

Shearer: Wants to encourage progress in SLT

Publisher's note: Lake Tahoe News asked candidates for South Lake Tahoe City Council, Lake Tahoe Community College, Lake Tahoe Unified School District, Douglas County School District, South Tahoe Public Utility District and Lake Valley Fire Protection District a series of questions. We are running the responses in the order received.



John Shearer is running for one of two seats open on the South Lake Tahoe City Council.

Name: John Shearer

Age: 49

Job/profession: Owner/operator of local businesses, boat captain

What boards, commissions, or other experience, including volunteering, do you have?: President of nonprofit, Marine Research and Education

Why are you running for City Council?: The number one reason I

am running for City Council is to encourage progress in our city. I want to help preserve the community and ensure its future. I am not doing this for the money, the status, or the title. I am running for City Council to help make a difference in our community, which I have worked so hard to be a part of and that has given my family and I so much. I believe there is no better place to live and raise your family than Lake Tahoe.

Why should voters vote for you over another candidate?: I am a businessman, a family man, and invested in the roots of this community. Owning four separate businesses in different industries gives me a broad knowledge of management.

What distinct experience or competency makes you uniquely qualified to lead effectively as an elected official?: I understand how to run multiple types of successful businesses and the city is essentially one very large business with many separate entities. Being able to effectively run my businesses gives me an understanding of how to manage separate entities and be able to forecast the future and adapt to change at a quicker pace.

Public agencies have been under scrutiny the last few years for lack of transparency and accountability. What will you do to ensure both?: I would treat this position as I operate my businesses, with dignity and respect toward others. I am very straightforward and very honest. I believe in fulfilling obligations that I have committed to and seeing them through in the most honest way possible.

What stands out for you in the current budget that you support and that you would change?: I support the transient occupancy tax percentage increase, which will directly fund the recreational sport complex. I strongly believe that recreation is one of our primary focuses in this city and bringing in a complex will allow increased tourism throughout the year.

Do you support current legislation for \$15 minimum wage?

Please explain: I think it is worthy of discussion, however I don't believe putting all the expenses for an individual's prosperity solely on the backs of the business owners. You have to work hard to earn more.

Do you support Proposition 55? Please explain: I oppose Proposition 55 because it is a premature forecast of change with two years still left in the original Proposition 30, which was written to be temporary. Extending this will affect small businesses and without a defined plan of where the allocated money will actually go. I oppose the extension of Proposition 30.

Describe three attributes for a successful council: Honesty, integrity, transparency

What are your thoughts about public employee defined benefits?: I believe that if you do a duty to the city, you deserve compensation; however long-term extended benefits after a person has left their employment with the city should be up for discussion based on their time and effort invested.

Please explain your position regarding contracting out work normally done by staff: If workflow exceeds my team's abilities or time constraints, I think it is important to seek professional assistance (under specific guidance) from an outside contractor to ensure the achievement of the goal.

What is your 10-year vision for South Lake Tahoe?: I would like to see the recreational sports complex built and fully operational. I would like to see overall progress for current projects within the city such as Heavenly's plans, better parking, and better flow of traffic throughout the city. I would also like to see outdoor sign guidelines so the city is more aesthetically pleasing when driving through it.

What one vote in the last four years that the current council made do you disagree with and why?: Vacation rental proposal; I would have liked to see the existing legislation in place

actually being enforced versus creating new ones.

How many City Council meetings have you attended this year?:
None this year.

What do you know about the strategic plan, finances, debt, and goals of the city?: Fiscal conservancy, pay attention to current trends and be aware of what may come in the future. Debt is sometimes necessary to achieve goals and increase growth, and refinancing that debt when necessary.

Being on the council means working as a team. How will you work with the sitting members for the greater good of the community?: I will practice the same values that I do with my businesses. We all need each other's expertise in order to ensure the best end result possible.

What should be the three main priorities for the council?:
Economic prosperity, transparency, and accountability.

What have you done to make yourself ready to be a council member?: I have worked every single day for the past 30 years in this community and I know what it takes to make things happen and how to make a living.

What role should government have in housing for residents?:
Providing legislation to regulate aesthetics, sound ordinances, and hold homeowners responsible for overall property maintenances.

How can the city partner with the school district to improve high school graduation rates?: The city is always open to new partnerships and is addressing the current needs. Schools are our city's future, and I believe that we have a wonderful school system.

How can local government support and expand job creation and small local businesses?: Work in alliance with our community and the Tahoe Prosperity Center. Provide transportation for

people to commute in and out of the basin. Provide an online forum or posting page for local businesses to have one location to post jobs, share jobs and employees, and that is accessible to anyone who is in need of a job.

If you believe in the one South Shore concept, what would you do to further make this a reality? If you don't believe in blurring the state line, why don't you?: We are one community, where our services frequently cross both lines, if we incorporate the separate entities into one, we could prosper together. One high school. One community from Zephyr Cove to Meyers. I like to think outside of the box and feel that we can find a solution that works best for the community and the states.

What are your views on:

a: Vacation home rentals: I believe in vacation rentals and the rules that are currently in place need to be enforced. Three strikes rule, if you can't manage your property within the current legislation, you shouldn't have the privilege of operating a vacation rental property.

b: Loop road: I believe in it – to increase the synergy, traffic flow, and events so local families and tourists can enjoy the area in safety.

c: City streets: City streets are definitely the less glamorous side of government but nonetheless, extremely important. We need to have better maintained roadways with reasonable time-lines for repairs and improvements and not in our peak season of tourism. New street lights should be considered in the heavily traveled back streets for safety purposes.

d: Relationships with other public agencies: Collaboration is necessary, but so is accountability. We cannot move forward while everyone is finger pointing.

e. Recreation: Increasing recreation with the recreation center complex. Bring back the basics of our city and the history of Lake Tahoe to have a place to host outdoor family recreation.

f. TRPA defined commodities: I think it is very helpful to have an agency that is dedicated to preserving Lake Tahoe and its environment, as long it is in collaboration with the best interests of the community.

g. Transient occupancy tax measure: I support the increase of 2 percent TOT if the funds are directly funding the new recreation center complex in town.

h. Sales tax measure: I support the sales tax increase by one-half percent if it directly addresses the city's "less glamorous" needs.

i. What do you want the additional sales tax money to go to?: I support that money be allocated toward road and street improvements, however I support our community and whatever the majority votes on.

Tell us something about yourself that people may not know: I own a fishing company, I am a fishing captain, and I don't enjoy eating fish. I would much rather have steak and potatoes.

As someone who owns multiple businesses on both sides of the state line involving fishing and snowmobiling, what are your priorities – the environment, fair wages, tourism, the consumer or something else? Why?: All the above. I believe all of these priorities are a recipe for success and they are defined within all of my businesses. We cannot have one without the other.