

THE MORNING AFTER

TOWN OF ROSS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Mayor's Corner



Beach Kuhl

A Happy New Year to all.....

2014 will bring two changes to the provision of community recreation services. First, Pam Riley, who has directed those services for the Ross recreation committee for thirty-one years has decided to do other things and thus will no longer be serving as the Director.

Second, the Town has determined to incorporate and provide for recreation services into a Town department. To insure continuity and maintenance of the high quality program, a search for a new department manager will be undertaken soon in anticipation of action in February to formalize moving the operation

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HIGHLIGHTS

2. Employee Appreciation
3. 2014 Council Election
3. Planning
4. ADR Openings
4. Marin Sanitary 2014 Rates
4. Public Safety
5. Calendar

Floor Area Ratio (FAR) to be Discussed



The Town Council encourages the public to attend a meeting of the General Government Committee (GGC) to discuss floor area issues on Tuesday, January 21, 2014, at 6:00 p.m. at Ross Town Hall. The Town Council discussed the Town floor area ratio at their workshop on October 22, 2013, after the Ross Property Owners Association (RPOA) Board of Directors sent correspondence to the Council regarding the issue. The Council directed the GGC to explore the issue further, particularly excluding garage and carport area from maximum permitted floor area.

Many of the floor area increases over the past two years have not been variances, but exceptions approved under the "Exceptions for Basements and Attics" Ordinance. This ordinance permits the Council to allow residents to finish existing areas of their residences for living space without changing the visible mass of the house.

The Council has also approved some requests for floor area ratio variances to expand or create new covered parking. Currently, the area of any garage or carport counts the same as living space and counts against the maximum permitted size of a house. Many other communities exclude covered parking from floor area.

The GGC meeting will provide the public with an opportunity to offer suggestions, learn more, ask questions and share thoughts on the proposal. The GGC committee may also discuss other options at the workshop, such as a sliding scale for any garage exemption based on the size of the site.

At the conclusion of the meeting the GGC is expected to provide direction to staff regarding any potential changes to Town regulations, which could be presented to the Town Council in February. A staff report will be available prior to the GGC meeting. ■



Water Conservation

This year's unusually dry weather is a good reminder that using water wisely all the time is critical to ensuring a reliable supply for the future. Here are some easy steps to take:

- Turn it off. Even though it is dry, irrigation systems can be turned off for the winter because plants are in their dormant phase, which means most plants require little water this time of year.
- Find and fix leaks. About one-third of homes have leaks that go undetected.
- Call MMWD to schedule a free water use consultation (945-1523).

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from the Ross Recreation and Parks Committee to a Town Recreation Department. As always, the Council and staff welcome community input as the changes move forward.

We all owe a big thank you to Pam and we wish her the best for her future.

Please remember that consideration of changes to planning standards regarding FAR will occur at a meeting of the Council's General Government Committee January 21st at 6 p.m. @ Town Hall. The committee will be seeking public input. ■

Employee Appreciation Program



Two Town employees were recognized for their years of dedicated service to the Town of Ross. Police Chief Erik Masterson presented Police Sergeant Gianfranco Campa (10 years), and Police Officer Paul Stromoski (10 years), with a certificate and gift of appreciation.

Gianfranco Campa began his career in law enforcement with the Marin County Sheriff's Office and transferred to the Ross Police Department in 2003. He currently serves as a Crises Intervention Team member, a Field Training Officer, and a Terrorism Liaison Officer. He was promoted to Police Sergeant in 2010.

Paul Stromoski began his law enforcement career with the Ross Police Department in 2003 after serving three years as a California State Parks Peace Officer (Ranger). He is the department's field evidence technician and evidence/property room manager.

Thank you Sergeant Campa and Officer Stromoski - the Town appreciates your years of service! ■

2014 Council Election

Are you interested in running for Town Council? Do you have an interest in civic issues? The next election to fill two 4-year Council seats will be held on Tuesday, June 3, 2014. The terms of Council members Rupert Russell and Carla Small will be expiring at that time.



To qualify to run for Council, you must be a Ross resident and a registered voter. The filing period for Council candidates begins on February 10, 2014 and extends through March 7, 2014. If any of the incumbents *do not* file for re-election by March 7th, the filing date is extended to Wednesday, March 12th.

If you are interested in running for a Council seat or have any questions regarding the process, please contact Town Clerk Linda Lopez at (415) 453-1453 ext. 105 or via email at llopez@townofross.org. An appointment with the Town Clerk during the filing period is necessary to obtain the required nomination papers that must be completed as part of the nomination process. ■

PLANNING



Elise Semonian

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the January 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 February 2014 Council meeting. An audio file of this meeting will be posted on the [website](#) the day after the meeting.

Address: 30 Ross Common
Applicant: Faye Coddington
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Address: 83 Shady Lane
Applicant: Stefanie & Nathaniel Cook
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 4-0-1 (Russell recused)

Address: 2 Upper Road West
Applicant: Jeff & Kim Qvale
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Address: 112 Winding Way
Applicant: Michael & Maren Bannon
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 5-0-0

Address: 12 Norwood Avenue
Applicant: Mark & Sarah Kruttschnitt
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 4-0-1 (Russell recused)

Advisory Design Review Group Openings



The terms of Advisory Design Review Group (ADR) members Jim Kemp and Mark Fritts, both architects, will expire in February 2014. Mr. Kemp and Mr. Fritts will both apply for reappointment. However, the Town Council will consider any applications received for the positions. The two-year terms are for two residents with professional design backgrounds.

Serving on the ADR is a unique opportunity to make a positive contribution to the design and appearance of our community and help neighbors come together on development issues. The ADR Group is composed of six volunteer Ross residents, four with professional design



backgrounds in architecture, landscape design or other comparable fields. This group, which is advisory to staff and not a decision-making body, meets once a month at Ross Town Hall to provide homeowners with early community input on development plans. The meetings are currently scheduled for the fourth Tuesday of the month from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. In addition to the meetings, members must review project plans and visit properties.

We would like to thank the current ADR members that have worked in 2013 to make ADR a helpful forum for providing staff and applicants with early feedback during the review process:

Peter Nelson, Chair (Chair 2013, appointed 2/10/11)
Chris Neumann, Vice Chair (appointed 2/14/13)
Mark Fritts (Chair 2011, appointed 2/14/08)
Jim Kemp (Chair 2008-2010 and 2012, appointed 2/14/08)
Eric Soifer (appointed 2/14/13)
Dan Winey (appointed 2/14/08)
Mark Kruttschnitt (Alternate, appointed 2/10/11)

If you are interested in serving on the group, please submit an application form to the Town Council by February 1, 2014. The application form is available on the Town website and at Town Hall. The Council will consider applications from current and prospective members at its February 2014 meeting. Please contact Elise Semonian, Senior Planner, with any questions you may have (415) 453-1453 ext. 121. ■



Marin Sanitary Service 2014 Rates

The Town participates in a franchisor's group comprised of San Rafael, Larkspur, portions of Marin County and the Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District. This group in turn retains an independent consulting firm to review the rate package submitted annually by Marin Sanitary Service (MSS). HF&H Consultants, LLC (HF&H) has determined a 5.52% rate increase is appropriate for the Town to compensate MSS for its costs to provide refuse and related services. Each year, the Town Council holds a public hearing to set the maximum collection rates that can be collected by MSS in the Town.



Rate Adjustment Components 2014 Component Percentages	
Wages	0.86%
Benefits (incl: workers comp)	0.90%
Fuel and oil	-0.41%
Disposal	2.16%
Other operating costs (*)	2.26%
Subtotal operations	5.77%
Revenue surplus net of Franchise Fees	-0.25%
Total rate adjustment	5.52%

* Includes depreciation, other vehicle related costs, profit, general and administrative costs (e.g., public education, customer service etc.)

This year's rate increase is due to a variety of factors as shown in the table, the most significant reasons being increased disposal costs and other operating costs such as depreciation, vehicles costs, general and administrative costs. ■

PUBLIC SAFETY

This is excerpted from an article recently featured on Yahoo.com.

If you think you're not at risk of being a victim of burglary, think again. If there's an opportunity to invade your home, no matter who you are or where you live, burglars will take the chance.



"Burglaries are considered 'crimes of opportunity' because the criminal is looking for the easy way to get into your home - the unlocked door, open garage door or open window," says Charlene Miller, Crime Prevention Neighborhood Watch director at the Boise Police Department. Fortunately, "There are practical security measures you can take to make it so difficult for burglars that they'll go somewhere else," Miller adds.

Here are nine things you can do to make burglars think twice before trying to enter your home.

1. Secured Doors and Windows
2. Loud Dog
3. Home Security System
4. Motion Sensor Lights
5. Surveillance Cameras
6. Protection Warning Signs
7. Trimmed and Tidy Yard
8. The Appearance That Someone Is Home
9. Helpful Neighbors



Property Tax Bill Now Available Online

The Department of Finance has announced a website link available to view details of property tax bills and charges. Go to <http://apps.marincounty.org/taxbillonline/> for more information.



CONTACT INFORMATION

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Ross, CA 94957

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Building 415.453.1453 x106
Planning 415.453.1453 x121
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

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
Jan 29	1:30	pm	Finance Committee Meeting, Town Hall

FEBRUARY 2014

Feb 1	—	—	Deadline for submitting ADR appointment application
Feb 10-Mar 7	—	—	Filing period for submitting nomination papers for a Council seat
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

MARCH 2014

Mar 13	6:00	pm	Regular Council Meeting, Town Hall
Mar 25	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

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