

# THE MORNING AFTER

## TOWN OF ROSS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Volume 12 | Issue 4 | April 2018

### Mayor's Corner



Elizabeth Robbins, MD  
Mayor

Come to First Friday in Ross, starting on Friday May 4! From 5 to 8pm the newly-formed Ross Merchants Association will host residents and visitors to a community event to include wine and beer available at Ross Landing/Eddies,

pizza slices from Trattoria Fresco, a food truck, children's activities, open house treats from participating merchants and a raffle. Come explore and support the Town's shops and businesses that help make Ross such a special place at this fun family event. Please note that the first First Friday will not be held Friday April 6th as previously announced.

Residents may have noticed that last night's agenda included a discussion to authorize an additional CalPERS (Califor-

*Continued on Page 2*

### IN THIS ISSUE

2. Third Graders Visit Town Hall
2. Seeking Disaster Coordinator
3. Planning
3. Council Election Cancelled
3. Bicycle & Pedestrian Survey
4. Ross School Garden Tour
4. Recreation
5. Calendar

### Spring Vegetation Clearing Time

Spring has arrived in our beautiful town and already the vegetation – both wanted and unwanted, is sprouting up uncontrolled in our front yards and along our roadways. Per Ross [Municipal Code Section 12.12.010](#), it is the responsibility



of all occupants and owners of property within the town to trim, remove or destroy all trees, hedges, plants, shrubs or vegetation, which obstructs or impairs the free full public use of the sidewalk area or street in front of their premises. Here are some guidelines to stay in compliance:

1) Remove all grass, weeds, shrubs, bushes, trees or vegetation growing, or which have grown and died upon property which are a fire hazard or menace to public health, safety or welfare. A tree permit may be required for tree removal (see [Municipal Code Chapter 12.24](#) for tree regulations).

2) Branches of trees shall not be permitted to extend lower than seven feet above the surface of the sidewalk area or to extend lower than thirteen feet six inches above the surface of the portion of the street used for vehicular traffic, whether planted in the sidewalk area or upon private property.

3) Flowers, shrubs and other growth, with the exception of trees, in the sidewalk area shall not be permitted to exceed eighteen inches in height.

#### Defensible Space from Wildfires:

The wildfires in Sonoma County last October are a grim reminder of the importance of maintaining defensible space around your home by clearing vegetation that could be ignited from burning embers even when a nearby fire does not appear to be threatening your home. [Ross Municipal Code 12.12.016](#) requires the continual maintenance of defensible spaces on hillside lots, but every house in Ross is vulnerable if a wildfire erupted nearby. The Firesafe Marin website has details about how to best protect your family and property from a wildfire by clearing vegetation: <http://www.firesafemarin.org/defensible-space>.

Thank you for helping keep the community fire-safe and our public right-of-way clear from any obstruction!



## Mayor's Corner - continued from Page 1

nia Public Employees' Retirement System) payment to continue to pay down the Town's pension obligations. The Town of Ross has several retirement plans through CalPERS. The Town has taken a number of steps to reduce the unfunded accrued liability from these retirement plans, including making additional payments to CalPERS to reduce the debt and interest; reducing the amortization schedules from 30 years to 20 years; and negotiating with police personnel to pay a portion of the employer share of CalPERS. By making an additional payment to CalPERS in the current fiscal year, the Town will generate a net savings of \$722,000 over the next 20 years.

The Council has also been discussing time limits for construction projects, a topic of great interest to home renovators and neighbors alike. Maintaining the charming character of Ross is a town goal. Homeowners and builders have pointed out that the renovation of historic homes takes longer than demolition and construction of a new home. To facilitate renovations of homes of architectural, historical, or cultural importance, the town building official can now approve up to an additional 180 days to the construction timeline.



The Town Council will be holding its annual budget workshop on Wednesday April 25th from 9am until early afternoon at Ross Town Hall. All are welcome. ■

### Third Graders Visit Town Hall



The Town of Ross was visited by two Ross School third grade classes on March 15th. Beginning at Town Hall, the students received a history and civics lesson and learned how the Town operates, how decisions are made, what services are provided, and what types of projects the Town oversees. Town staff from Administration, Planning and Public Works provided information on their departments and answered questions. The students also visited with the Police Department and the Ross Valley Fire Department.



### Council Seeks Disaster Coordinator

Emergency Preparedness



The Town Council is seeking a Ross resident to become the coordinator of the

Ross Disaster Preparedness Council (DISCO), a citizen-based volunteer committee that works with the Town to plan, prepare and assist in responding to threats of disasters of any type.

The mission of the DISCO Coordinator is to harness the power of Ross residents through education, training, and volunteer service to make the community safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to the threats of disasters of all kinds during the critical 72-hour to 1-week period following an emergency. The committee's goal is to: (1) prepare the public for local risks with targeted outreach; (2) engage voluntary organizations to help augment resources for public safety, preparedness and response capabilities; and (3) integrate the whole community by incorporating nontraditional resources to ensure disaster preparedness. The Coordinator will oversee the neighborhood Block Captains and work with the Ross Police Chief, Ross Valley Fire Department, Red Cross and the Marin County Sheriff's Office, who provide guidance to the group.

If you are interested in volunteering for this position, please contact Police Chief Erik Masterson at [emaster-son@townofross.org](mailto:emaster-son@townofross.org), or at (415) 453-1453 ext. 101.

## PLANNING RESULTS

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the April Council meeting. Staff reports and audio for the meeting can be found on the Town's website [April 5th](#) meeting page. The minutes for this meeting will be posted after adoption by the Council at the May 10, 2018 Council meeting.

**Address:** 14 Lagunitas Road  
**Applicant:** St. John's Episcopal Church  
**Council Action:** *Continued*

**Address:** 123 Lagunitas Road  
**Applicant:** Michael & Tory Winnick  
**Council Action:** *Approved*  
**Vote (for/against/abstain):** 3-0-2 (Brekhus recused, Russell absent)

**Address:** 39 Fernhill Avenue (*Talent Show*)  
**Applicant:** The Branson School  
**Council Action:** *Approved*  
**Vote (for/against/abstain):** 4-0-1 (Russell absent)

**Address:** 39 Fernhill Avenue (*Use Permit Amendment*)  
**Applicant:** The Branson School  
**Council Action:** *Approved*  
**Vote (for/against/abstain):** 3-1-1 (Robbins opposed, Russell abstained)

**Address:** 74 Shady Lane  
**Applicant:** Thomas & Lindsey Abramo  
**Council Action:** *Continued to April 25th Meeting*

## June Council Election Cancelled

At a special Council meeting held March 19th, the Council adopted a resolution to cancel the June 5, 2018 election for Town Council candidates, and appoint the three nominees for the three open seats. Three current Councilmembers (Julie McMillan, Elizabeth Robbins, Rupert Russell) were the only candidates to file during the nomination period. No other interested candidates turned in the required paperwork to qualify. The incumbents will complete their current term of office through June and be sworn in at the July Council meeting. We congratulate Councilmembers McMillan, Robbins and Russell on their reelection and thank them for their service and contributions to the community.

## Bicycle & Pedestrian Survey



The Town is in the process of updating the 2010 Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan and we are seeking input from the community to help us develop the best plan to meet the walking and bike riding

needs for the Town. The Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan allows us to be consistent with our Town goals regarding the implementation of bike riding and walking improvements throughout town, and also helps secure grant funding for designing and constructing these improvements.

Please go online and participate in the quick 10-question survey, and be sure to get the kids to take the survey too - we need everybody's input! The Town staff will review your responses before we present the 2018 updated draft Plan to the public sometime in May or June

Click on the bicycle to take the survey. →



You can review the 2010 Bike and Ped Master Plan and the draft 2018 update at our Town's website at <https://www.townofross.org/publicworks/page/bicycle-and-pedestrian-plan>.

## Council Approves Preschool Transfer

At the April 5th Council meeting, the Town Council approved the transfer of the Ross Preschool to the Marin International School, a non-profit managed by the current Preschool Director, David Hughes. David is a Ross native with a strong background in early childhood education. The transfer will allow greater flexibility in staffing and will help to enable the services offered by the program. The transfer has received the enthusiastic support of the current preschool parents. The Ross Preschool is scheduled to transfer effective August 1, 2018.



David Hughes



# Beyond THE GARDEN GATE



Photo by Eric Horner

**20th Biennial Ross Garden Tour**  
**Saturday, May 12, 2018**  
**9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

Join us for the 20th Biennial “Beyond the Golden Gate” Ross Garden Tour! As in years past, the variety and beauty of the gardens are sure to deliver an afternoon of inspiration and delight for garden enthusiasts of all kinds.

We hope you’ll enjoy the four exquisite properties on this year’s tour, along with lunch and refreshments at our Garden Tour Marketplace on Ross Common, and an array

of local merchants for your shopping pleasure.

Tickets are available online at <http://rossgardentour.org/tickets/> for \$50 and also available for purchase at the event for \$60. Beyond the Garden Gate is a biennial fundraiser for the Fine Arts programs at Ross School, a public K-8 school. We thank you sincerely for supporting the Ross Garden Tour and the many children at Ross School and we look forward to seeing you on May 12th!

For more information or to preview this year’s gardens, go to [www.rossgardentour.org](http://www.rossgardentour.org). If you have any questions please contact [chair@rossgardentour.org](mailto:chair@rossgardentour.org).

## RECREATION NEWS

The Ross Recreation youth basketball program completed the season in March with playoff games at the Ross School gym. Congratulations to all of the participants on a fun season. The players enjoyed support from a large group of fans throughout the day.



Parents & friends cheer on the players

The annual Ross Valley Little League opening day parade was held on Saturday, March 10. The parade began at Ross Common and ended at Bacich School, where the opening ceremony was held. The colorful event included RVLL teams riding in trucks decorated in team themes.



Team Magic with their championship hardware



### Summer Program Registration

Registration is open for the Ross Recreation summer program. Camps and activities will begin the last week of June. Top Gun Sports Camp, Adventure Camp, Sporty Girls, Camp Safari, Marin Explorers and Gone Fishin’ offer a wide variety of summer fun. Once again we will be conducting our popular basketball and field hockey camps for middle school girls in early to mid August.

**Come and join the fun! Register for programs at [rossrecreation.org](http://rossrecreation.org).**

# ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## APRIL 2018

Apr 5*	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall ( <i>*on special date</i> )
Apr 9	7:15	pm	Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall
Apr 24	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall
Apr 25	8:30	am	Special Council Meeting Annual Budget Workshop, Town Hall

## MAY 2018

May 7	7:15	pm	Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall
May 10	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
May 12	9:00	am	Ross School Garden Tour, Ross Common ( <i>see Page 4 for details</i> )
May 22	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall
May 28	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for Memorial Day

## JUNE 2018

Jun 11	7:15	pm	Ross Property Owners Association Meeting, Town Hall
Jun 14	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
Jun 26	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

## RECURRING EVENTS

Thursdays, May - October      Ross Farm Stand - *BEGINS MAY 3rd*, 11:30 am - 7:30 pm, Ross Common

## CONTACT US

Administration	415.453.1453 x105	Public Works Director	415.453.1453 x115
Building & Public Works	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)



We welcome suggestions for future issues. Email [llopez@townofross.org](mailto:llopez@townofross.org)

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