

David mayor of SLT; council marginalizes Conner



Austin Sass and Wendy David are now mayor pro tem and mayor, respectively, of South Lake Tahoe. Photo/LTN

By Kathryn Reed

Without unanimous support of their colleagues, Wendy David is now mayor of South Lake Tahoe and Austin Sass is mayor pro tem.

Councilwoman JoAnn Conner abstained from both votes this morning without saying why.

As is customary with the December council meeting, the electeds voted among themselves as to who will be the two leaders for the next year as well as which council member will represent the city on a variety of boards.

No one besides David expressed an interest in being mayor.

Councilman Tom Davis was the first to throw his hat into the ring for mayor pro tem.

Conner said it was important for the mayor and mayor pro tem to attend ceremonial functions. She listed a few where that did not happen, to which then Mayor Hal Cole had to correct her to say he attended things she wasn't aware of.

During Sass' proclamation as to why he should be mayor pro tem he stated how the position is so much more than attending functions, and that it is more about leadership.

David agreed. "Leadership does equal making decisions," she said.

She threw her support behind Sass, saying the two had worked well together on committees in the past year.

Cole, hearing what David had to say about Sass, sided with her.

The votes for mayor and mayor pro tem were 4-0-1.

This was the same vote for the commissions, with Conner abstaining.

The council changed how it voted on entities beyond the council by having members weigh in on their desired position before the Dec. 7 meeting. At the meeting each council member voted on a preprinted ballot for whom they wanted for each position.

Conner was essentially removed from all of her duties except for one that has her working with people outside of Lake Tahoe. She remains the representative to the League of California Cities.

This comes on the heels of Conner having been **censured** by the

council earlier this fall and being **banned from talking to staff**. Those actions were the result of her bullying nature that has resulted in city employees filing complaints against her and other leaders in the community like El Dorado County Supervisor Sue Novasel and Lake Tahoe Community College President Kindred Murillo voicing their inability to work with Conner.

The committee-board reps are:

- California Tahoe Conservancy – Davis
- El Dorado County LAFCO – Sass
- Tahoe Regional Planning Agency – Cole, Sass as alternate
- Tahoe Transportation District – Sass, Davis as alternate
- Abandoned Vehicle Abatement – Cole
- Cal-Tahoe JPA – David and Davis
- Clean Tahoe – David
- Tahoe Prosperity Center – David
- Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority – Davis
- Recreation JPA – Sass
- Waste Management Authority JPA – David, Davis as alternate
- Redevelopment Successor Agency – Cole, Davis as alternate
- Community Play Consortium – David.

The ballot came with some standing committees being eliminated or representation to the committee being eliminated. Because

this is a policy decision that had not been put on the agenda it will come back for a future vote.

The proposal is to not send a council member to the following entities' board meetings:

- Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce
- South Tahoe Chamber of Commerce
- South Lake Tahoe Lodging Association
- South Tahoe Public Utility District.

It is proposed to eliminate the following city committees or subcommittees because they are considered completed:

- Airport Master Plan
- Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- LTUSD, LTCC MOU
- Single Room Occupancy
- Policy for Giving to Nonprofits
- Warm Room Project
- Senior Citizens Center.