

THE MORNING AFTER

TOWN OF ROSS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Volume 14 | Issue 8 | August 2020

Mayor's Corner



Julie McMillan
Mayor

School reopenings are delayed due to the pandemic. Ross School is exploring ways to conduct distance learning, including holding some classes on the Ross Common, when it is safe to open.

(Outside areas are safer than inside classrooms.) Along those lines, last night we reconsidered whether to continue to allow dogs on the grove area of the Common. Last month Council attempted to reach a compromise by limiting the hours that dogs would be allowed there. Unfortunately, this result failed to support Ross School holding classes in the grove, because sanitation problems from dogs remain.

Despite the multiple challenges with COVID-

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Modernizing Town Civic Center Buildings

At the August Town Council meeting, the Town Council and staff began the discussion of what facilities the Town needs to update and modernize for the future ([see Council staff report](#)).



The public safety building which includes police, fire, and paramedics was originally constructed in 1927 (93 years ago). The current building is physically and functionally obsolete and has exceeded

the limits of its life expectancy with numerous structural deficiencies. In addition, the building is not compliant with Essential Service Act (ESA) requirements for public safety buildings. A building consultant found it would be cost prohibitive to correct the issues related to seismic and flooding non-compliance issues. Given the numerous deficiencies, the cost of re-construction could easily equal or exceed the cost of building a new facility.

The question before the Town Council and community is what facilities (police, fire, paramedic, administrative) should the Town update and modernize to serve the community efficiently and professionally for the next 30 to 50 years? The Town hired Mary McGrath Architects, who specializes in public safety and civic buildings, to develop a high level conceptual site plan for various building options along with a rough cost estimate for each option. Facility replacement costs ranged from \$12.2 million to \$28.4 million depending on the facilities the Town decides to rebuild. The low-end cost is if only the police station and administrative facilities are built. The high-end cost also includes building a fire station and paramedic facilities. In a couple of years, the Town should have approximately \$7 million available to contribute to the facilities. As a result, a new tax measure will likely be needed to fund any of the options with any new tax measure requiring two-thirds voter approval to pass.

In 2019, the Ross Valley Fire Department (RVFD) and Town contracted with Citygate Associates to assess the services provided by each of the four RVFD stations. It also analyzed the impact on the current level of services received in Ross if the fire engine in the Town was relocated, and alternatively, if the fire engine and ambulance were relocated.

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19, good work continues in our Town. Last month I highlighted work by the Ross community and Town Council. Now I'd like to showcase some of the Town staff's work:

Our Town Manager and staff continue to work diligently and creatively to keep our Town running smoothly. Last month staff finished gathering information to develop an emergency generator policy in anticipation of more PG&E power shut-downs (PSPS). Last night we began conversations about how to address our deteriorating fire and police stations. Staff has been working on the Corte Madera Creek Flood Risk Management Project to reduce flooding in Ross, and the proposed utility undergrounding districts in Town. Upcoming capital projects include the Bolinas Avenue and Thomas Court road rehabilitation, seismic improvements to Town Hall, and tennis court resurfacing at Frederick Allen Park.



Thank you, Town staff, for moving us forward!

Last night we appointed five Advisory Design Review (ADR) members for a three-year term. Last Thursday, with Planning and Building Director Patrick Streeter's coordination, we interviewed nine outstanding candidates. We thank everyone who applied, has served and will serve going forward. We thank Dan Winey, who is stepping off ADR after 12 years of service to our community. Our small town aesthetics are better because of Dan's excellent contributions.

And finally: Please continue to wear a mask and socially distance! ■

Temporary Prohibition of Public and Dogs Upon the Ross Common

The Council passed a Resolution last month temporarily prohibiting dogs on the areas of the Ross Common that formerly allowed for dogs from 9 am to 4 pm Monday through Friday, to enable Ross Recreation and Ross School to utilize a greater portion of the Common during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Council revisited the issue at the August meeting at the request of Ross School to permit additional temporary restrictions on the Common to allow Ross School to offer in-person instruction once it is safe to do so under State and County Health Orders and guidelines. Ross School has stated that the Resolution adopted previously does not do enough to enable the Ross School to safely and effectively operate in-person instruction this school year under COVID-19 Health Orders. In preparation for the return to in-person instruction, Ross School requested that the Town prohibit dogs on the Common at least seven days prior to the School re-entry for sanitary reasons. Once in-person instruction begins, the public will be prohibited from the using the northern portion of the Common and on the west side of the Common along the blacktop and the pathway on the 6 Redwood side (as shown on the map). Ross School will provide the



Town a 21-day notice of its intent to return to school once Marin County is off the California State Monitoring List for COVID-19 and all local health orders from Marin County Public Health have been met.

The Council voted to approve the temporary ban on the Common. The Town appreciates the many comments received from residents on this issue (both for and against). We know residents feel strongly about the use of the Ross Common and we thank you for your understanding during this unprecedented time.

ADR Members Appointed

On Thursday, August 6, 2020, the Town Council interviewed candidates to serve three-year terms on the Town's Advisory Design Review Group (ADR). At the conclusion of interviews, Council members individually provided staff their recommendations for appointment to the five ADR positions. Last night, the following ADR appointments were made by the Council: Josefa Buckingham; Laura Dewar; Mark Fritts; Mark Kruttschnitt; and Stephen Sutro.



Josefa Buckingham



Laura Dewar



Mark Fritts



Mark Kruttschnitt



Stephen Sutro

Congratulations to the newly appointed and reappointed ADR Group members!

The Town Council and staff also wish to thank outgoing ADR member Dan Winey

for his years of service to the community. Dan chose to withdraw his reappointment application in the interest of providing the opportunity for a new appointee. The Town takes pride in its small-town aesthetic, commitment to nature and the environment, and the superior design of its structures and properties. Dan's contributions, through his ADR service, are evident throughout the Town of Ross.

The ADR group meets on the third Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be Tuesday, August 18th.

New Employee Updates

Police Department

The Town is pleased to welcome new Police Officer Anthony Spediacci, who joined the Ross Police Department on July 29th. Officer Spediacci began his law enforcement career in 2011 as a Cadet for the Santa Rosa Junior College Police Department. In 2017, Officer Spediacci joined the College of Marin Police Department where he served for the past three years. In his spare time, Anthony enjoys spending time with his family and cooking. Being born and raised in a small town in Sonoma County, Anthony appreciates the opportunity to serve the Town of Ross and protect this great community.



Anthony Spediacci
Police Officer

Recreation Department



Gretchen Castets
Interim Recreation
Manager

Gretchen Castets has been with the Recreation Department for the past three years serving as Administrative Assistant. Effective August 10th, she stepped into the role of Interim Recreation Manager assuming many of the duties held by Mike Armstrong who recently retired. Gretchen is a native of Marin, she holds a BA from UC Santa Cruz and an MBA from Dominican University. She spent close to a decade working as a preschool teacher and also as a Head Teacher working directly with staff, children and families. She loves working with the Ross community and is excited to explore new and creative ways to engage the youth and adult populations in Recreation. In her downtime, Gretchen enjoys taking in the natural beauty of Marin and hiking the trails with her husband and two children.

Modernizing Town Civic Center Buildings - continued from Page 1

The study's findings are summarized in the staff report for this agenda item.

Is it worth roughly \$12 to \$16 million capital costs to keep the same level of service, or is it acceptable to save the money and have services provided from neighboring fire stations which will increase response times on some calls for service? This is an important issue and we will need your input. The target date for a Council decision is November or December. In the meantime, we will be seeking community input. This process will involve substantial community outreach including workshops and additional Council meetings, a project website, a resident survey, Townwide emails and Morning After articles. Please stay tuned and contact Town Manager Joe Chinn if you have any questions or comments.

Award of Contracts

Ross Tennis Courts at Allen Park

Council awarded the construction contract in the amount of \$87,500 for the Frederick Allen Park Tennis Court Resurfacing Project to Vintage Contractors, Inc. a local Bay Area company that specializes in tennis court resurfacing.

The project consists of a complete replacement of the 2 Tennis Courts surfaces at the south end of Frederick Allen Park.



The courts were last resurfaced in 2011 by a different contractor and are cracked in many places and have been showing increasing areas of failure of the subsurface structure.

According to the Town Engineer, tennis courts should last up to 20 years before resurfacing is necessary. The courts will be closed for approximately three weeks during construction and reopened sometime near the end of September.

2020 Pavement Rehabilitation Project

Council awarded the construction contract in the amount of \$77,715 for the 2020 Pavement Rehabilitation Project to low bidder Alaniz Construction, Inc. Two other bidders, Maggiora & Ghilotti and HM Construction, bid \$88,855 and \$87,000 respectively. The project consists of a 2" grind and asphalt overlay over the entire limits of Thomas Court. Staff has been coordinating with the residents on Thomas Court since early July to ensure that the travelled way of Thomas Court is sufficiently cleared of vegetation to allow the pavement work to proceed without damaging the existing overhanging hedges. The paving of Thomas Court is expected to begin in mid-September and take two weeks to complete.

A Bid Alternate was provided for the slurry seal of Shady Lane between Bolinas Avenue and the Shady Lane Bridge, however the cost for that portion came in too high and will not be included in this contract and will be rebid later this year under a separate bidding process.

RECREATION NEWS

Ross Recreation bids a fond farewell to longtime employee Sue Talmage who is retiring. Sue has worked for Ross Recreation for over twenty years and was instrumental in transitioning the Ross Recreation program to a department of the Town of Ross. As Administrative Assistant, Sue was responsible for overseeing program registration and daily financial operations. Her ability to mentor new staff and establish department protocols has contributed



Sue Talmage

greatly to the sustainability of Ross Recreation. We wish Sue much happiness in her retirement and thank her for her service to the Town of Ross.

The second session of the Ross Recreation Summer program is underway with Lego Robotics and Fishing camps added to the schedule. The camps are operating under guidelines issued by the County of Marin COVID-19 order. Camps are limited to twelve participants per camp for each three week session. Instructors will stay with the same group throughout the three week intervals and camps will not intermingle with each other.



If you have any questions about Ross Recreation programs, please email rossrec@rossrecreation.org.

ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

AUGUST 2020

Aug 13 6:00 pm Council Meeting (*virtual meeting*)
 Aug 18 7:00 pm Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (*virtual meeting*)

SEPTEMBER 2020

Sep 7 -- -- Town Hall offices closed for Labor Day
 Sep 10 6:00 pm Council Meeting (*virtual meeting*)
 Sep 15 7:00 pm Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (*virtual meeting*)

OCTOBER 2020

Oct 8 6:00 pm Council Meeting (*virtual meeting*)
 Oct 20 7:00 pm Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (*virtual meeting*)

CONTACT US

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