

# SnowGlobe promises to suppress noise

By Kathryn Reed

Chad Donnelly is committed to South Lake Tahoe even if some residents wish he would take SnowGlobe, his three-day music festival, elsewhere.

“I really believe in what we do,” Donnelly told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Since 2011 he has brought the electronic music festival to the ball fields on Al Tahoe Boulevard. It’s grown in that time – in terms of the number of attendees, the ability to attract Grammy-winning artists, the amount of money in his pocket, donations to nonprofits, and overall impact to the local economy.



Chad Donnelly, SnowGlobe producer, listens to deliberations on March 6.

Photo/LTN

It’s also grown in the number of complaints, or least the effort to have the venue changed or concerts banned is more cohesive. A petition with 175 signatures supporting modifying or canceling SnowGlobe has been given to city officials.

Asked why he stays when there is a backlash against him – at least by a small vocal group – Donnelly gets a bit melancholy. SnowGlobe is his baby. He loves the mountains. And for the most part, the South Shore has welcomed him no matter the noise. He's built something he is proud of.

Noise and the condition of the fields are sticking points for many people, even electeds. Those issues were brought up again March 6 at the City Council meeting during a presentation about SnowGlobe.

Of the 34 people who spoke, the majority were in favor of the festival – saying it's good for the economy – especially in lean snow years, that it is putting South Lake Tahoe on the map in a positive way, it is upping the number of lodging nights, and it is diffusing the chaos at Stateline.

The contract goes through 2018. What Donnelly wants is a long-term agreement. The council isn't ready to say yes or no to that request just yet. And there is no set date when that will be back before the council.

At the end of the lengthy discussion on Tuesday it was decided that city staff would meet with Donnelly and those who have concerns. The goal is to have a resolution in the next couple of weeks.

Part of the urgency to get things resolved quickly is that the producers are already signing contracts and the NoGlobe people want the hours curtailed. If the times change, it means fewer acts to book.

Donnelly and his reps have promised to do more to control the sound – starting this year. This in part includes covering the entire field. Technology via computer modeling will be implemented on every speaker, the subwoofers will be lifted off the ground, and delay towers will be used.

Snow is a natural absorber of sound. But Mother Nature has not

always come through. *Lake Tahoe News* asked Donnelly if blowing snow would be an option. Possibly, he said; he needs to know the costs, logistics and figure out the depth that would be required to make a difference.

Even so, Mother Nature would still be a variable. The overnight temperature has to be at a certain level for consecutive days for snowmaking to be viable.

The ball field after the 2017 event was in sad shape. Donnelly is paying up to \$250,000 for the field to be replaced.

He paid \$50,000 to rent the field.

The Community Playfield Consortium, made up of the city and Lake Tahoe Community College, manage the fields. The city this week received two bids to fix the damaged field. Work will begin as soon as possible, though the normal date to be able to move dirt in the basin is May 1.

The council is worried that the public who paid for that field is being denied access because it won't be ready for use until mid-June most likely. On the one hand that isn't a huge issue because the field has never been in the rotation for use because the sod was just laid last fall. Still, fields are in short supply – which was the reason to build it, and means a delay is getting people to use them for their intended purpose.