



# THE MORNING AFTER

## TOWN OF ROSS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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### Mayor's Corner



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

This is my last report as Mayor, I am very thankful to have had the opportunity to serve as mayor these past two years. Ross's reputation as a small bucolic community faces constant, significant challenges which require prompt clear headed responses. Your Town council's actions are aimed at preserving the trust our friends and neighbors place in us to meet challenges. Hardly a day goes by that your Town staff and elected council members aren't met with a new twist on an old problem, or more challenging, a new twist on a new problem.

Looking back, we have come a very long way since the challenges that faced us earlier in this decade, the strides we have

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### 2018 Budget Highlights



The Town Council passed the Fiscal Year 2017-18 (FYE18) General Fund and Special Revenue Funds budget last night. The budget includes revenues and expenses related to Town operations and capital improvements. The budget was developed based on the continuing objectives of providing high quality services to the community in an efficient, effective, responsive, and financially responsible manner. The overall budget for all Town Funds is approximately \$10.1 million for FYE18. The budget is prudent and provides for a small General Fund surplus (revenues in excess of expenses). Additionally, we are aggressively paying down our CALPERS debt to minimize future CALPERS retirement obligation costs. The Town utilizes a five year financial forecast and five year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to better understand and plan for the future and provide services at a sustainable level while strategically maintaining and improving the infrastructure and facilities which serve Ross residents. The budget includes over \$2.5 million for improving Town infrastructure and facilities such as roadway rehabilitation of Brookwood, Redwood, Wellington, and Fallen Leaf; Bolinas Avenue drainage improvements and roadway design work to improve Bolinas; drainage improvements in other parts of Town to reduce localized nuisance flooding; Winship Bridge

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### Annual Ross 4th of July Celebration



Come join the fun at the annual Town of Ross 4th of July celebration on Tuesday, July 4th. The celebration kicks off with a parade beginning at 11:00 a.m. A picnic on Ross Common from 12:00-2:00 p.m. follows the parade. There will be live music, games, face painting and much more! Hot dogs and sausages by Let's be

Frank will be available for purchase at the picnic site.

#### Join the Parade

If you are interested in participating in the parade, please contact [rossrec@rossrecreation.org](mailto:rossrec@rossrecreation.org).



made in addressing issues, have enabled us to look forward with confidence and conviction that the Town of Ross has met its challenges and has prospered. As Mayor, I led the Town through Town Manager changes, and have also pushed a more aggressive approach with CalPERS saving the Town hundreds of thousands of dollars. The Town's operating budget is much improved, and Ross Recreation is a fully fledged operating department of the Town. We have just again successfully negotiated the Post Office lease, achieving market rates, and now have formalized the role of the Advisory Design Review Group (ADR). I have also worked diligently to clear up inconsistencies with ordinances that conflict with the General Plan, although some remain. I believe that the General Plan, with the effort and input from residents over many years, is our best guide as Council members, and as Mayor, I am deeply committed to it.

My second term as mayor has been marred by personal illness; however, my ability to stay in near daily contact with town staff and fellow council members has been a meaningful antidote. I sincerely appreciate the generosity in both time and energy expended by my colleagues during this challenging time. Throughout my time as mayor, I have worked as hard as possible to improve Ross. I have brought decades of business experience to my role of mayor, and tried to conduct meetings with integrity, fairness, and agility. I truly have appreciated and enjoyed being your mayor. Thank you so much! ■



### Mayor & Mayor Pro Tempore Appointed

The Council appointed Elizabeth Robbins to serve as Mayor, and Beach Kuhl to serve as Mayor Pro Tempore beginning with the July Council meeting.

Each year, the Council elects one of its members to serve as Mayor for a one-year term. With the early departure of Council Member Carla Small last year, the normal progression was modified and Mayor Hoertkorn served a second term.

The current Council terms are as follows:

- Elizabeth Brekhus (2016-2020) *2nd Term*
- Katie Hoertkorn (2016-2020) *2nd Term*
- Beach Kuhl (2016-2020) *2nd Term*
- Elizabeth Robbins (2014-2018)
- Rupert Russell (July 2016-June 2018)

Mayor Robbins presented outgoing Mayor Hoertkorn with a commemorative gavel plaque and thanked her for two years of service as Mayor.

### County Discusses Flood Control



Phoenix Lake

The Marin County Flood Control District updated the Council at the June meeting on the status of the Phoenix Lake Detention Basin project and alternative flood risk reduction projects in Ross Valley. The County was awarded a Department of Water Resources (DWR) Proposition IE grant in the amount of \$7,661,000 to evaluate, design, and construct flood control/detention basin features and water supply improvements at the Phoenix Lake Dam in Ross. The project was subsequently included into the adopted Bay Area Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) in October 2014. The Bay Area IRWMP is a nine-county effort to coordinate and improve water supply reliability, protect water quality, manage flood protection, maintain public health standards, protect habitat and watershed resources, and enhance the overall health of the Bay.

The results of the draft feasibility assessment have revealed various operational, environmental, and constructability challenges that potentially outweigh the flood risk

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## PLANNING RESULTS

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the May Council meeting. Staff reports and audio for the meeting can be found on the [June 8th](#) meeting page. The minutes for this meeting will be available on this page after adoption by the Council at the July 13th Council meeting.

**Address: 15 Madrona Avenue**  
**Applicant: Jeff Greenberg**  
**Council Action: Approved**  
**Vote (for/against/abstain): 3-2-0 (Brekhus, Russell opposed)**

**Address: 3 Circle Drive**  
**Applicant: Peter Nelson**  
**Council Action: Continued**

## County Flood Control Discussion

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reduction benefit and the grant timeline of the Phoenix Lake IRWMP project. The decision to halt the Phoenix Lake IRWMP project provides an opportunity for County staff to transfer or “migrate” the DWR Prop IE grant funding to other projects which may be equally if not more beneficial to the residents of Ross Valley while remaining consistent with the goals of the Bay Area IRWMP.



Corte Madera Creek

During their presentation, the Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District staff revealed some potential replacement project alternatives, including removal of the damaged fish ladder

and replacing portions of the concrete channel with a more natural park like setting. Residents are encouraged to attend the Flood Control Zone 9 Advisory Board Meeting on June 12th at Marin Art & Garden Center Studio, 5:00-7:00 pm, where the Flood Control Advisory Board will consider and select the preferred alternative. ■



## Results of Short-Term Rentals Survey

At the July 2016 Town Council meeting, the Council continued the policy discussion on whether or not to regulate short-term rentals in order to solicit additional input from the community. In response to the direction from Council, Town staff developed a short community survey to gauge public opinion on this issue. The survey was officially launched and announced in the February 2017 Edition of the Morning After.



Since the survey was launched, the Town received 165 survey responses. The results of the survey show that the Town is divided on this issue. Many respondents stated that short-term rentals should be prohibited outright, whereas many respondents stated that short-term rentals should be allowed with varying degrees of regulation (e.g., limited to no regulatory involvement to strict limitations such as the number of rentals per year, when rental may occur, number of occupants, types of renters, and what should be regulated (noise, trash, parking, events, etc.). In terms of whether the Town should collect a transient occupancy tax to offset the cost of implementing and enforcing short-term rental regulations, 53% of the respondents stated that they did not support an additional tax, whereas 36% of the respondents did support the additional tax. The remaining respondents were either undecided or did not provide a response to the tax question. A summary of the responses can be found in the June 8th Town Staff Report at: <http://www.townofross.org/towncouncil/page/town-council-meeting-177>.

As a result of the survey and discussion on this issue, the majority of the Council directed a wait and see approach with no action being taken at this time.

For more information on this, contact Planning Manager Heidi Scoble, at [hscoble@townofross.org](mailto:hscoble@townofross.org), or at (415) 453-1453 Ext. 121.



## Fire

### Season is Here: Are You Ready?

Following one of California's wettest winters, it may be difficult to believe that wildfire season in Marin has arrived. As temperatures rise, and the surrounding hillsides begin to turn brown, the danger of a wildfire increases. The time to create and maintain "Defensible Space" around your residence is now. Defensible space is essential to improve your home's chance of surviving a wildfire. It's the buffer you create between a building on your property and the grass, trees, shrubs, or any wildland area that surround it.

Your home may be the most valuable investment you ever make. If you live in a high-risk fire hazard area, protect against the chance of losing that investment by creating "Defensible Space" and using fire-resistant construction materials and techniques. Creating an area of "Defensible Space" does not mean you need a ring of bare dirt around your home. Through proper planning, you can have both a beautiful landscape and a fire safe home.

Visit [www.rossvalleyfire.org](http://www.rossvalleyfire.org) or [www.firesafemarin.org](http://www.firesafemarin.org), to learn more.

## ADR Members Appointed

The Council appointed Josefa Buckingham, Mark Fritts, Stephen Sutro, Dan Winey, and Mark Kruttschnitt to serve on the Advisory Design Review Group (ADR) for a three-year term beginning July 1, 2017.

In March 2017, the Council adopted a resolution establishing new ADR policies and procedures which included reducing the size of the ADR group members from nine members to five members (composed of four design professionals and one non-design professional). In April 2017, the Council approved a Townwide application and interview process for the five appointments, and the Town invited interested community members to apply. Six applications were received, four of which were current ADR design professionals, and two that were current ADR non-design professionals. At a special Council meeting on May 24th, the Council interviewed the non-design professionals, and selected Mark Kruttschnitt as the fifth member.

## RECREATION NEWS

Summer program begins on Monday June 19. Ross Recreation will offer camps and programs through the second week of August. Our main camps such as Top Gun, Adventure Camp, Sporty Girls, and Marin Explorers are popular so don't delay in signing up for summer at Ross Recreation.

Register online at [www.rossrecreation.org](http://www.rossrecreation.org).



The Ross Preschool held their graduation ceremony on Wednesday, June 7. Fourteen students participated in the ceremony and will be moving on to Kindergarten next year. Congratulations to the Class of 2017!



## 2017 Budget Highlights - continued from Page 1

replacement design; and Natalie Coffin Greene Park and Three Bear Hut rehabilitation and design plans. The budget includes providing the current services to Town residents as well as new projects and programs such as: technology – new Planning and Building permit tracking software, scanning documents, new phone system; Facilities Master Plan development and discussion for Town facilities; Bike/ Pedestrian Master Plan updated; traffic study to evaluate signal timing and traffic patterns; drainage System Mapping; historic resource evaluation on bridges; develop detailed Design Guidelines and requirements; continue with Zoning Ordinance cleanup and amendments; and new recreational programs to meet community needs.

We strive to provide high quality services to the community in a financially responsible manner. Please contact Town Manager Joe Chinn if you have any questions related to the Town finances and budget. ■

# ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## JUNE 2017

Jun 5	7:15	pm	Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall
Jun 8	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
Jun 12	5:00	pm	Flood Control Zone 9 Advisory Board, Marin Art & Garden Center Studio
Jun 27	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

## JULY 2017

Jul 4	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for Independence Day
Jul 4	11:00	am	Annual Ross 4th of July Parade and Picnic, Ross Common
Jul 10	7:15	pm	Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall
Jul 13	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
Jul 25	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

## AUGUST 2017

Aug 7	7:15	pm	Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall
Aug 10	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
Aug 22	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

## RECURRING EVENTS

Thursdays, May - October	Ross Farm Stand, 11:30 am - 7:30 pm, Ross Common
Thursdays, Jun 29-Aug 10	MAGC Summer Concert Series, 5:00 - 7:00 pm

## CONTACT US

Administration	415.453.1453 x105	Public Works	415.453.1453 x106
Building	415.453.1453 x106	Recreation	415.453.6020
Planning	415.453.1453 x121	Ross Valley Fire	415.258.4686
Police	415.453.1453, Option 2	Town Manager	415.453.1453 x107

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Visit us at [www.townofross.org](http://www.townofross.org)



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