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## Chronicles of a Resignation Foretold - Town Manager likely to leave Moraga

By *Sophie Braccini*

It's a bad situation when a newspaper article announces that you are one of the final candidates for a job while you are still employed elsewhere and have not tendered your resignation. That's what happened to Moraga Town Manager Mike Segrest when inquisitive residents read, in the Telluride Watch, that Segrest was one of the finalists for the position of Telluride town manager. The rumor spread and residents were surprised to learn that Moraga's new manager, hired just a year ago after an elaborate search, wanted to return to Colorado.

Segrest said his wife's health was the basis for his desire to leave Moraga. The Town Council was aware of his wife's precarious health situation, but had not heard of his application to Telluride. When contacted, council members confirmed their support of Segrest and stressed that a good solution will be found both for the town and the Segrests.

"I have not decided what I will ultimately do," says Segrest, "I will talk with my wife and with the Council." He explained that upon moving to Moraga his wife started suffering from respiratory problems that were first attributed to mold in the rental house the two were occupying in the Country Club. But after a stay in Catalina, the health problem came back when she returned to their new house in Danville. "It is scary when you have trouble breathing," says Segrest.

Moraga Council members who discussed the situation with him are supportive. "I understand the situation and I can't blame him for doing what he has to do," said Mayor Ken Chew, "he is a great town manager; it is unfortunate that we have to start again. I'm sure we'll quickly find a way to achieve a successful transition."

"It is a disappointment for him and for the Council," said Council Member Mike Metcalf, "But putting his wife first is a no-brainer. It would be a shame if he leaves; it will be a great loss for the town."

"Mike Segrest has the full support of the Council. He has done a very good job of managing the Town's affairs since his arrival last year," said Council Member Dave Trotter, who was the Mayor when Segrest was hired, "I'm confident he will continue to do so during the transition period." Trotter added that the Council would be working with the Segrests to develop a transition plan, recruit and hire a new Town Manager. At this point no decisions have been made regarding the transition. Any resolve on that process will be made by the full Town Council at an upcoming public meeting, probably in June.

Metcalf added that the whole story speaks for keeping the names of applicants confidential. "In the private sector anonymity is granted, and it should be the same in the public sector," he said. He added that when the Town was engaged in its last recruitment process, the consultant warned them that making the process public would immediately guarantee that they would lose half of their pool of candidates.

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