

THE MORNING AFTER

TOWN OF ROSS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Volume 7 | Issue 11 | December 2013

Mayor's Corner



Beach Kuhl

Usually work slows down over the holidays as people take trips to visit friends and relatives, but our town's work has only increased. The Council has several major initiatives underway that will begin in earnest after the New Year.

In early 2014 we'll be dealing with arranging the details of the new organizational relationship of the Town and Ross Recreation incorporating actions to provide community recreation services through a Town department. Also we will consider potential adjustments to the rules concerning floor area ratio and in particular whether garages should be counted toward floor area ratio. And work will be underway to complete the Fiscal Year 2015 budget.

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HIGHLIGHTS

2. Chief Meagor Recognition
3. Planning
3. Creek Violations
4. Public Safety
4. Liz Welsh Recognition
4. Building/Fire Code Ordinances
4. Flood Insurance Premiums
5. Calendar

Ross Recreation to be Town Department



The Council met November 21st and discussed providing recreational services in Ross. Specifically the Council considered what organizational structure it wanted to implement to provide Town recreation services. The Council was provided with three options for consideration.

1. Incorporate current RPRC operations as a Town operating department;
2. Initiate action to legally separate RPRC operations from the Town either as a:
 - Government sponsored non-profit organization or
 - A private non-profit

In addition, the Council was provided with an independent professional consultant report entitled "[Ross Parks and Recreation Organizational Assessment Report](#)" that reviewed current Ross Recreation operations. This report included an analysis of current RPRC operations including:

- RPRC organizational structure and operations including existing staffing and financial operations analysis
- Organization model where recreation services are provided through a town operating department and
- Benefits, challenges, risks and issues to implementation as a Town department.

A key report conclusion was:

"Based on this review, the conclusion is the Town of Ross can incorporate RR into town operations as a self-supporting "Enterprise Fund"

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Meanwhile, the Council has completed a great deal of work in the last year with the assistance and support of staff and we should all thank them.



Before leaving 2013, I have to thank the Ross Property Owners Association (RPOA) for the garlands on Lagunitas Road Bridge and the wreaths on downtown businesses. We owe our thanks to the RPOA for the many things they continue to do each and every year for the community. This includes donations for capital items and making suggestions for Town improvements.

All of us, working together, can continue to improve this already great community. Happy holidays to all for an enjoyable holiday season and best wishes for the New Year. ■

Ross Recreation to be Town Department

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After hearing from the public at this meeting and previous meetings, the Council passed a motion and directed the Town Manager to take the

necessary steps to incorporate Ross Parks and Recreation as a Town operating department. As the staff report provided to the Council indicated this action will take considerable staff time and independent contractor resources (i.e., accountant, auditor) and Town Attorney resources to implement. Staff will initiate work with the Town Attorney to start the transition process necessary to implement this policy action in December. Work to commence the transition process will begin early in 2014. ■

Fire Chief Roger Meagor Commended



Mayor Beach Kuhl presented Ross Valley Fire Chief Roger Meagor with a Resolution thanking him for his many years of service to the Ross Valley community. Chief

Meagor will retire at the end of this year.

He began as a volunteer with the Town of San Anselmo Fire Department in 1979 and held every rank in the department from Firefighter, Captain, Battalion Chief to becoming Fire Chief in 2005. During his tenure, Chief Meagor successfully negotiating the merger of the Town of Ross Fire Department with the Ross Valley Fire Department through a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) in 2012, attended up to 96 Council meetings per year, and was instrumental in coordinating the recovery efforts following the floods of 1982 and 2005, including the repair and remodel of the San Anselmo Fire Station following the 2005 flood. His dedicated service to the Ross Valley community will be missed. ■



COUNCIL ADOPTS NEW EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

The Town's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) has been updated to meet State of California standardized emergency management requirements and Federal National Incident Management Standards. Last updated in 2005, the new plan provides a more comprehensive overview of the Town's emergency management structure, concept of operations, and hazard and threat summaries. The EOP will be available on the Town's website soon.

PLANNING



Elise Semonian

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the December Council meeting. For more information on each planning application, click [here](#). The minutes for this meeting will be available on the website www.townofross.org after adoption at the January 2014 Council meeting. An audio file of this meeting will be posted on the [website](#) the day after the meeting.

Address: 8 Woodside Way

Applicant: Drew & Miriam Manning

Council Action: Approved

Vote (for/against/abstain): 4-0-1 (Hoertkorn recused)

Address: 122 Winding Way

Applicant: Mr. & Mrs. John Shalavi

Council Action: Approved

Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Address: 191 Lagunitas Road

Applicant: Paris Royo

Council Action: Approved in part

Vote (for/against/abstain): 3-0-2 (Hoertkorn, Small recused)

Address: 83 Bolinas Avenue

Applicant: Trevor & Billie Buck

Council Action: Approved

Vote (for/against/abstain): 4-0-1 (Russell recused)

Address: 58 Shady Lane

Applicant: Richard & Jennifer Kaufman

Council Action: Approved

Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Report of Residential Building Records Ordinance Passed

The Council adopted an Ordinance amending Chapter 15.32 of the Ross Municipal Code that would require the correction of unlawful improvements or conditions identified in a Residential Building Record resale inspection report. This provision will help reduce current staff time and financial resources to get voluntary property owner compliance with items identified in the Residential Building Record report.

CREEK VIOLATIONS



You may not know the Town requires design review for any construction, improvements, grading, filling or other site work within twenty-five feet of the top bank of a creek, whether



or not a building permit is required (See [Ross Municipal Code Section 18.41.020\(d\)](#)). Regulated work includes construction of low walls, on-grade patios or decks, and even play structures. "Creeks" include Corte Madera and Ross Creeks, seasonal streams and swales, and even culverts that follow the general historic course of a creek.

The Town has a number of reasons for requiring design review for creek work, even if it seems minor in nature. The Town seeks to protect the natural beauty of the creeks as well as fish and wildlife, including federally-listed endangered steelhead trout. Creekside trees and plants filter out pollutants and provide habitat. Creek trees provide shade necessary to preserve the cool water temperatures that steelhead need to survive. The Town creek regulations were also established to prevent erosion, flooding, and protect water quality. Poorly designed work near creeks may cause future erosion for the property owner or neighboring properties.



If you would like more information regarding what permits may be required for a creek project, contact the Town Planning Department. In addition to Town permits, you may need to obtain permission from federal, state, and

regional agencies. The Town of Ross is a member of the Marin County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program (MCSTOPPP). MCSTOPPP holds informal monthly meetings to allow residents to share prospective creek projects with regulators from the permitting agencies who give free input and help guide residents through the permit process. For information about the meetings, or to be placed on the agenda, call MCSTOPPP at (415) 473-3202. For further information, see the [Marin County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program](#) (MCSTOPPP) web site and [Creek Care Guide](#), and also the [Friends of Corte Madera Creek Watershed](#) web site.



NEW MARIN CLIMATE & ENERGY PARTNERSHIP WEBSITE LAUNCHED



The Town has been a member of the Marin Climate & Energy Partnership (MCEP) since 2007, when all Marin jurisdictions

agreed to work together on greenhouse gas reduction programs. Since that time, MCEP has cost-effectively developed greenhouse gas inventories, climate action plans, and model ordinances and policies. Please visit www.marinclimate.org to learn more about MCEP, Town government emissions, and strategies that you may take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

THANK YOU LIZ WELSH!



Liz Welsh received a big thank you and was presented with a commemorative gift from the Town for her excellent work as Chief of Protocol in 2012-

2013. During her tenure, she oversaw two 4th of July holiday events, one Town Dinner, and a three-day community-wide Rummage Sale, which raised over \$18,000. All of the events were a smashing success. The Town greatly appreciates all of her hard work and effort to make these events the best, well-done, Liz!

PUBLIC SAFETY

Thefts

There have been some burglaries in the areas around Ross recently, and also a couple thefts in our town. Marin Sheriff's Office arrested a suspect from a burglary in the Kent Woodlands area. These types of crimes appear to be increasing, so please take care to secure your house and use your alarm if you have one. Please do call about suspicious activity in your neighborhoods.

Parking

With the bad weather, parking around the school has become more difficult. Please do not park in front of the school and leave your vehicle during the morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up. We are warning drivers about these violations, but will be citing as necessary. These areas are designated for drop-off/pick-up only at those times. Thank you for your cooperation.



Have a Safe and Happy Holiday

NEW BUILDING AND FIRE CODE ORDINANCES ADOPTED



The Council passed ordinances to adopt the 2013 California Building Standards Code and the 2013 California Fire Code including the 2012 International Fire Code.

Adoption of these codes are mandatory for local government agencies and must be adopted every three years. The 2013 codes become effective January 1, 2014, and will replace the 2010 codes currently in use.

REDUCED FLOOD INSURANCE PREMIUMS



The Town has applied to participate in the Community Rating System (CRS). The CRS program rewards communities that are doing more than the minimum required under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to help residents prevent or reduce flood losses. Participating in the program will reduce flood insurance premiums for residents and businesses. The Town is seeking credits to become a Class 7 or 8 Community or better, which would reduce flood insurance premiums by at least 10-15%.

Mr. Dave Arken, Certified Floodplain Manager, with the Insurance Services Office (ISO), is scheduled to visit Ross in February to determine the Town CRS rating. After the visit, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and ISO will need several months to review and confirm the rating and provide notice to insurance agents. Any insurance discounts may not go in to effect until October 2014.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Police 415.453.1453, option 2
Public Works 415.453.1453 x106
Ross Valley Fire 415.258.4686
Town Manager 415.453.1453 x107



ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER 2013

Dec 6	4:30 pm	Holiday Tree Lighting, Ross Common
Dec 12	6:00 pm	Regular Council Meeting, Town Hall
Dec 14	9:00-4:00	Tour de Noel, St. John's Episcopal Church
Dec 23-27	— —	Town Hall Offices Holiday Closure

JANUARY 2014

Jan 1	— —	Town Hall offices closed for New Year's Day
Jan 9	6:00 pm	Regular Council Meeting, Town Hall
Jan 20	— —	Town Hall offices closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday
Jan 21	6:00 pm	General Government Committee Meeting, Town Hall
Jan 28	7:00 pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

FEBRUARY 2014

Feb 13	6:00 pm	Regular Council Meeting, Town Hall
Feb 17	— —	Town Hall offices closed for Presidents Day
Feb 25	7:00 pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

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