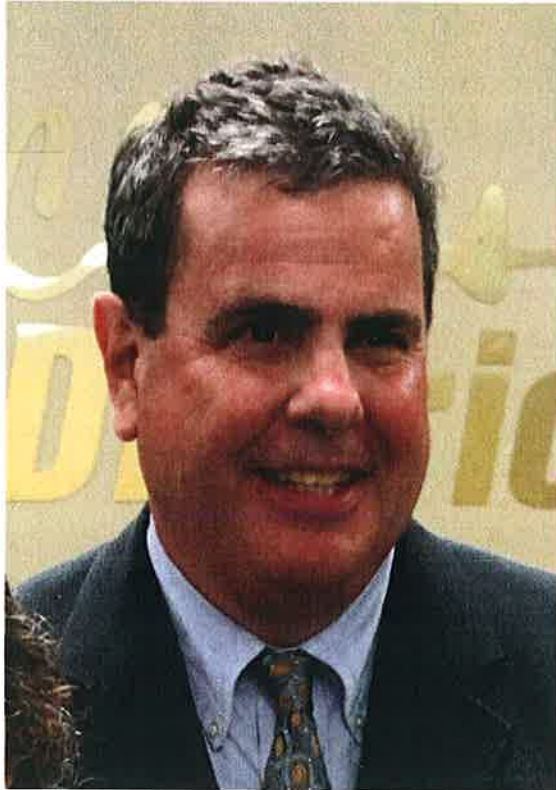


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LOCAL NEWS

Hermosa Beach city manager will step down, become CEO of Beach Cities Health District



Tom Bakaly will leave his post as Hermosa Beach city manager on Nov. 1 to become CEO of the Beach Cities Health District. (Daily Breeze staff file photo)

By [KELCIE PEGHER](#) | kpegher@scng.com and [MEGAN BARNES](#) | mbarnes@scng.com |
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The top administrator in Hermosa Beach for the past four years will step down in just over two months to take the helm at the neighboring Beach Cities Health District, officials announced Tuesday.

Tom Bakaly was selected among hundreds of applicants to become CEO of the preventative health agency, which was formed 60 years ago to build a hospital

serving the beach cities but now supports health programs in Redondo Beach, Hermosa Beach and Manhattan Beach.

Bakaly will replace Susan Burden, who [announced in March that she would retire](#) on Oct. 31. His three-year contract includes a base salary of \$235,000 with no limit set for annual raises.

Jane Diehl, board president for the Beach Cities Health District, called Bakaly “uniquely qualified” to make an immediate impact on the district. He served as an ambassador when the U.S. surgeon general visited the area this summer and worked to oversee smoke-free policies in Hermosa Beach, which some have complained lack enforcement and others claim are too far-reaching.

Though the city approved a smoking ban in 2011, the city began to tighten up the language of its ordinance this summer, expanding the ban on smoking downtown, at beaches and public gatherings in the entire city. Violators are subject to fines ranging from \$100 to \$500.

Bakaly was hired as city manager of Hermosa Beach in 2012 after working in Park City, Utah. One of the first meetings he scheduled when he arrived to the city was with Burden, he said.

“I immediately connected with the organization’s values and developed an appreciation for the critical work and services they provide throughout our community,” he said in a statement.

Bakaly assumes the reins of the Redondo Beach-based health district on Nov. 1.

He said the position shares similarities with his current role, from financial management, to focusing on quality of life issues, and that the greatest lesson he will take with him from Hermosa Beach is to focus on community engagement.

“We were able to successfully develop a community decision-making tool and I think that’ll line up well with how Beach Cities Health District makes decisions,” he said. “Another similarity is trying to help people and make life better for them.”

In Park City, Bakaly worked closely on the annexation of a large-scale community hospital into the city.

The experience, he said, as well as working with the Beach Cities Health District on the smoking ban and other initiatives have helped shape his public health perspective.

Hermosa Beach Mayor Hany Fangary said officials were expected to discuss the position at Tuesday night’s City Council. Though that session will be private, Fangary said the search for a new city manager will be transparent.

Bakaly became Hermosa Beach's top administrator after the departure of Steve Burrell, who served the city for 18 years. John Jalili filled in as an interim city manager for five months while the city searched for a replacement. According to his most recent contract, Bakaly earns \$198,252 a year in salary as city manager. He began with a base salary of \$185,000.

Burden is leaving the Beach Cities Health District making \$259,000. The agency has an operating budget of about \$11 million.

Bakaly, who lives in Hermosa Beach, said he will continue to live in his community.

"We're looking forward to staying in the South Bay and, for me, continuing to do work that positively impacts the health and well-being of us all in the beach cities."