

Kerry resigns as S. Lake Tahoe city manager

By Kathryn Reed

It's official – Nancy Kerry is no longer city manager of South Lake Tahoe.

“We've accepted the resignation of Nancy Kerry effective immediately,” Mayor Wendy David said after emerging from about a 30-minute closed session meeting on March 6 at 6:05pm.



Nancy Kerry

Kerry told *Lake Tahoe News*, “I've really enjoyed the 10 gratifying years in the city tackling unique and complex issues. I'm really proud of what we accomplished as a team.”

Asked why she resigned, Kerry would only say, “With all due respect, I am committed to leaving the city on the highest road possible. The city and I came to a respectful agreement.”

It was a somber mood in council chambers when it was opened to the public. Council members Tom Davis and Jason Collin ducked out of the meeting via the side door, not staying for the announcement.

No one would talk to *Lake Tahoe News*, the only media outlet who was there for the announcement, so it is not known what the vote was – unanimous or divided.

David and acting City Manager Jeff Meston retired to his office at City Hall. He retains that title. It will be up to the council to decide how to go forward with replacing Kerry on a permanent basis.

Kerry's departure has been clouded in speculation for more than a month. It started with the illegal hiring last fall of someone to study the culture of the city, which turned into an illegal review of Kerry.

Then she was placed on leave a month ago. On Tuesday it all came to an end. Still, though, the public is left wondering what really happened.

The settlement calls for Kerry to receive her nine month's severance (\$176,321) which her contract stipulated if she were let go without cause. She is also owed 339 hours of vacation leave and 520 hours of sick leave.

Had Kerry truly left on her own volition, this payment would never have occurred. Had there been actual cause for the separation in employment, Kerry would not have received any of this money either.

In some ways, the taxpayers are getting off cheap because Kerry could have sued the city on several allegations. Just the protracted litigation would have been costly.

The settlement states that Kerry cannot file "any claim against [the] city based on, or related to acts or events taking place on or before the effective date of this agreement. Employee understand that by making the above waivers and releases she has forever surrendered every claim, complaint, allegation of misconduct or cause of action of any kind or nature, whether known or unknown, suspected or unsuspected, at the time of the effective date of this agreement."

The council as a whole and individually are the city manager's

boss. That means the city manager is covered by labor laws like any other employee. So if one of the councilmen called a city manager "mommy" or made comments about clothes, weight or other appearance issues, the city manager would be able to sue for harassment or hostile work environment at a minimum.

Those accusations told to this reporter by community members/city staff will now not see the light of day and the people responsible not held accountable.