



CITY NOTES

February 26, 2015

CITY COUNCIL GOAL-SETTING RETREAT>> Last Saturday, the City Council spent the entire day in the conference room at the Police Department grappling with a number of issues that are fundamental to the City's governance. The conversation was far-ranging, but came back again and again to the pervasive negativity that has infected so many public discussions in recent months. The Council brainstormed about a variety of actions that can be taken to educate the public about upcoming decisions and to increase civic engagement and transparency. The Council also made some agreements about rules of conduct at Council meetings. One change that they will be testing on a trial basis is taking 30 minutes of "public comment on non-agenda items" early in the meeting, rather than relegating all of the public comment to the end of the agenda. Submittal of speaker cards will be required in order for commenters to be called upon in an orderly fashion.

CITY OF FORT BRAGG FACEBOOK PAGE>> The City launched its new governmental website several months ago (<http://city.fortbragg.com>) and staff is now preparing to venture into the realm of social media as another means of getting information out to the public. An interdepartmental team of City employees is working to assemble internal administrative procedures for the City's Facebook page and to establish guidelines for public postings. Administering a governmental Facebook page is more complicated than a private Facebook page as First Amendment rights must be protected, there are Public Records Act implications, and there is a need to establish clear guidelines and then moderate public comments. Staff is fine-tuning the City's Facebook procedures and guidelines and we expect to launch the City's Facebook page in March. All of the City's postings (but not comments) will also be presented on the City's website.

"NOTIFY ME" FEATURE ON CITY'S WEBSITE>> In case you haven't discovered it, the City's website has a function whereby individuals can sign up for notifications and receive either email messages or text messages for a variety of actions, including: notifications of specific planning matters; emergency alerts; Bids and RFPs, Job listings, Press releases, meetings, agenda packets, etc. You can sign up for any or all of the notifications—just follow the "Sign Up for Notifications" icon on the front page of the website.

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC, EDUCATION & GOVERNMENT (PEG) ACCESS TELEVISION IS MAKING PROGRESS>> The Council's ad hoc committee on PEG Access Television has been continuing to meet and discuss options for getting the PEG channels back on the air. After evaluating a number of options, the committee is focusing on negotiating the details of a proposal by Mendocino TV to set up all of the necessary hardware and software to support the PEG in the Audio-Visual Room at Town Hall, to take responsibility for putting digital content out on the PEG channels, and to coordinate monthly meetings of a PEG volunteer group. Terry Vaughn of Mendocino TV has proposed to have the PEG up and running by the end of June.

UPDATE ON POLICE CHIEF RECRUITMENT PROCESS>> The recruitment process for a new Police Chief is wrapping up. Last week, four finalists out of a field of 30 applicants participated in a rigorous

screening process. Each candidate was interviewed by a "community panel" that was comprised of representatives from Neighborhood Watch, Coalition for Gang Awareness & Prevention, the Latino community, the business community, and the Fort Bragg Police Officers' Association. In addition, each candidate was interviewed by a "technical panel" that was comprised of three Police Chiefs and a City Manager. The candidates were also required to complete a written exercise. At the end of the day, the two panels met with the City Manager and each panelist identified his/her ranking of the candidates and explained why. Three of the candidates were invited back to follow-up interviews with the City Manager and to meet informally with the City's management team. Once a conditional offer is made to the top candidate, a thorough background investigation will be conducted and, only then, will a public announcement be made regarding the new Chief.

WORK PARTY TO CLEAN-UP DERELICT PROPERTY>> Last year, the City Council delayed action on placing a derelict property at 125 N. McPherson Street into receivership as a means of addressing its blighting influence on the neighborhood. The delay was at the request of the property owner who has made some efforts to demolish the residence, but has not completed the work. A volunteer effort, spear-headed by Mayor Dave Turner, Councilmember Scott Deitz and "Downtown Watch" volunteers, is underway to help the property owner complete the demolition. Waste Management has agreed to donate a roll-off dumpster for the debris and Bryan Paulson has generously offered his time and heavy equipment to knock it down. On Saturday, March 7th at 10 AM all interested volunteers are encouraged to show up with boots and gloves to help. Please call Dave Turner at 964-3356 if you have questions.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS>> In addition to the regularly scheduled City Council, Planning Commission, and Council Committee meetings, the following special meetings are coming up in the next month:

- Monday, March 16 @ 3 PM, Police Department Conference Room - City Council's FY 2014/15 Mid-Year Budget Review Workshop
- Wednesday, March 18 @ 4 PM, C.V. Starr Center Meeting Room - Joint City Council/MCRPD FY 2014/15 Mid-Year Budget Review Workshop for C.V. Starr Community Center
- Wednesday, March 18 @ 6:30 PM, Fort Bragg Town Hall - Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) Community Workshop on Mill Site Remediation
- Thursday, March 19 @ 6 PM, Fort Bragg Town Hall - City Council/Board of Supervisors Public Hearing to Receive Comments on Draft EIR for New Coastal Transfer Station
- Thursday, March 26 @ 1:30 PM, Fort Bragg Town Hall – Special Finance & Administration Committee to discuss modifications to the countywide Business Improvement District for lodging. All Fort Bragg lodging owners are invited to attend.
- Monday, March 30 @ 3 PM, Police Department Conference Room - City Council Goal-Setting Workshop (Part 2, with Management 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 L.Ruffing@fortbragg.com.