

# THE MORNING AFTER

*Highlights from the  
Ross Town Council Meeting  
of July 10, 2008*

Volume 2, No. 7

July 11, 2008



## **What do YOU Think?**

Ross resident Douglas Abrams waxed eloquently at the June 24 Special Council meeting when he said that The Morning After was not enough. Resident Stanley Stern thoughtfully proposed at last night's meeting a townwide survey to gauge resident sentiment. Resident Carla Small suggested the Town have material available for the public at the Council meeting, not just on our website. Over the past year, we have tried to open Town Hall to the public and make government more transparent through our flagship publication The Morning After, increased informational emails, an expanded website and by nearly doubling our email list. But as evidenced by these terrific suggestions, there is room for us to improve and to do more. Your suggestions and ideas provide us with a wonderful opportunity to work collaboratively to improve Town services. Please feel free to contact me at [gbroad@townofross.org](mailto:gbroad@townofross.org) or members of the Town Council with any thoughts you might have on how the Town can better meet your needs.

## **Newly Elected Council Members Sworn In**

Mayor Bill Cahill announced the official final results of the June 3, 2008, statewide direct primary election of town council members as follows: Christopher Martin, 639 votes; R. Scot Hunter, 538; Richard Strauss, 487; Don Santa, 385; Douglas Abrams, 357; Diane Durst, 325. The total votes cast in the election were 1,063 ballots, representing a 65% turnout.

Newly elected council members Scot Hunter, Rick Strauss and Chris Martin were sworn in. Each will serve a four-year term.

With the election results declared, the Council repeated June's vote and selected Bill Cahill to serve as mayor over the next year and Rick Strauss to serve as mayor pro-tempore. The Council also selected members to serve on Town Council committees and to represent the Town on various countywide commissions and boards.



*Chris Martin was sworn in as Council member.*

Congratulations to all, and a special welcome aboard to new Council member, Chris Martin.



## **Flood Control Moves Forward**

Council member Rick Strauss announced several positive flood control developments over the past month. The Town hosted a meeting of key players, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and all endorsed the Town's draft design for the Lagunitas Road Bridge, allowing the Town to proceed with environmental review and detailed design plans. A public scoping meeting for the Army Corps of Engineers' Unit 4 fish ladder replacement project has been scheduled for Wednesday, July 23, from 7 to 9 p.m. Notice from the Army Corps will be emailed shortly. Finally, a scoping session for environmental review for the Lagunitas Road Bridge

will be held soon. All three of these meetings are significant steps as these projects move forward toward completion.



### **Mayor Bill Cahill's Report**

As part of the Town's Centennial, a plaque commemorating the 100-year anniversary of the incorporation of the Town of Ross will be unveiled on Thursday, August 21, at 4 p.m. at the front of Town Hall. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

The Town Council will be holding a Council retreat which will be noticed and open to the public. The retreat will occur in late July or August. The purpose of the retreat is to discuss and establish the five council goals for our fiscal year ending June 2009.

At the request of Council member Hunter, the Council will be revisiting the Town's policy on anonymous correspondence at our September Council meeting.

This year's fire season has started off with over 1,000 wildfires in Northern California to date, most caused by lightning. The Town participates along with all the other communities in Marin and across the State in emergency mutual aid whenever the need for firefighting resources becomes critical. The Ross Fire Department is typically assigned to protect homes in the wildland-urban interface from advancing fire. At present, our crew is participating in a local government strike team assigned to the Butte Complex. Recently, Chief Heying received a letter from a grateful resident of Paradise in Butte County who described how our firefighters saved his home from certain destruction.



### **Council Says Farewell to Chief Barry Heying**

The Council passed a resolution commending Chief Barry Heying for his dedicated service to the Town. Chief Heying has served as Public Safety Director since 2004 through a contract with the Marin County Sheriff's Department. He initiated the Town's successful apprentice firefighter program, which added a third person to each shift, and worked diligently toward Ross Valley fire consolidation during his tenure. Chief Heying is also credited with spearheading the Town's Get Ready campaign and instituting enhanced fire protection standards. Thank you Chief Heying and best wishes for continued success!



### **Council Approves FY 08-09 Budget**

The Council adopted a FY 08-09 general fund budget of \$5,191,350. The budget forecasts a general fund surplus of \$143,374 and a general fund reserve balance of \$1,779,544 on June 30, 2009. Town Manager Gary Broad noted that while some other Marin cities are struggling financially, the Town continues to operate on solid financial footing. Preliminary financial reports show the Town ended the 07-08 fiscal year with a surplus of \$213,789, approximately 4% of the general fund budget.

The FY 08-09 budget includes almost \$1.4 million for road improvements, Shady Lane and Sir Francis Drake pathways construction, engineering for Lagunitas Road Bridge reconstruction, and development

of a downtown plan. The pathway projects will be funded with two grants the Town received last year totaling almost \$500,000. Most of the \$432,000 Lagunitas Road Bridge environmental review and engineering costs will be paid from a CalTrans grant for 88.5% of the estimated \$3 million bridge project.



The budget anticipates general fund revenues of \$5,334,724, a 2.8% increase over last year's budget. Although property tax revenue, which contributes almost half of the Town's total revenue, is projected to rise by 5%, fees for applications, permits and licenses, are expected to decrease 1.2% because of general economic malaise. The General Service Tax will contribute approximately 12% of total general fund revenues.

The most significant increases in spending occur in public safety, which comprises more than 57% of all general fund expenditures. The public safety budget was increased 14.8% over last year's estimated expenses, reflecting substantial increases in salary and additional benefits for police department staff, as negotiated earlier this year, and anticipated salary increases for the Town's fire fighters to keep pace with salaries paid by surrounding communities.

### Council Approves New Road Overlay Projects

The Town Council authorized the expenditure of \$198,839 for three repaving projects: one for Glenwood Avenue; one comprising North Road, East Road, West Road and Hill Road; and a third comprising Wellington Avenue, Garden Road and Prospect Avenue. The contract was awarded to the lowest bidder, Ghilotti Brothers. Repaving is scheduled to take place between July 14 and 24. Contact Public Works Director Mel Jarjoura for more information at [mjarjoura@townofross.org](mailto:mjarjoura@townofross.org).



### From Public Safety Director Barry Heying

The Farmer's Market has been successful from a public safety point of view, as no cars have had to be towed away to make room for the event. Although we've had a few complaints of dogs in the market (against the Health Code) and running at large downtown, everything else has been going smoothly.

Finally, I'd like to say that it has been my pleasure to serve the citizens of Ross and to have worked with the fine men and women who protect this community every day. I leave a dedicated and capable staff as I return to the Sheriff's Office where I look forward to new challenges.






## Municipal Service Tax Approved

Voters approved Measure D, authorizing the Town Council to assess each developed parcel up to \$1,000 per year over the next four years. The measure passed with 64% voter approval; 50% was required. The Council unanimously agreed to keep the Municipal Service Tax at its current level of \$775 per parcel for the coming fiscal year.



## Planning Application Scoreboard

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications considered at last night's Council meeting. For more information on each planning application, you can view staff reports at <http://www.townofross.org/town-council/current-meeting-reports/>. The minutes of this meeting will be available on the Town website at [www.townofross.org](http://www.townofross.org) after approval at the September Council meeting.

Address	Applicant	Approved	Denied	Continued
51 Wellington Ave.	Craig and Melissa Slayen			
57 Bridge Way	James Felchin and Diane Oliver			
6 Skyland Way	Paul Fradelezio			
22 Chestnut Ave.	Suzanne and Joe Galuszka			
662 Goodhill Rd.	Donald Santa			
7 Woodhaven Rd.	Steve Bode			
18 Canyon Rd.	Douglas Abrams and Faraz Naqvi			
3 Upper Ames Ave.	Lionel Conacher			

## Upcoming Town Council Meeting

In order to accommodate summer schedules, the Council agreed to cancel the August 14 meeting. The Council also agreed to reschedule the September 11 Council meeting to a yet-to-be determined date. Agendas and staff reports are posted in advance of the meeting on the town's website at [www.townofross.org](http://www.townofross.org). Enjoy the rest of your summer!

*The Morning After is published following each regular Council meeting by The Town of Ross and is written by Project Planner Christine O'Rourke and edited by Town Manager Gary Broad. The newsletter is not an official record of the meeting's proceedings and does not cover all agenda items. No portion of this newsletter may be copied, reproduced or reprinted without advance written permission from the Town of Ross. If you'd like to receive The Morning After and other town information via email, contact Linda Lopez at [llopez@townofross.org](mailto:llopez@townofross.org).*