

Tahoe Paradise Park board struggles with professionalism, how to get anything done



Tahoe Paradise Park's internal workings are becoming a bit dysfunctional. Photos/LTN file

By Jessie Marchesseau

MEYERS – Thirty-five community members were in attendance at the Tahoe Paradise Resort Improvement District board meeting on Thursday night, but by the time the meeting adjourned three and a half hours later only a few remained.

The larger than usual turnout may have been the result of some topics currently circulating through the community. One woman said she was there because of a notice she found on her door which said the park was closing. Someone else was concerned about what the new Assembly Bill 2762 would mean for the

TPRID. Another person voiced concern over rumors that the county was taking over the park.

The board members assured attendees the park is not in danger of closing. Only one board member had even heard of AB2762 with no answers as to what it meant for the future of the district. And Norma Santiago, El Dorado County supervisor and board member, denied any plans for El Dorado County to take over the park.

“The county does not want this park,” she said, “this is a community park, this is your park.”

However, she did reveal that the governance committee has considered the possibility of asking El Dorado County for administrative support. This is still at the committee level and has not been discussed by the TPRID board. However, the committee reported there is a possibility the county could help with administrative tasks such as invoicing, insurance policies, legal services, personnel policies and so on for a year or so until things get back on track, possibly at no cost to the RID.

Currently, all administrative duties in addition to maintenance are handled by Steve Dunn, the park manager who lives on site. All the board members as well as Dunn agreed this was too much for one person to handle, but a previous attempt to hire a part-time administrative person was unsuccessful.

In his first meeting as a board member, Peter Nelligan voiced his concern about the complete lack of any sort of bylaws or policies and procedures for the RID. In its current operational and administrative state, Nelligan said he believes the park will not be able to sustain itself for more than a few years.

Nelligan and Victor Babbitt are new to the board this year and appear anxious for change.

“We have a park, we have assets, we have a budget, we have projects that need to get done,” Babbitt said Oct. 23.

He reviewed the short-term priority projects for the park, including painting the gate, cleaning up the planter boxes at the entrance, and restraining the recreation center and the residence among a numerous other maintenance items. Some of the projects have already been completed; others are still in the planning process.



Park users will be using porta potties indefinitely.

One of the larger projects in the works over the summer was installing a restroom at the south end of the park. The project was approved by the county, but then TRPA shot it down, according to those at the meeting. However, after the meeting, TRPA told *Lake Tahoe News* that no application to build the bathroom was ever filed. With the restroom off the table, the board now has to find other projects on which to spend their grant money before the March deadline. Without a qualifying project, the RID could face losing a big chunk of the \$60,000 grant.

Board members bickered amongst themselves throughout the evening, with board Chairperson Judy Clot expressing the most disdain about being excluded from budget discussions and individual committees not keeping her in the loop. More than once attendees took the floor to ask members to take their

arguing elsewhere.

Board and community members alike expressed concerns about adhering to the Brown Act which outlines requirements for open meetings, public input and accessible information. Clot said she has received several complaints recently. The fact that the only place meetings are consistently announced is on the park bulletin board and the only place one can get meeting minutes is by going to the park and asking Dunn to make them a copy, and that is assuming he has had time to transcribe the audio recording, suggests there is room for improvement. The board agreed to look into getting further Brown Act training from the county.

The meeting concluded with Babbitt making a motion to schedule a special meeting before the regularly scheduled meeting in January. He said there was too much to be done for them to take the next three months off. His suggestion was met with objections and scowls from some of the others. But in the end, a special meeting was tentatively scheduled for Dec. 11. An announcement will be posted on the park bulletin board at least 24 hours in advance.