



## CITY NOTES

June 26, 2014

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- 1. CHECK OUT FORT BRAGG'S NEW WEBSITE!** For months, City staff and a team of consultants have been working behind the scenes to create an entirely new governmental website for the City of Fort Bragg. The new website went live last Thursday-- and what an improvement it is! Check it out at [city.fortbragg.com](http://city.fortbragg.com). The website has a fresh look and many new features, including the ability to pay your utility bill online. There are a number of interactive features that will be fired up over the coming months. Staff is still working out the kinks, updating content, checking links, refining page layouts, etc. Please feel free to contact us with suggestions or if you can't find what you are looking for on the new website.
- 2. COASTAL TRAIL PROJECT CONSTRUCTION WILL BEGIN NEXT MONTH.** Last Friday was the bid opening for the Fort Bragg Coastal Restoration and Trail Project. The City received two bids and the apparent low bidder on the \$4.5M project was Granite Construction. The City Council will hold a special meeting on Friday, June 27 to award the construction contract. In the meantime, City staff is working to trim the scope of the project to reduce costs to match available funding. Construction will commence in July and continue through next summer. We expect that the 92-acre coastal park will be opened for public access in late 2015.
- 3. PROGRESS UPDATE ON SUMMERS LANE RESERVOIR PROJECT.** The City is proceeding with the permitting for construction of a small reservoir on City-owned property at the north end of Summers Lane. The reservoir will store 45 acre-feet of water from the City's Waterfall Gulch diversion. The State Water Resources Control Board has expedited its permit process in recognition of the urgent need for this storage facility to improve the reliability of the City's water supply during periods of extended drought. Earlier this month, the reservoir project was prioritized for \$700k of Prop 84 Drought Relief funding in the North Coast Resource Partnership's (NCRP) regional ranking of grant applications. The NCRP's recommendations will now be forwarded to the State Department of Water Resources for a second round of proposal review. If all goes well, the Summers Lane Reservoir will be constructed next year.
- 4. DISTRICT ATTORNEY FILES CHARGES AGAINST TOT SCOFFLAW.** The primary sources of revenue for the City's general fund are sales tax and transient occupancy tax (TOT). TOT, also known as a "bed tax," is a surcharge that is added to the rate a visitor is charged for renting a room at a lodging establishment. TOT is an important revenue source for Fort Bragg and each hotel owner is responsible for collecting the tax and remitting it to the City. The Mendocino County District Attorney recently filed charges against a Fort Bragg bed and breakfast owner for failure to remit the TOT collected from her guests. This is a very serious charge that was pursued only after the owner ignored the City's repeated efforts to resolve the delinquency.

5. **CITY CODE ENFORCEMENT TO CRACK DOWN ON AIRBNB RENTALS.** A quick look at the Airbnb website reveals a thriving business of short-term room or house rentals in Fort Bragg. Rentals for stays of less than 30 days are considered "transient occupancy" and require a business license and remittance of transient occupancy tax to the City. In addition, such short-term rentals are only permitted in certain zoning districts and may require a use permit. The City will be reaching out to folks with Airbnb listings to ensure compliance with the City's zoning, permitting and tax requirements.
  
6. **CITY WELCOMES NEW EMPLOYEES.** Two new police officers were recently sworn in to the Fort Bragg Police Department. Anthony Melendez started in early May after graduating from the Police Academy in Santa Rosa. Joe Breyer started in early June after spending 10 years as an officer with the Los Angeles Police Department. In addition, Caleb Cunha has joined our Finance Department as an intern this summer before heading back to Claremont McKenna College for his senior year. Two years ago, Caleb worked in our Public Works Department as an intern. We welcome all three of these new employees to our team.

*City Notes is published on the second and fourth Thursday of each month. If you have questions or suggestions regarding the column, feel free to contact City Manager Linda Ruffing at (707) 961-2823, ext. 118 or [LRuffing@fortbragg.com](mailto:LRuffing@fortbragg.com).*