

Rape charges reduced in plea agreement

By Kathryn Reed

A former South Lake Tahoe City Council candidate who was accused of rape was sentenced to lesser crimes last week after reaching a plea agreement.

Doug Cichowicz, who came in last in the 2010 council race, agreed to a deal that will have him spending just more than 70 days in the local jail and then be on probation for five years. He pleaded guilty to felony burglary because he entered the home of his victim uninvited, felony stalking, and misdemeanor assault and battery.

Had he been convicted of rape, Cichowicz would have had to file as a registered sex offender. He doesn't have to based on what he pleaded to.

"I don't feel like he is a sex offender. I feel like he has a violent trigger," the victim told *Lake Tahoe News*. "I want people to be warned about him."

The two worked together years ago and then he returned to her life in the past few years.

The crimes took place in summer 2013.

"I know this is a win, but I was so geared up for a trial," the South Lake Tahoe woman said. "It was supposed to be (this) week. Then they asked for pleas at the last minute."

Attorney Rob Woelfel, who represented Cichowicz, declined to comment.