

Nevada marijuana industry growth has state scrambling to catch up

By Colton Lochhead, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY – Nevada’s fledgling marijuana industry has taken off significantly faster than state officials anticipated.

Now state regulators are scrambling to catch up.

Nevada Legislature’s Interim Finance Committee on Wednesday approved approximately \$1.3 million in new funding for the Nevada Department of Taxation to help bolster staffing and upgrade technology systems that the department’s executive director said are necessary to keep up with the ever-increasing regulatory demands.

[Read the whole story](#)

Median home prices hit highs in El Dorado, Placer

By Tony Bizjak, Sacramento Bee

Regional home prices hit 12-year highs last month, according to data, fueling a discussion of whether the area is experiencing a bubble that could burst.

The median sales price in Sacramento County hit \$360,000 in May, the highest price in any month since 2006, just before

real estate prices took a major tumble amid deep recession.

Median sales prices in El Dorado County and Placer also hit highs, at \$518,000 and \$490,000, respectively.

Read the whole story

Online sales tax ruling could bring \$30M to Nev.

By Associated Press

Nevada's top tax official says a U.S. Supreme Court ruling Thursday allowing states to require more online retailers to collect sales tax could bring in an extra \$30 million a year for Nevada.

The court's 5-4 ruling was a big win for states who argued they were losing billions annually under old court rulings regarding online sales tax.

Read the whole story

Liberty Utilities' customers' info leaked

Liberty Utilities' customers on both ends of the lake have been getting calls from scam artists.

People are calling customers stating they are from Liberty Utilities and demanding cash payment to avoid shut off. These scammers are able to recite the customer's entire account number.

Liberty says it does not know how the account number and phone numbers were released.

Liberty says it will never call customers demanding payment prior to shutoff. Customers receive several letters if they are in arrears. Customers should always call Liberty at 800.782.2506 if they have questions regarding their bills.

Voters give CTC more cash to spend at Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

KINGS BEACH – Voters earlier this month infused the California Tahoe Conservancy budget with \$27 million.

This was through Proposition 68, which in total is a \$4 billion bond for parks, environmental protection and restoration, water infrastructure, and flood protection.

The CTC board on June 21 received an update about Proposition 68 at the meeting in Kings Beach. This came after approving its 2018-19 program budget authorization.

There are some strings attached with the new bond money. Language in the initiative says 20 percent of the money must be allocated to communities with a household income of less than 60 percent of the statewide average of \$39,980 in 2016. In CTC's jurisdiction, South Lake Tahoe and Kings Beach

qualify as disadvantaged communities.

Board member Lynn Suter said, "I think we need to pay attention to this in a big way." She said the Legislature is adamant that disadvantaged communities be paid attention to.

As such the Conservancy staff has come up with a revision to the mission statement that says, "All communities have equitable access to the lake."

It remains to be seen how this will look in terms of future projects using Proposition 68 dollars.

In Proposition 68 the focal areas are:

- Acquire open space and create greenway corridors
- Outreach to diverse populations
- Mentoring diverse new leaders
- Creating new partnerships to expand access
- Implement improvements to increase access
- Expand use of appropriate educational materials
- Promote youth engagement and empowerment
- Identify possible staff liaisons.

Key projects the Conservancy plans to work on in this next fiscal year that starts July 1 include:

- Restoration of the Upper Truckee River Marsh
- South Tahoe Greenway, phase 1b/2
- Tahoe Pines Restoration project
- Lakeview Lookout/Connelly Beach.

CTC has \$15.4 million in capital outlay and local assistance

funding. This comes from just more than \$9 million in bond funds, about \$1.87 million in special funds dedicated to the Conservancy, and \$4.56 million in grants from the Federal Trust Fund and other reimbursements.

There is another nearly \$7.93 million in continuing “baseline” funding from various bonds, special funds, and revenue sources dedicated to the CTC.

The state agency based in South Lake Tahoe spends about \$3.4 million on personnel, with \$3.2 million for other operating expenses.

Water a question for home building west of Tahoe

By Ryan Sabalow, Dale Kasler and Tony Bizjak, Sacramento Bee

It's like a new city springing to life: 11,000 homes and apartments, three public schools, a pair of fire stations, a police station, a slew of office and commercial buildings and 1,000 acres of parks, trails and other open space. Expected population: 25,000.

But will it have enough water?

As construction begins this month on the first model homes at Folsom Ranch, a 3,300-acre development in the city of Folsom south of Highway 50, state regulators continue to have questions about the project's water supply. They still aren't convinced the city has secured enough water to keep showers and spigots flowing as California contends with increasing uncertainty about rain and snowfall.

[Read the whole story](#)

Homeless camps dismantled behind Stateline casinos

Harrah's Lake Tahoe and Douglas County Sheriff's Office employees recently teamed up to clean up the forested area behind the Stateline casinos.

In years past homeless people have camped there illegally. Volunteers and DCSO SWAT members cleaned up the make-shift campsites which contained bedding, furniture, drug paraphernalia and rubbish. An illegal camping citation was issued to one person.

Harrah's provided four dump trucks for trash, and each was filled to capacity.

El Dorado County bird tests positive for West Nile

El Dorado County health officials received confirmation June 22 that a bird found in the El Dorado Hills tested positive for West Nile virus.

The songbird, was collected on June 13.

So far this year, West Nile virus activity has been detected

in 22 dead birds in California; El Dorado (2), San Mateo (2), Alameda (4), Humboldt (1), Los Angeles (1), Sacramento (6), Stanislaus (1) and Santa Clara (5).

Confirmation of the West Nile virus positive bird means the virus is circulating between birds and mosquitoes and there is heightened risk of infection in humans. West Nile virus can be transmitted to people through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes get the virus when they feed on infected birds. The illness is not spread from person-to-person.

Housing at South Tahoe Y moving forward

Talks are under way to build 50 to 75 units at the Y in South Lake Tahoe.

The California Tahoe Conservancy has been working with Sutter Capital Group, owners of the Crossing, to acquire neighboring CTC parcels. The two entities are in exclusive negotiations.

In the next month CTC hopes to have a pre-application meeting with city and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency staff.

The CTC through its asset lands program is selling parcels it owns that are in town centers and are essentially in-fill. The state agency has taken a more hands-on approach as to how the property is then developed after having a questionable McMansion go up on one of its former holdings.

The plan is these units would be housing the average resident could afford and not high-end condos for tourists like what has been and is being built at the other end of town.

Interim SLT leader jumping into all topics

By Susan Wood

Interim City Manager Dirk Brazil sat across the table from citizens Wednesday for a fireside-type chat where he heard topics as diverse as the ones he's faced in the two weeks of being on the job.

South Lake Tahoe Mayor Wendy David introduced Brazil, who replaced former manager Nancy Kerry after a whirlwind of events, to the gathering of 15 people at the senior center June 20. This was David's fifth such "conversation" she stages each month to get up-close-and-personal with the citizenry.



South Lake Tahoe interim City Manager Dirk Brazil and Mayor Wendy David talk city issues with the public on June 20. Photo/Susan Wood

Topics ranged from dogs off leash, television reception and

broadband expansion to vacation home rental permits, snow clearing and beautification of town. It might have been a welcome sign to Brazil, who rattled off a list of interesting issues that have crossed his desk in half a month.

A small sampling includes Lime bike safety, lake erosion, a murder, a clerk's sudden resignation, parking problems, solar power issues and even offensive public art. The crowd giggled, but no one asked for the background on the last one. Perhaps that stays under wraps.

Brazil has been keeping his eyes and ears open since coming out of retirement from his post in Davis, something he initially didn't expect he'd do.

"The right people asked. I don't know if it's an addiction, but it certainly is a calling," Brazil said about returning to government. CalPERS retirement guidelines allow him to work half the year once retired.

"It's pretty nice to be here. I've never worked somewhere where there's an ice arena, lake and airport – one that I work in," he said.

This doesn't mean he hasn't been around. Besides his three-year stint managing Davis, the government official worked in Yolo County in administration, California's Legislature under former Gov. Gray Davis and for the Fish and Game departments in this state and Washington.

Brazil knew that whatever post he might fill in for he'd see three constants every city manager in California must deal with: homelessness, vacation home rentals and cannabis.

Getting an update from Tahoe Prosperity Center's director Heidi Hill Drum on upgrading sketchy cell phone reception through the use of new towers and microcell sites put a whole new dimension on where he's landed.

He seemed fascinated about the patchwork nature of town, along with its unique quality and cultural character.

The latter is what Melissa Wong said she would like discussed and addressed more.

This message blended nicely into common courtesy when a woman who lives in the Bijou neighborhood expressed concern about dogs off leash that may look menacing.

David appreciated the comment, having shared her own experience.

"I'm glad you brought that up. We're paying a lot for (animal control)," she said. At Tuesday's meeting, the city was forced to grapple with a more than 50 percent increase in fees for its portion it pays El Dorado County for the service.

Governance is not easy and for the faint of heart.

One attendee even asked if Brazil would stay on, but he can't. Brazil is filling in until a permanent replacement is found.

"He reminds me of Kerry Miller," Carol Olivas said, rather smitten with Brazil. The 40-year Tahoe resident was referring to the former city manager from the 1980s.

When asked by *Lake Tahoe News* what he does in his leisure, Brazil told the gathering he likes to run, play golf and cook (though he humbly kept his specialty to himself). The adrenaline rush of running comes in handy after enduring long City Council meetings.