

THE MORNING AFTER

*Highlights from the
Ross Town Council Meeting
of June 12, 2008*

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Town Manager Gary Broad...Meet Me at the Farmers Market!

Sustainability begins at home. The launching of the Ross Valley Farmers Market in downtown Ross next Thursday, June 19, at 4 p.m. is an easy and fun way to do something good for the planet. Leave your automobile behind and walk, bike, skate or jog to the Post Office parking lot to join the festivities. Bring a backpack or cloth bag or reuse paper bags. I've met many of our vendors and they are very excited to be part of the Ross market. They offer a fantastic assortment of produce, prepared foods, beverages and artistic products. Invite your friends to "Meet you at the Farmers Market." Leave time to stroll through downtown and support our wonderful year-round businesses. I can't wait for Thursday. Meet me at the Farmers Market...

New Mayor Selected

Council members selected Mayor Pro Tempore Bill Cahill to serve as Mayor, beginning immediately. Rick Strauss was selected as Mayor Pro Tempore. Outgoing Mayor Scot Hunter was given a plaque with a gavel on it in appreciation for his work as mayor over the past year.

In July, newly elected Council member Chris Martin will take his turn on the dais. He will be replacing Diane Durst, who was appointed to the Town Council in May 2005. The Council passed a resolution commending the outstanding service of Council member Durst and recognizing her many achievements over the past three years, including serving on the Street Tree Working Group and implementing Advisory Design Review. Thanks, Diane!



Marin Clean Energy Discussed

Dawn Weisz, Marin County Community Development Principal Planner, gave a presentation on Marin Clean Energy, an alternative power authority being proposed for Marin. Under the plan, Marin local governments would purchase power and deliver that power to residents over PG&E transmission lines. Marin consumers would be able to choose between PG&E electricity and a new green source known as Marin Clean Energy. PG&E would continue to provide billing and customer service.



Marin Clean Energy (MCE) would include alternative energy sources such as solar, wind and small hydro. Consumers would be able to choose between a "light green" product, which contains 25-50% renewable energy and according to MCE would cost the same as PG&E electricity, and a "deep green" product, which delivers 100% renewable energy and is projected to cost 8-10% more than PG&E electricity. PG&E electricity currently contains 14% renewable energy and, under state law, must contain 20% renewable energy by the end of 2010.

Ms. Weisz explained that MCE would be competitive with PG&E rates because the new power authority would be structured as a non-profit entity and would have low overhead, no shareholder profits, and tax-exempt financing of assets. The business plan she presented assumes 34% of Marin customers will choose the light green product, 50% will choose deep green, and 16% will remain with PG&E.

Although power would initially be purchased outside Marin, the long-term goal is to generate renewable energy locally. MCE's current plan is to purchase wind turbines in Solano County. The most likely energy purchase sources in Marin are solar and methane capture.

PG&E representatives countered that the MCE business plan seriously underestimates current renewable energy costs and projected MCE capital investment and operating costs. Their own analysis projects deep green rates to be 30-35% above PG&E rates. Renewable energy is expensive, and as more states impose renewable energy mandates on public utilities, future competition could drive prices even higher.



PG&E also stated that the MCE plan does not adequately address potential risks to customers. Customers will be able to opt out of the MCE program, but if they fail to do so, they will automatically be enrolled in the deep green plan. If a customer chooses to return to PG&E at a later date, the customer could be charged exit fees to offset the cost of purchasing additional energy to service that customer.

The Town Council must decide whether or not to participate in the Joint Powers Agreement that will enable MCE. Given the complexity of the subject, the Council decided to schedule a special meeting to further discuss the MCE plan. To learn more, visit www.marincleanenergy.info.



Mayor Scot Hunter's Report

Because the Centennial Celebration on September 20 will feature a large parade and other festivities, the 4th of July this year will be celebrated with a picnic only in The Grove area of the Common. There will be music by the Red Garters. Tables, umbrellas, and tablecloths will be provided – bring your own picnic or order a box lunch from Eddie's.

On May 28, Sgt. Robert Tucker of the Ross Police Department was awarded a Master of Science in Emergency Services Administration from Long Beach State University. On behalf of the Town I would like to congratulate Bob on his achievement!

By popular demand, the Town is investigating installing port-a-potties somewhere in the Ross Common area in the near future. This should alleviate the constant public demand for the use of our downtown businesses' restrooms.

Recently, there has been a spate of anonymous letters and flyers sent to Town Hall or distributed around town. While no one would argue that an individual has the right to express his opinion, I believe that most everyone would agree that anonymous missives are to be discounted because the author was either too cowardly or didn't care enough about their opinion to sign their name. Accordingly, I would like to recommend that staff be instructed to discard any and all anonymous letters and flyers upon receipt. We value everyone's opinion but we need to be able to have a dialog which you can't do with unsigned correspondence.

Finally, I want to personally thank Council member Durst for her tireless attention to detail and her service to the citizens of Ross. It has been a pleasure to serve with her. I would also like to thank staff and the Council for your help and support this past year. I must admit that I have enjoyed being Mayor

and it is with both relief and reluctance that I pass the gavel to my successor to whom I wish great success in the coming year.

Council Responds to Grand Jury Report on Animal Control Services

The Council voted to approve a written response to the Grand Jury's April 7, 2008, report titled, "Tails of Marin: Marin County Animal Control Services and the Marin Humane Society." The Council agreed with the majority of the findings and recommendations of the report.



The Town of Ross entered into a joint powers agreement with the County of Marin and the other eleven Marin municipalities in 1979 to provide for regulation of animals and enforcement of animal control laws. The County contracts with the Marin Humane Society to provide animal control services throughout Marin. The Grand Jury found that few people understand this relationship or the cost-sharing agreement among the agencies. The Council agreed to provide this information on the Town's website.

The Grand Jury also found that the County has failed to meet its objective of licensing 75% of dogs. The countywide dog licensing rate is estimated to be between 25% and 33%, while the Ross rate is estimated at 40%. The Council agreed with the Grand Jury's recommendation to improve pet owner compliance with animal control laws. Ross dog owners are reminded to clean up after their pets and to license their dogs. Contact the Marin Humane Society at 506-6220 to obtain a dog license or visit their website at www.marinhumanesociety.org.

Ross Prepares for Centennial

The Council passed a resolution approving temporary closure of certain streets for the Town's Centennial on September 19 and 20.



A 250' section of Redwood Drive will be closed to through traffic both days, and Fernhill Avenue and Shady Lane will experience a "rolling closure" Saturday morning as the centennial parade makes its way through town. Streets in the downtown area, including Ross Common, Poplar Avenue, and a portion of Lagunitas Road, will be closed to through traffic between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Saturday while Town residents enjoy a centennial picnic lunch and carnival activities. The Town will send out email notification of road closures before the event, and the Public Safety Department will post signs warning residents of the impending street closures.



From Public Safety Director Barry Heying

The Kentfield Fire Department moved into their temporary quarters behind our station on June 3, bringing two fire trucks and five crew members with them. We expect Kentfield to stay for one year until their extensive remodel project is finished.

The new twenty-minute parking zone in front of the Ross Grocery was posted and painted last month. Police officers have been issuing warnings to violators for the past two weeks and will begin to write tickets when necessary this month.

The south Post Office parking lot will be closed June 19 from 3 to 8 p.m. for the Farmers Market setup and operation. A new tow-away zone will be established in that lot while the Farmers Market is held through September 25. The Town has secured twelve replacement parking spaces; contact Town Manager Gary Broad at gbroad@townofross.org for details.



From Public Works Director Mel Jarjoura

Caltrans gave the Town approval to proceed with preliminary engineering for the Sir Francis Drake pathway project. A soil stabilization specialist visited the Shady Lane pathway site and he is currently preparing documentation on construction specifications. New road resurfacing projects will begin soon; the Glenwood Avenue project just went out to bid. Hill Road, East Road and West Road overlays will be done together, as well as Garden Road, Wellington Avenue, and Prospect Avenue.



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 after approval at the July Council meeting.

Address	Applicant	Approved	Denied	Continued
20 Winding Way	Robert and Kim Kristoff			
27 Ross Common	Wendel Nicolaus and Vito & Sonia Badalamenti			
30 Sir Francis Drake	Marin Art & Garden Center			
36 Glenwood Ave.	Ross Valley Sanitary District No.1			
51 Wellington Ave.	Craig and Melissa Slayen			
42 Fernhill Ave.	Tim Wood			
662 Goodhill Road	Donald Santa			

Finally... The Town Council met in closed session to discuss labor relations negotiations between the Town and the Ross Professional Firefighters Association and other personnel matters. No reportable action was taken.

Upcoming Town Council Meeting

The next Town Council meeting will be Thursday, July 10, at 6:30 pm. Agendas and staff reports are posted in advance of the meeting on the town's website at www.townofross.org.

The Morning After is published monthly 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. 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.