

South Shore ambulance legal sparing escalates

By Lake Tahoe News

With the **threat of a lawsuit** from El Dorado County, the Cal-Tahoe Joint Powers Authority board this week voted to hire an attorney.

The JPA is responsible for providing ambulance service to the California side of the South Shore. South Lake Tahoe and Lake Valley fire departments are the agencies of the JPA, each with two voting members on the board.

South Lake Tahoe agreed to staff its ambulances until July 1. The city had threatened to stop doing so this month, and to pull out of the JPA. Monetary reimbursement from the county is the catalyst to do so.

In an effort to reduce expenses, city ambulances are staffed with paramedics and emergency medical technicians. Lake Valley continues to use firefighter-paramedics.

The city made it clear it still wants out of the ambulance business.

Still to be resolved is South Lake Tahoe's proposal it made at the meeting, which includes giving its stake in the consortium, including personnel, to the JPA. Fire Station 2 would be available to the JPA at least through 2019.

The proposal further states, "This transfer of personnel would not harm Lake Valley's desire to run Medic 7 in their current configuration and would relieve the city from being in the ambulance transportation business. The city would still provide paramedic engine response within the city as part of this proposal and would be available as part of mutual aid."

Other action at the April 11 meeting included:

- Six cardiac monitors will be purchased.
- The board is reviewing dispatch proposals from CalFire and the city with the hope the county will increase the reimbursement.