

THE MORNING AFTER

TOWN OF ROSS NEWSLETTER

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Mayor's Corner



Julie McMillan
Mayor

This past year has been challenging on so many levels. I want to reflect on where we were when I began serving as Mayor a year ago: A few weeks into a novel shelter in place order, with no vaccine in sight; a couple months before the horrific George Floyd murder; and about half a year before record wildfires, smoke, heat and power outages. Each unprecedented.

Pandemic: We moved all meetings to Zoom and the Town Staff adjusted operating processes to deliver services following COVID-19 safety protocols. Amazingly, Town business continued uninterrupted, along with our Council meetings, with record resident attendance. We began to

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Ross Welcomes New Police Chief



Raffaello Pata, Police Chief
Swearing in Ceremony

Town Manager Joe Chinn has named Raffaello "Ralph" Pata as the new Police Chief to lead the Ross Police Department effective March 30, 2021, replacing retiring Police Chief Erik Masterson.

Two panels comprised of Police Chiefs, Town management staff and a community member, interviewed a competitive field of candidates and provided feedback to the Town Manager who then held one-on-one interviews with the finalists. Pata stood out as a dedicated and enthusiastic law enforcement leader with 34 years of public safety experience in supervisory, management and leadership roles.

"We were extremely impressed with the expertise and credentials of the candidates we interviewed," Town Manager Joe Chinn said. "Through this highly competitive process, we gained consensus from the panels that Ralph Pata was the top candidate for the Police Chief position. Ralph has a deep commitment to serve and interact with the community and a proven track record as a leader and in collaborative and community policing. We are very excited to have him joining Ross."

A Marin County native, Pata was born and raised in San Rafael, and started his public service career as a San Rafael Fire Department Dispatcher at the age of 17. His law enforcement career began at the San Rafael Police Department in 1984 where he worked as a civilian employee until his promotion to officer at the age of 20 in 1985. Over his 34-year career, Pata served the San Rafael Police Department in virtually every capacity in progressively responsible roles, culminating in his promotion to Lieutenant. As Lieutenant, Pata created and managed the first San Rafael Homeless Outreach Team utilizing the first civilian mental health professional in Marin County assigned to a police department. His service working with advocates, the housed and unhoused community, as well as other departments at the City of San Rafael earned him employee of the year in 2013. He was responsible for co-teaching the Incident Management System to the Officers and leadership at San Rafael Police Department, served as commander of the crisis negotiation team, served as Lieutenant in charge of the Investigations Unit, and received three life saving awards. Since December 2018, Ralph has worked as a Marin

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address other major issues, including our deteriorating Town facilities and the Corte Madera Creek flood risk reduction project. Many residents are now vaccinated.

Social Justice: In June we participated in the Black Lives Matter event on the Common, recommitting to equity. Councilmember Brekhus and I participated in county meetings about renaming Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, with Council voting in January against it (4-1), followed by most other affected jurisdictions.



Wildfires and Climate Change: Voters overwhelmingly approved the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority (MWPA) and I joined its Board. During record-setting wildfires and smoke, MWPA-funded inspectors showed residents how to harden their homes and create defensible space. Last summer, in the face of more power outages, Council adopted a Generator Policy. We reviewed the Town's Climate Action Plan, and added "Promote environmental stewardship" to our Town goals.

Today our lives are returning to a new normal. We are emerging stronger and more resilient for future challenges, with greater appreciation of things we once took for granted.

I am proud of how much we've overcome and accomplished. I thank my fellow Council members for their service to our Town and their support, especially Mayor Pro Tempore Robbins, and the Town Staff, especially Town Clerk Linda Lopez and Town Manager Joe Chinn. Finally, heartfelt thanks to Police Chief Masterson for his ten years of outstanding service, and a warm welcome to Chief Pata. ■

Farewell to Chief Masterson Upon His Retirement



Erik Masterson

The Town recognized retired Police Chief Erik Masterson at the April Council meeting. Chief Masterson's distinguished career has spanned over four decades in law enforcement with 30 years with the City of San Rafael, 1.5 years in the Town of San Anselmo, and the last 10 years with the Ross Police Department as Police Chief.

During his tenure, Chief Masterson has led the department with impeccable character and integrity, the highest standards of excellence, and a deep commitment to providing effective community policing to ensure Ross remains one of the nation's safest. Chief Masterson will be remembered for always being approachable, his generous spirit and calm demeanor, and his willingness to engage and interact with the community.

We have thoroughly enjoyed working with Chief Masterson and he will definitely be missed! We extend to him and his family our best wishes for a happy and healthy retirement filled with new and exciting adventures.

Mayor & Mayor Pro Tem Appointed



Elizabeth Robbins
Mayor

The Council appointed Elizabeth Robbins to serve as Mayor, and Beach Kuhl to serve as Mayor Pro Tempore. Each year, the Council appoints one of its members to serve in these positions for a one-year term. With the change to the Statewide election moving from June to March in even-numbered years, Council will be appointing its Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem in April of each year unless the Statewide election changes again. The next Ross Council election will be held in March 2022.



Beach Kuhl
Mayor Pro Tempore

Mayor McMillan will be recognized for her service and term as Mayor at the May Council meeting.

The current Council Members and their terms are:

- Elizabeth Brekhus (2012-2024) 3rd Term
- William "Bill" Kircher, Jr. (2020-2024) 1st Term
- Beach Kuhl (2012-2024) 3rd Term
- Julie McMillan (2017-2022) 1st Term
- Elizabeth Robbins (2014-2022) 2nd Term

PLANNING RESULTS

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the April Council meeting. Staff reports and video for the meeting can be found on the Town's website [April 8th](#) meeting page. The minutes for this meeting will be posted after adoption by the Council at the May 13, 2021 Council meeting.

Address: 205 Lagunitas Road
Owner: Lagunitas Country Club
Council Action: Approved
Vote (for/against/abstain): 4-0-1 (Kuhl recused)

Temporary Prohibition of Public and Dogs on Ross Common

The Council revisited the discussion of the temporary ban of the public and dogs upon the Ross Common to facilitate in-person school and social distancing for Ross School students, faculty, and staff and for Ross Recreation programs under the Shelter in Place and Health Orders that have occurred with the COVID-19 pandemic. The ban has been in place since last summer when the Council adopted a Resolution which temporarily restricted public use of the Common at the request of the Ross School.

The temporary prohibition has allowed the School to utilize the Common for various activities throughout the school year. Since mid-March, the School has expanded its scheduling to include recess and electives with the grove area being utilized for recess and snacks five days a week. Starting on April 12, students will begin attending school all day and they plan to utilize the grove area of the Common five days a week. The School requested the grove area remain dog free for the remainder of the school year which ends June 10. Additionally, Ross Recreation has been able to utilize the grove area to facilitate social distancing for its afterschool programs. This summer, Ross Recreation will continue to keep their summer camps in socially distanced pods which will require using the grove area and field area of the Common.

The Council provided direction to continue to support the Ross School and Ross Recreation by keeping the current temporary prohibition in place.

Downtown Ross Outdoor Dining Returns



Friday, April 30 – 4:00 to 9:00 pm
Saturday, May 1 – 10:00 am to 8:30 pm

Continuing the spirit of supporting our local businesses during what has been very challenging times, we hope you will consider enjoying a meal outdoors provided by one of Ross's downtown food purveyors (Crown & Crumpet, Marche Aux Fleurs, Tony Tutto, Trattoria Fresco, and Village Corner).

Redwood Drive (at Ross Common) will be closed starting on Friday, April 30th at 3:30 pm to allow for tables with chairs in the street for dining spaced appropriately to comply with COVID-19 health guidelines. Other seating options include the new picnic tables in place on the Common near Redwood Drive or spreading out a picnic blanket on the grass on the Common. You can also use the outdoor and indoor seating provided by each restaurant to enjoy your meal.

Hand sanitizer will be provided at the tables but feel free to bring your own sanitizing products if you wish. We ask that everyone continue to follow the County's guidelines on social distancing and wearing your masks.

Spring is here and the weather is beautiful so it's a perfect time to enjoy a meal outdoors! Please join us to support our local businesses.

RECREATION NEWS

Last year, at this time, sports were cancelled, playgrounds were empty and schools were closed. A year later, I look out at the Ross Common and see it coming back to life. One of the silver linings of this past year is that the Ross Common has become a safe place for families to get outside, have a picnic and visit with their neighbors at a safe distance. The weather has been beautiful, so grab a blanket and come out in the evening and grab some take-out or bring food from home. We love to see you out there!



Ross Recreation is part way through our spring session and still has openings in some of our programs. If you are interested in a spring program on our website, please e-mail us at rossrec@rossrecreation.org, and we can help you get registered and/or pro-rate the price if the class has already started. The Ross School K-5 will be returning to their full day schedule on April 19th and we will be starting our Holly Hoppin' Aftercare program. Your child will be picked up directly from class and the program will run until 5pm, Mon-Fri. Please see our website for more details or reach out to us by e-mail for help with registration.



Summer is just around the corner and we are ready!! Some of our programs are full but others have a few spots left! The COVID guidelines are ever evolving and spots could open up so having your child on the waitlist will give him/her the best chance of getting in. See summer schedule at <https://www.rossrecreation.org/>.

Let's keep moving forward as a community by staying vigilant, staying safe and looking out for one another. See you on the Common!

New Police Chief

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County District Attorney Investigator for the Northern California Computer Crimes Task Force.

Pata said, "I am honored to have been selected to help maintain and improve the quality of life for the town residents, businesses, visitors and students. I have spent my entire adult life in the public service of others, working to bring fair and meaningful resolutions to neighborhood issues, and know that successful community policing and law enforcement is a group effort. Our mission should always be about our community and enhancing the quality of life, by providing safety, security and service. I look forward to being part of the Town leadership team and collaborating with the community." Welcome Chief Pata! ■

Frederick Allen Park Community Workshop April 15



Town staff will host a virtual public workshop on Thursday, April 15, 2021 at 6PM to discuss the impacts to Frederick Allen Park from the Corte Madera Creek Flood Risk Management Project being proposed by the Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.

The goal of this public workshop is to provide background information to the public about the Corte Madera Creek Flood Risk Management Project and alternatives, answer the public's questions, and gather public input and sentiment about the available flood control options for Frederick Allen Park. After the workshop, a short questionnaire will be available until April 30th on the Town's website. The Town encourages everyone to participate in the questionnaire.

The results of this workshop and the questionnaire will provide important feedback to help inform the Town Council's discussion about the Town's preferred option for Frederick Allen Park. For further project details, visit <https://www.marinwatersheds.org>. The link to join the April 15 public workshop is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85052162076>.

ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL 2021

Apr 8	6:00	pm	Council Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
Apr 12	7:00	pm	Ross Property Owners Assn (<i>for Zoom link, contact jeffkoblick@comcast.net</i>)
Apr 15	6:00	pm	Frederick Allen Park Community Workshop (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
Apr 20	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
Apr 29	9:00	am	Special Council Meeting - Annual Budget Workshop (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
Apr 30	4-9:00	pm	Ross Downtown Outdoor Dining (<i>see Page 3 for details</i>)

MAY 2021

May 1	10-8:30	pm	Ross Downtown Outdoor Dining (<i>see Page 3 for details</i>)
May 10	7:00	pm	Ross Property Owners Assn (<i>for Zoom link, contact jeffkoblick@comcast.net</i>)
May 13	6:00	pm	Council Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
May 18	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
May 31	--	--	Town Hall offices closed for Memorial Day

JUNE 2021

Jun 7	7:00	pm	Ross Property Owners Assn (<i>for Zoom link, contact jeffkoblick@comcast.net</i>)
Jun 10	6:00	pm	Council Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)
Jun 15	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting (<i>virtual meeting</i>)

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Bldg Inspection Hotline - erobbe@townofross.org	415-453-1453 x170	Recreation Department - rossrec@rossrecreation.org	415-453-6020
Planning/Building Director - pstreeter@townofross.org	415-453-1453 x121	Ross Valley Fire Dept	415-258-4686
Planner - mweintraub@townofross.org	415-453-1453 x116	Town Manager - jchinn@townofross.org	415-453-1453 x107

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Email

We welcome suggestions for future issues. Email

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