MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Trustees

THROUGH: Steven J. Pinkerton
General Manager

FROM: Sharon G. Heider
Director of Community Services

SUBJECT: Review and accept offer of a donation from the E. Clampus Vitus group, of an informational plaque and a monetary commitment in the amount of $300, to install/locate said plaque honoring/commemorating George Whittell Jr.

STRATEGIC PLAN: Long Range Principle 6 – Communication

DATE: May 26, 2016

I. RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Trustees makes a motion to accept the donation of informational plaque with revised language and monetary commitment of $300 for the installation of said plaque located on Lakeshore pathway adjacent to existing bench west of Incline Beach entrance.

II. DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN

Long Range Principle 6 – Communication - The District will engage, interact and educate to promote understanding of the programs, activities, services, and ongoing affairs.

- Promote transparency in all areas including finance, operations and public meetings.

- Provide clear, concise and timely information in multiple, publicly accessible formats.

- Ensure that both internal and external communication is responsive, comprehensive and inclusive.

III. BACKGROUND

Trustee Tim Callicrate brought this item to Staff and asked Staff to do some investigative work and prepare a recommendation memorandum.

The local chapter (Chief Truckee #3691) of E. Clampus Vitus (the Clamper's), a fraternal organization who donate informational plaques on local history, have offered to donate a plaque honoring/commemorating on George Whittell Jr. The text of the plaque is below:

Legacy of George Whittell, Jr.

Lake Tahoe's east shore and forest remains the last large undeveloped area in the basin due to Whittell's vision and eccentricity. A bon vivant, born to wealthy parents of San Francisco high society, he loved fast cars, faster women and exotic animals. In 1936, he began acquiring land for a vast development, amassing 40,000+ acres in four years. He first built his own sanctuary – Thunderbird Lodge – south of Sand Harbor, then came to prefer its solitude: finally forsaking further development to retain his privacy. In the late 1950's, he sold 9,000 acres which became the Lake's first major planned community – Incline Village. Since his death in 1969, the remaining lands have become State Park and National Forest, preserved for future generations.

Dedicated May 9, 2009
Chief Truckee #3691
E Clampus Vitus

E Clampus Vitus was supposedly started in Virginia in the 1840s and moved West with the Gold Rush in 1849. No one really knows why it took off, but it may have been created to poke fun at the proliferation of secret societies of the day. More than likely it gave hardworking miners some comedic relief from panning for gold. The group died out by the turn of the last century, but was revitalized in the 1930s and it is very much alive today. Today, there are 40 chapters and more than 100,000 members in the Western states. Their motto is "Credo Quia Absurdum," roughly translated to mean "I believe it because it is absurd." The meaning of E Clampus Vitus is not known - it is not Latin and no one really knows.

Staff Analysis

George Whittell Jr. played a very important role in the history of Incline Village and the region, and providing public information on local history is of community value. The text of the plaque is informative and provides a general overview of his role, however the reference to, "faster women" could be perceived as inappropriate for an educational plaque in a public location.

The organization has requested the plaque be hung on the outer fence at the entrance to Incline Beach as there is a view of Thunderbird Lodge from that location. Below is a conceptual mock-up of what that may look like:

Staff has reviewed other plaques located throughout the community and notes a practice of placing this type of information on boulders such as those in parks and near the Skate Park. There is an existing plaque located on the exterior wall of the Village Market also on George Whittell Jr. which has similar, but not exact language as the proposed plaque. If the Board wishes to accept the donation of the plaque, Staff recommends it be placed on a boulder and located just west of the entrance to Incline Beach where a bench is currently located. This location

also has a view of Thunderbird Lodge and is more appropriate for gathering given the bench and open area near the trail as conceptually shown below:

Other locations that could be considered, but may require additional Staff time to research and gain approvals from other parties, would be on the property of the Visitor Information Center located on 969 Tahoe Blvd., or the exit sides of the entry monuments at East or West Parks.

The Visitor Information Center is located on District property and the District maintains the grounds and landscaping. This location would provide access to a large number of persons as they seek information on the area, however, it does not have a view of Thunderbird Lodge as requested by the group. It should be noted however, neither does the plaque currently located at the Village Market.

East or West Park currently have Incline Village entry monuments with no information on the exiting side of the monuments. The plaque could be located on either location, and East Park at least has some relationship to the lake and the location of Thunderbird Lodge.

Given the very public location requested, Staff recommends accepting the plaque donation if the text can be revised to omit the reference to, "faster women", and that it be placed west of Incline Beach entrance near the existing bench.

IV. FINANCIAL IMPACT AND BUDGET

Staff estimates a cost of $300 to purchase and locate a boulder at the recommended location and permanently affix the plaque to it and recommends this cost be borne by the Chief Truckee E. Clampus Vitus organization. Should the cost exceed this estimate, Staff will ask the organization to absorb any additional costs.

V. ALTERNATIVES

1. Do not accept the donation.
2. Accept donation of plaque as currently written and place on boulder.
3. Accept donation of plaque as currently written and place on fence.
4. Direct Staff to research an alternate location.

VI. COMMENTS

None at this time.

VII. BUSINESS IMPACT

This item is not a "rule" within the meaning of Nevada Revised Statutes, Chapter 237, and does not require a Business Impact Statement.