

Editorial: Collin, Laine for SLT City Council

Publisher's note: The following endorsement is from Lake Tahoe News after a team of seven community members gathered to discuss who should be on the South Lake Tahoe City Council.

Even with 10 candidates running for South Lake Tahoe City Council, *Lake Tahoe News* was left wanting something more. Maybe there isn't that ideal, perfect candidate out there.

The two, though, who eventually rose to the top were Jason Collin and Brooke Laine. With Collin, we get someone with new ideas who is a bit of a maverick in the world of recreation. After all, recreation is what the city and the entire South Shore is hanging its economic hat on. With Laine, we get experience and someone who can jump into the job without needing a learning curve.



Jason Collin

Collin is charismatic, a community guy, a family man and someone who can be relied upon to think for himself. While we aren't taking a stance on whether his lawsuit to stop Measure T was right or wrong, we admire that he was willing to put his neck on the line – especially while running for election. We aren't convinced he paid for all of this on his own, but what matters is he stood up for his convictions and in a manner that was neither abusive nor confrontational in a detrimental way. At the end of the day that is the type of person we need

on the council – forthright, opinionated, determined and able to stand up for his beliefs.



Brooke Laine

Laine's enthusiasm for this town is unwavering. She was born here and has no plans to leave. On or off the council (she has served six years) she does what she believes is best for South Lake Tahoe. Our reluctance with Laine is that she represents a bit of the old guard. We need vision beyond one county; and we need the details for how to achieve those goals. She was involved in some of the redevelopment projects while on the council in the 1990s, which will serve the community well as it goes through a bit of a renaissance. However, just reading the council agenda is not enough to know what is going on in the city and elsewhere.

While we support the one South Shore concept, we hope Collin and Laine will remember they are being elected to represent South Lake Tahoe first and foremost, not the Nevada interests who support them.

Hal Cole's departure from the council means there will be at least one new council person.

Four years ago *Lake Tahoe News* endorsed JoAnn Conner for council. We can't do so this time around. In 2012, we were excited that she would be a voice for a segment of the community that wasn't getting heard, that she would bring a perspective that was missing.

What we got instead is someone who is not able to work well

with others – and that’s putting it mildly. When *LTN* asked her what she got out of the lawsuit she filed against the city that she didn’t have before the settlement she said the agreement answers that question. *LTN* has read the agreement and has written about it. All that changed is Conner can now email staff directly. This cost her more than \$30,000 and the taxpayers \$100,000. Her answer to how she justifies the city’s costs is that she was not a party to the decision for the city to defend itself.

Her total lack of remorsefulness is appalling.

Being on the City Council is not a game. It is not a popularity contest. It should neither be a way to curry favor from the public or other public agencies, nor be used to enhance one’s own business.

There are serious matters the city takes up each month. We need serious people who see the big picture. We need people who will work as a team. This doesn’t mean we advocate for 5-0 votes. Disagreements are fine. It’s how one goes about disagreeing that matters.

No matter what happens with the two tax initiatives, the council is going to have to be diligent in how it spends those dollars or creative in coming up with other revenue sources to accomplish its goals.

Finances, development deals, environmental issues, roads and tourism – those are just a handful of the issues that regularly come before the council. Collin and Laine have the ability to understand the complexities, the time needed to do the job, the ability to work with the other three council members and most of all the ability to make decisions for the greater good of South Lake Tahoe, the South Shore and the Lake Tahoe Basin.

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Why we said no to the others:

- For candidates Patrick Jarett, Trey Riddle, John Shearer and Bob Topel we believe they would benefit from joining a city commission to further their knowledge base before running for council again.

- It is an ethical decision not to endorse Danny McLaughlin. No one in the media, even someone working in ad sales, should ever be in an elected office.

- Ted Long has proven himself untrustworthy in the past. He will say just the right thing to potentially get elected, but his record as a councilmember here and elsewhere are reasons enough to say no.

- Tami Wallace, while she has experience on the Planning Commission, clearly doesn't have a grasp of how the city really works. She touted experiences as a spouse of an elected official as her own in her answers to *Lake Tahoe News'* questions. She wants to return to the fundamentals of when the city was born – to focus on police, fire and snow removal. We need someone with vision who is living in the 21st century, not the 20th.