City Hall News

From the desk of
Fort Bragg City Manager Linda Ruffing
March 5, 2009

1. **City Hall Remodel.** Danco Builders has completed the City Hall remodel project a week ahead of schedule and with about $30,000 remaining in the project's "contingency" fund. The City Hall Annex will be closed on Wednesday and Thursday of next week to accommodate the relocation of the Finance and Community Development Departments back to City Hall. The lovely, refurbished City Hall will be open to the public for business on Friday, March 6th. The benefits of the project include: establishment of a ground floor conference room, installation of handicap-accessible service counters and other accessibility features, creation of additional office and archival space for the Finance and Community Development Departments, and installation of automated fire sprinklers to protect the structure and its contents in the event of a fire.

2. **Mid-Year Budget Review.** The City Council held its annual Mid-Year Budget Review workshop last week and received information about year-to-date and projected year-end revenues and expenditures in the General Fund, Enterprise Funds, and Redevelopment Fund. In a nutshell, revenues to are expected to fall below budgeted projections in the General Fund and Redevelopment Fund and above projections in the Enterprise Funds. Expenditures are projected to fall below budget at year-end in all of the funds. The Council agreed to several mid-year budget adjustments that will be brought forward for adoption at the March 23rd Council meeting. Additionally, the Council had a lively discussion regarding a number of budget issues pertaining to the FY 2009/10 Budget which is currently being prepared by City staff.

3. **Mendocino Licensed Contractors Coalition Requests City Assistance.** City Attorney Mike Gogna and I met with representatives of the Mendocino Licensed Contractors Coalition in mid-February to discuss their concerns about unlicensed contractors operating in our community. Among the concerns expressed by the group are (a) deceptive advertising using the City business license number (5-digit) to appear like a State contractor's license number (6-digit); (b) unlicensed contractors advertising on the City's FortBragg.com website; (c) enforcement of "stop work orders" issued by the Building Department; (d) inadequate information on building permit applications regarding "Owner Builder" certification. We brainstormed a number of ways in which the City can help with their efforts to level the playing field and eliminate unfair business practices by unlicensed contractors.

4. **Council Expresses Shock and Dismay to College of the Redwoods Board of Trustees.** The City Council sent a strongly worded letter to the Board of Trustees of the College of the Redwoods expressing its "extreme opposition" to the proposed termination of the Marine Sciences Technology program at the Fort Bragg campus. The letter notes that: "For more than three years, the City of Fort Bragg has been pursuing the establishment of a non-profit marine science and education center (known as the Noyo Center for Marine Science & Education at Fort Bragg) as a centerpiece of the Georgia-Pacific mill site redevelopment project. We view the College's Marine Sciences Technology program as a key piece of "community infrastructure" necessary to support this facility and we believe that the Noyo Center

will offer a complementary and beneficial addition to your Marine Sciences Technology program. […] The City Council and the Fort Bragg Redevelopment Agency have committed significant financial resources to the Noyo Center project with the expectation that the College's excellent Marine Sciences Technology program will continue to service our community. […] It would be tremendous loss to the City of Fort Bragg and the coast community, as well as a huge lost opportunity for College of the Redwoods, if the Marine Sciences Technology program is relocated to the Eureka campus. Quite frankly, the Council is shocked and dismayed to hear that this is even under consideration, and it points to a fundamental lack of awareness on the College's part regarding what we view to be collaborative and mutually supportive local initiatives."

5. **Revenue Collection Efforts.** At long last, the State has freed up some of the more than $2 million of reimbursement revenues owed to the City. The City received word yesterday that the final invoice for the ADA Curb Ramps and Sidewalk Infill project for more than $800,000 will be paid within the next few days. The City is still waiting on the $1.2 million owed by the State for the Pudding Creek Force Main Replacement project and we are hopeful that the State will "unfreeze" its bond-funded grants real soon.

6. **Mill Site Update.** Community Development Director Marie Jones and I met with Georgia Pacific representatives and the Mill Site Specific Plan consulting team in Petaluma last week. We received an update on the remediation component of the Mill Site reuse project and the rest of the meeting focused on a discussion of various topics pertaining to the Mill Site Specific Plan and the next phases of the planning process. We'll provide an update on the Specific Plan at the March 9th Council meeting.

7. **Fireworks Funding.** The Fort Bragg Promotion Committee has allocated $2,500 towards the estimated $16,000 price tag for this year's Independence Day Fireworks display. When the Promotion Committee funding is combined with the $5,900 of "seed money" that last year's event organizers collected in parking fees and matching grants, there is still a need to fundraise about $7,600. The Chamber of Commerce has agreed to take on the event for one more year, if sufficient funds are available. If you know of any potential deep pocket donors, please suggest that this is a very worthy community event to help fund.