

# THE MORNING AFTER

## TOWN OF ROSS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Volume 9 | Issue 3 | March 2015

### Mayor's Corner



Elizabeth Brekhus

Tonight we are saying goodbye to our current Town Manager, Rob Braulik, who is taking a position with an agency in the East Bay. We want to express our appreciation and thanks to Rob for his nearly three years of service to the Town. Rob was asked to respond to and resolve a number of difficult issues that the Town faced, and he systematically set out to complete all tasks at hand. Rob's knowledge of public finance have been a real benefit to the Town, and the Town is in a better financial state because of him. We wish Rob well.

There is nothing more certain than change, and so there are other staff changes afoot as our longstanding Senior

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### Interim Town Manager Appointed



Dianne Thompson  
Interim Town Manager

Following a search and interview of candidates, the Town Council is pleased to announce the selection of Dianne Thompson as Interim Town Manager. Ms. Thompson most recently served as City Manager for the City of Cotati in Sonoma County. Following Town Council approval of her contract on March 12, 2015, Ms. Thompson will begin work in the Town full-time beginning April 1, 2015 with a salary of \$160,000. She will spend time working with the current Town Manager in the next few weeks to meet the staff and get acquainted with current projects and operational matters.

Ms. Thompson will serve as interim Town Manager for up to six months until a new Town Manager can be hired. The Council plans to retain the services of a professional executive recruitment firm to assist with this effort.

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### Tree Ordinance Introduced

The Council introduced an ordinance that would update the Town tree regulations, Ross Municipal Code Chapter 12.24. The Council will consider adopting this ordinance at their April meeting. The Council also passed a resolution that amends the fee the Town may charge in lieu of tree replacement, and reduced tree removal fees for permits that require little staff time or arborist costs to review.



The Town has regulated tree removal since its incorporation in 1908, with Ordinance No. 10 that required a permit to cut or trim street trees. The Town began regulating removal of trees on vacant private property in 1988 and on developed private property in 1993. A tree removal permit

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## Mayor's Corner - continued from page 1

Planner, Elise Semonian, is also going to be leaving. Elise has served the Town since 2006, she has a tremendous work ethic, and we want to thank her for her years of excellent service. She is taking the Director of Planning position with our neighboring Town, the Town of San Anselmo. The Town will be working on recruiting for a new Town Manager and Town Planner in the coming months.



Also in other news, the Ross PTA will be holding an auction on March 21st and work is already underway on the July 4th celebration event. If people are interested in helping with the 4th of July, please contact Town Recreation Manager Mike Armstrong. ■

### Tree Ordinance - Continued from page 1

is required to remove trees on vacant lots. A tree removal permit is required to remove any Significant or Protected tree on a developed site. A "Significant" tree is any tree that is 12" or greater in diameter. A "Protected" tree is any tree 8" or greater in diameter within a required setback.



Town staff initiated update of the Town tree ordinance to address a number of issues, including a deposit requirement to ensure protection of trees during construction and to specify the size of required replacement trees. Changes proposed include some minor technical corrections and definition changes, and some sections would be revised to be consistent with

Town practices. The most significant change proposed is a specific tree replacement size requirement.

In order to protect trees during construction projects, the ordinance permits the Town to request a security deposit equal to the value of a protected tree. The deposit would be reimbursed at project completion if required tree protection is followed. If tree protection measures are not followed and possible damage has occurred, the deposit could be used to replace the tree. To view the full ordinance text, go to [www.townofross.org](http://www.townofross.org). ■

### Town Manager Braulik Commended



Town Manager Rob Braulik was presented with a Resolution and a commemorative gift for his service to the Town. A reception for Mr. Braulik was held prior to the Council meeting.

Mr. Braulik began in July 2012, during the aftermath of the recession and the failure of the Public Safety Tax Measure C). He quickly created a road map to balancing the budgets for the Town by tackling numerous financial issues not addressed previously such as the CalPERS side fund retirement debt, and construction penalty deposits dating back a decade. Mr. Braulik brought the Investment Policy into compliance with State law, instituted quarterly and financial and investment updates, and developed a five-year financial forecast. He instituted new policies such as the Records Retention Schedule and the Risk Management Program, and updated out of compliance policies such as Human Resources Rules.

Mr. Braulik oversaw the transfer of Ross Recreation operations to the Town and all the logistical challenges the move presented. He managed several major Public Works projects including the Sir Francis Drake Boulevard/Lagunitas Road Intersection Project, the Bolinas Avenue Safe Pathways Project, and the Sir Francis Drake Land-

## PLANNING RESULTS



Elise Semonian

The Town Council took the following action on planning applications at the March 2nd special Council meeting and the March 12th regular Council meeting. Staff reports and audio for each meeting can be found by clicking [March 2, 2015](#) or [March 12, 2015](#). The minutes for these

meetings will also be available on these pages after adoption by the Council at the April 2015 Council meeting.

**Address:** 39 Fernhill Avenue

**Applicant:** The Branson School & Ross School PTA

**Council Action:** Approved (March 2, 2015)

**Vote (for/against/abstain):** 5-0-0

**Address:** 12 Norwood Avenue

**Applicant:** Mark & Sarah Kruttschnitt

**Council Action:** Approved (March 12, 2015)

**Vote (for/against/abstain):** 3-0-2 (Robbins, Small recused)



## Nonprofit Fee Waiver Policy Approved

The Council passed a resolution approving a policy which would enable staff to grant a fee waiver or fee reduction for nonprofit agencies. The policy allows the Town Manager the ability to grant a fee waiver or reduction for planning, development and building fees, based on the following criteria:

- 1) The applicant is a nonprofit organization that (a) is recognized by the IRS as holding current tax exempt status; (b) was formed for civic or educational purposes; and (c) has an office or service location within the Town limits.
- 2) The applicant has submitted a written request that describes the public benefit to be derived from the event or project for which the applicant has requested the fee waiver.
- 3) The maximum amount of the fee waiver shall not exceed 25% of the fee or \$1,000, whichever is less.



Applicants may appeal decisions of the Town Manager to the Council in writing within 10 days after the date of the Town Manager's decision. ■

## Recreation News



Remember when Summer was just for fun?

30th Anniversary  
Ross Recreation's Summer Camp Programs



Online registration at:

[RossRecreation.org](http://RossRecreation.org)

Summer Registration is live online at [www.rossrecreation.org](http://www.rossrecreation.org). Sign up NOW to save your spot!

## Weekly Sessions June 15 - Aug 15

**Camp Safari, Ages 3-5:**

**Kinder Camp, Entering Kindergarten:**

Younger camps feature a new "Theme" each week with activities including arts & crafts, cooking, games, yoga, music & singing, science, sports, nature, outdoor and play. M-F, 9am-1pm

**Marin Explorers, Ages 6-9:**

Explore the Bay Area's "out-of-the-way" places by seeing first-hand what it's like to milk a cow in Point Reyes, or make chocolate bars at a Berkeley chocolate factory, take a ride on the Redwood Valley Steam Train and picnic at Tilden Lake. Then record weekly memories in a scrapbook. M-F, 9am-3pm

**Top Gun I & II, Ages 7-14:**

Play sports, sports, and MORE sports, plus weekly field trips to Giant's & A's games, Driven Raceway, and swimming. M-F, 9am-3pm or 5pm

**Adventure Camp, Ages 8-15:**

Daily trips to 6 Flags, Great America, Raging Waters, Waterworld, Driven Raceway, Sky High, Paintball, A's Game, Sea Trek, Stinson Beach, ice and roller skating, and swimming! M-F, 9am-3pm or 5pm

**Other Weekly Camps:**

Academic Enrichment, Sporty Girls Sports, Holly's Hoppin Camps, Kids on Camera, Art, Music, Tennis, Kayaking, Little Champs Sports, NextStep Soccer, Kids Choice/Carpentry, Lacrosse, Performance Camp and more!



## Creek Clearing Time

The Public Works Department would like to remind property owners to ensure that any drainage way through your property is clean and the original flow line and width are reestablished. Every earth ditch, pipe and creek is an integral part of our drainage system. Each part needs to be maintained to function properly. Here are some recommended tips:

- If you have blackberries, brush, bamboo or other non-natives on your creek bank blocking the flow of water, please trim them out of the channel but do not remove them totally and expose bare soil. They help prevent erosion.



- Please cut any ivy off the trees or it will kill the trees over time.
- Please remove any dead or dying tree from the creek bank before it falls. You will need to get a tree removal permit from the Planning Department. The fees are waived when you are removing a hazard.

### Creek Side Property Owners

- Please maintain the right of way in front of your property to the edge of the road.



- Please keep the ditches clean of weeds and leaves. This will keep the culverts under your driveways from being blocked, which may cause roadway flooding. Homeowners are responsible for the maintenance of the culverts under their driveways.

Please see the Ross Municipal Code Sections 12.12.015 Maintenance of Right-of-Way, 13.16.010 Purpose, and 13.16.020 Duty of Owner for details on property owners responsibilities.

Your cooperation in maintaining our waterways is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact the Public Works Department at 453-1453, option 4. ■

## Town Manager Braulik - *Continued from page 2*

scape Median Project.

Council Member Small stated “From the outset, Rob faced many challenges by the Town Council. Fortunately with his intense work ethic, sense of integrity and innovative problem solving, he has put the Town of Ross on firm ground towards the future.”

His last day is March 31<sup>st</sup>, and he will be missed. ■

## PUBLIC SAFETY

**Phone Call Scams** - The Police Department has received complaints regarding fraud phone calls. The calls come from people claiming to be affiliated with law enforcement, claiming you have committed some type of crime such as a false tax claim, or purchase of drugs on the internet. The caller insists you will be arrested for these crimes. They will offer a way to resolve the matter by sending money (via money order or similar method). They will even supply you with a phone number that is answered by FBI or whatever they claim to be.



*Please do not send them money. Remember that law enforcement will not call you about a crime you are supposed to have committed and ask you to send money. ‘Google’ the phone number from caller ID; you will see it has had fraud complaints. Notify Ross Police. ■*

## Interim Town Manager Appointed

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Ms. Thompson has over 20 years of experience working in the public sector, including as City Manager in Cotati and formerly as Facilities Planner/Architect for the City of Santa Rosa. She also worked as a Project Manager for TLC Architecture in Santa Rosa where she completed the entitlement process for a \$170M Kaiser Hospital. This experience and the fact she is a licensed Architect, will serve her well in the Town due to the nature of planning projects that come before the Council.

She is an International City Management Association (ICMA) Credentialed Manager and has earned a Masters of Public Policy from Northwestern University, and a Bachelors of Arts in Architecture from the University of California, Berkeley. ■

# ROSS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## MARCH 2015

Mar 2	7:30	am	Special Council Meeting, Town Hall
Mar 10	6:00	pm	Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting, Town Hall
Mar 12	5:00	pm	Reception for Town Manager Braulik, Town Hall
Mar 12	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
Mar 17	7:00	pm	Flood Control Zone 9 Advisory Board Mtg, San Anselmo Council Chambers
Mar 21	6:00	pm	Ross Rodeo 2015 Auction, Branson School
Mar 24	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

## APRIL 2015

Apr 4	2:00	pm	Spring Fling, Ross Common
Apr 9	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
Apr 14	6:00	pm	Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting, Town Hall
Apr 28	6:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall
Apr 29	8:30	am	Special Council Meeting - Budget Workshop, MAGC

## MAY 2015

May 12	6:00	pm	Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting, Town Hall
May 14	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
May 21	6:00	pm	Special Council Meeting - Budget Public Hearing, Town Hall
May 25	--	--	Town Hall offices closed Memorial Day
May 26	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall

## JUNE 2015

June 9	6:00	pm	Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting, Town Hall
June 11	6:00	pm	Council Meeting, Town Hall
June 23	7:00	pm	Advisory Design Review Group Meeting, Town Hall



<b>C O N T A C T  U S</b>	<b>Mailing Address:</b>	<b>Street Address:</b>
	P.O. Box 320	31 Sir Francis Drake Blvd
	Ross, CA 94957	Ross, CA 94957
	<b>Administration</b>	415.453.1453 x105
	<b>Building</b>	415.453.1453 x106
	<b>Planning</b>	415.453.1453 x121
	<b>Police</b>	415.453.1453, option 2
	<b>Public Works</b>	415.453.1453 x106
	<b>Recreation</b>	415.453.6020
	<b>Ross Valley Fire</b>	415.258.4686
<b>Town Manager</b>	415.453.1453 x107	
	<a href="http://www.townofross.org">www.townofross.org</a>	

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