



Mail

PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449-5310

Location

128 Market Street
Stateline, NV 89449

Contact

Phone: 775-588-4547
Fax: 775-588-4527
www.trpa.gov

STAFF REPORT

Date: May 17, 2023
To: TRPA Governing Board
From: Julie Regan, Executive Director
Subject: Executive Director Six-Month Performance Update

Summary and Staff Recommendation:

This item is for informational purposes and no action is required.

Project Description/Background:

Following a robust search and the Board's hiring decision, I stepped into the position as TRPA's Executive Director on November 28, 2022. It's been an active six months and I'm grateful for the opportunity to offer this summary of our collective achievements to date and the challenges ahead.

The specific terms spelled out in our employment agreement call for the following items to be discussed at the six-month mark.

- Satisfactory support of Governing Board operations including regular communications, monthly meetings, and an annual priority-setting session that results in an annual agency work plan and budget;
 - Progress on or completion of the core activities and initiatives in the approved work plan consistent with the approved budget, unless the Governing Board approves revisions to the work plan and/or budget;
 - Demonstration of the core competencies which all TRPA employees have included in their performance plans; and
 - Input from stakeholders and partner agencies that demonstrates a good faith effort at communication, coordination, and collaboration.
1. Governing Board operations including regular communications, monthly meetings, and an annual priority-setting session that results in an annual agency work plan and budget.

In order to accomplish task number one, I felt it was imperative to do an internal assessment of the organization and I made it my immediate priority to meet with all 70 members of TRPA staff. We are fortunate to have an incredible team of talented professionals who are all committed to TRPA's mission to protect Lake Tahoe and support our communities. Staff members shared their commitment to the Agency with me, their joy in making positive contributions to Lake Tahoe, and their respect for co-workers and the positive work environment we have at TRPA. Staff members also expressed concerns about office technology challenges, the Agency's lack of competitiveness in salary and retirement benefits, and workload pressures resulting in burnout from hiring freezes over the years. Our Executive

Team and I have committed to addressing these challenges through our upcoming work plan and budget in step with board direction.

Over the last six months, I've also focused on improving the open and transparent flow of communication with the Governing Board through the following mechanisms:

- Executive Director updates and Tahoe In Brief monthly board reports
 - Email updates (10 since late November)
 - One-on-one meetings and phone calls with board members
 - Staff/board/public workshops (Transportation equity workshop in Feb., strategic planning workshop in April).
 - The April Governing Board retreat summary is covered in another agenda item. The Board is on track to adopt the priorities, work plan, and budget in June.
2. Progress on or completion of the core activities and initiatives in the approved work plan consistent with the approved budget, unless the Governing Board approves revisions to the work plan and/or budget;

By working together as a team, we've accomplished a great deal over the last six months and are on track to meet and exceed the expectations of the overall Agency work plan. Here are highlights of some of the significant results:

- Restructured Agency operations to backfill my former position and promote multiple staff members from within the organization. Provided a smooth transition of leadership resulting in a zero staff vacancy rate – there are currently no open positions at TRPA.
- Worked with Nevada Governor Lombardo's office, Board members, and the Legislature to restore TRPA's operational funding to the full one-third share as called for in the Bi-State Compact. This marks the first time in 15 years that Nevada's full contribution has been achieved. California's appropriation remained whole despite the significant budget shortfall the State is experiencing.
- Honored four departing Governing Board members for their service and onboarded three new members. Facilitated smooth committee assignment shifts including chair and vice chair replacements.
- Vetted major policy areas including housing/land use, biomass, sustainable recreation, transportation equity, and transportation funding.
 - Board and staff together created the opportunity for the South Tahoe Refuse to pursue an application for a small-scale waste to energy biofuel pilot project.
 - Re-activated the Tahoe Living Working Group. Staff members are working tirelessly to advance housing goals in the Region in collaboration with community stakeholders. Our team, in partnership with El Dorado County and the City of South Lake Tahoe, advanced to the next round for a \$2.4 million grant from California's Housing and Community Development office.
- Led a collaborative partnership and internal restructuring to deliver key legislative results. Achieved record **appropriations under the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act**, setting another record of **more than \$30.9 million** for restoration projects through September 30, 2023. Passage of the Water Resources Development Act, which included two key priorities for the Tahoe Basin, authorizes an additional \$25 million for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to continue funding restoration projects within the basin. Team TRPA also played a vital role with our congressional

delegation in their work to extend the authorization of the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act for another 10 years plus (bill just cleared the US Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee) and to execute a \$5.5 million agreement with the USDA Forest Service to distribute fiscal 2023 funds to priority EIP projects. We also participated in more than six hearings during the NV Legislative session and numerous Capitol Days in Sacramento to raise Tahoe's profile alongside partners in the California Tahoe Alliance.

- Our federal legislative successes are not only thanks to the tireless efforts of our allies in Congress, including Senators Feinstein, Catherine Cortez Masto, Jacky Rosen, and Alex Padilla, and Rep. Mark Amodei, but the long hours of advocacy by "Team Tahoe" which includes the TRPA, our state and local government partners, the non-stop work of our non-profit allies in the basin and the support of Tahoe's private sector. We are proud to collaborate with our partners for the benefit of Lake Tahoe.
 - Completed three area plan amendments and vetted two amendments in Washoe and Placer Counties. Managed two mitigation fund releases passing \$2.7 million to the Nevada Division of State Lands and El Dorado County for environmental projects. Brought forward the MPO overall work plan, transportation funding program amendments, \$11 million awarded through the Regional Grants Program, and developed transportation performance metrics and a safety strategy.
 - Found solutions, through board/staff/partner collaboration, to major projects which had lingered such as the Lily Lake Trail retroactive permit and the Latitude 39 project. These projects also daylighted multiple challenges to resolve going forward regarding sustainable recreation and VMT implementation.
 - Completed the Waldorf Astoria Lake Tahoe project revision with a unanimous vote of the Governing Board.
 - Renewed focus on community engagement is both challenge and opportunity for the future.
 - Operating teams successfully managed the building during a record snow year and Finance delivered a clean financial audit.
 - Legal staff shepherded multiple challenges and a significant improvement in the rules of procedure to allow continued remote meetings.
 - Improved review times in Permitting and Compliance, moved forward with our permit efficiency project, and created a new public service team to enhance information services.
 - Hit key milestones in year one of the Tahoe Keys Weeds Test project and myriad other EIP projects in partnership with the Tahoe Interagency Executive Steering Committee.
3. Demonstration of the core competencies which all TRPA employees have included in their performance plans;

I have been mindful of the qualities that staff, board members, and stakeholders said they wanted to see in TRPA's next Executive Director and have worked diligently to live up to those expectations. The Agency's core competencies of self development, collaborative relationships and teamwork, initiative and results focus, communication, people and Agency leadership, critical thinking, and continuous improvement have also been guideposts in my new position. I've scoured leadership articles and books, interviewed successful leaders, collaborated with Executive team members, and vetted concepts with board members to develop my skills and push forward.



Word cloud from the Executive Director recruitment materials.

4. Input from stakeholders and partner agencies that demonstrates a good faith effort at communication, coordination, and collaboration.

I am proud to report that TRPA is enjoying a renewed spirit of collaboration with multiple partners as a result of outreach and engagement over the last six months, particularly with the California Tahoe Conservancy and the Tahoe Transportation District. Examples of other key stakeholder engagement work includes engagement with the following:

- Washoe Tribal Chair Serrell Smokey
- USFS Forest Supervisor and staff
- CA Tahoe Conservancy Director and staff
- NV Division of State Lands Administrator and Staff
- Tahoe Science Advisory Council
- All 6 local government representatives
- Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority
- CA Natural Resources Agency Secretary and Staff, NV Dept. of Natural Resources and Staff
- League to Save Lake Tahoe, Tahoe Fund, Tahoe Prosperity Center, Parasol Foundation
- Tahoe Chamber, North Tahoe Community Alliance (formerly North Lake Tahoe Resort Association), Travel North Tahoe Nevada
- NDOT Director and staff, CalTrans staff
- California Attorney General's office
- North Tahoe Preservation Alliance
- Lahontan Regional Quality Control Board, NDEP

Contact Information:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide highlights of the last six months. For questions regarding this agenda item, please contact Julie Regan, Executive Director, at (775) 589-5237 or jregan@trpa.gov.