

SLT, city manager brouhaha continues

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe City Council members on Feb. 20 will again discuss the future of City Manager Nancy Kerry.

The closed session item is listed as: public employee discipline/dismissal/release. This was the same wording used for the **Feb. 12 special meeting**. At that time there was no reportable action.

Sources have told *Lake Tahoe News* the city and Kerry are working on a settlement. She is owed nine month's severance if she were to be let go without cause. As with all employees, she would also be entitled to compensation for unused sick and vacation time.

Still, though, no one has come forward to say what has led the city and Kerry to be on a path to part ways.

On Feb. 6 Kerry was mandated to turn in her work phone and key card for access to city offices, though she is still technically the city manager. She is receiving her regular paycheck, but is not doing any work. She is not taking sick or vacation pay, nor is she on administrative leave.

"Nancy is currently on regular paid status," Debbie McIntyre, director of finance, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "The Finance Department has received no direction from City Council regarding Nancy's pay status, and as such she will remain on paid status until direction is given. An exempt employee receives full pay whether or not they work full hours, and their pay doesn't change if they work more than full hours, just the nature of the exempt status employee."

Councilman Austin Sass has said people have complained about Kerry, but to what extent is not known. People complain about bosses and colleagues all the time. Councilman Tom Davis said no official complaints have been filed.

Lake Tahoe News on Feb. 8 asked the city: "How many complaints have been filed against each of the last three city managers? How many employee lawsuits have been filed against Kerry, O'Rourke and Jinkens? What was the outcome of them?" The city has not provided the answers.

Lake Tahoe News knows of **one former employee who filed a lawsuit** during Kerry's tenure, which was settled. There are no other known complaints. This speaks to why Kerry in her five-plus years as city manager had only received glowing reviews, including as recently as June 2017 when she was given a 5 percent raise.

Kerry's fall from grace comes with more questions than answers.

The relationship became strained once interim City Attorney Nira Doherty came on board.

The only thing known for sure is that **Mary Egan of Municipal Resource Group** came in last October to assess the culture of the city at the request of Sass, who was mayor at the time. Egan never provided the city with a written report. She talked about her findings in closed session Jan. 23.

Lake Tahoe News requested all correspondence with MRG prior to the contract signing as that would be public record. Suzie Alessi, the city clerk, handles all Public Records Act requests. Again, no response.

Alessi was resent a different PRA on Sunday, with acting City Manager Jeff Meston, Mayor Wendy David and Doherty copied on the email.

Alessi's response to everyone about this reporter was, "I am really tired of feeling harassed and bullied by her."

Again, Alessi is failing to do her job. As an elected official her boss is the people, no one at the city.