

Cole retires from South Lake Tahoe politics



A plaque near the South Lake Tahoe welcome sign pays tribute to Hal Cole. Photo/LTN

In an emotional goodbye, Hal Cole said farewell to politics on Tuesday – at least as an elected official.

After more than 20 years on the South Lake Tahoe City Council he opted not to seek re-election. He is the longest serving council member in the city's 51-year history.

At the December meeting the new council members will be sworn in. So, technically, he is on the council until then.



Hal Cole

Many accolades were bestowed upon him at the Nov. 15 council meeting. The city honored him with a plaque detailing how the welcome sign by the airport came about. It was installed before the meeting was over.

Cole started the process of creating the sign when he was on the Planning Commission and completed it with the help of many others once he got on council.

He readily admits it's his most treasured accomplishment.

A mini version of the plaque was given to Cole as well as a proclamation that was read by Mayor Wendy David.

Cole also spoke of how proud he is of the redevelopment of the Heavenly Village area and approving the gondola project. He said the risk paid off.

He equated his time on council to being in college; learning so much it was like getting degrees in multiple subjects.

But he also knows along the way he alienated friends with some of his votes. That, he said, is the fallout of doing what's right for the city.

After he thanked those he currently works with and those from

the past, Cole was sent off with a standing ovation.

– *Kathryn Reed*