City Hall News

From the desk of
Fort Bragg City Manager Linda Ruffing
June 25, 2009

1. **The Spotlight is on Sergeant Phil Ward!** In June, the Spotlight is focused on Sergeant Phil Ward who joined the Police Department team last August. Sgt. Ward has worked in law enforcement since 1990, and previous positions have included Major Crime/Narcotics Task Force Investigator, Narcotics K-9 Handler, Police Academy Recruit Training Officer, Assistant SWAT Team Leader, Field Training Officer, Chemical Agents Instructor and Firearms Instructor. As a Shift Supervisor with the Police Department, he is responsible for overseeing the night-shift operations of officers, reviewing and approving case reports, addressing citizen concerns, developing and implementing educational community presentations, and assisting with major event planning. Sgt. Ward has a great sense of humor and an infectious laugh.

2. **Water and Sewer Rate Increase Effective July 1, 2009.** Based on the five-year rate schedule adopted by the Council and Municipal Improvement District Board last July, the City's water and sewer rates will increase on July 1. For residential customers, the monthly meter charge will increase from $19.97 to $21.77 and the consumption charge for 100 cubic feet of water will increase from $3.65 to $3.98. The monthly base charge for sewer use will increase from $14.50 to $17.40 per month and the discharge rate per hundred cubic feet will increase from $4.13 to $4.96. While the rates go into effect July 1, the increased rates will be reflected in the August bills. Customers will receive notification of the rate increases with the July bills.

3. **State Continues to Eye City Revenues to Help Balance Budget Deficit.** As the saga of the State budget deficit continues, over $500,000 in City revenues are at risk of being seized in FY 2009-10 to reduce the State's budget deficit:

   - Property Tax Revenues - $115,500
   - Gas Tax (HUTA) Revenues - $126,000
   - COPS Funds - $100,000
   - Prop 42 Local Streets and Road Improvement Allocation - $65,000
   - Redevelopment Agency Revenues - $110,000

   The City of Fort Bragg operates on a very tight budget. The loss of revenues due to the State budget situation, combined with reduced local taxes due to the economic downturn, has potential repercussions on our local government. While the Council adopted a balanced budget earlier this week, further cuts may be necessary if the State seizes City revenues to help offset the consequences of the State's financial mismanagement.

4. **Business Assistance MicroLoan Program.** The City of Fort Bragg's Business Assistance Micro-Loan Program is up and running. Loans of up to $10,000 are available to help local businesses that have experienced a decline in sales due to construction activities associated with the Downtown Streetscape Project. The program is intended to provide capital to assist businesses in making rent payments and purchasing inventory to assure their ongoing viability and tenancy in the central business district. The Council allocated $50,000 to this program, which will be loaned on a first come, first served basis to eligible applicants. Program guidelines and application forms are available on the City's website and

prospective loan applicants should contact Jennifer Owen, Housing & Economic Development Coordinator at 961-2827, ext. 109, or send her an email at jowen@fortbragg.com.

5. **Community College Advocacy Group Update.** The "Community College Advocacy Group" met in early June and brainstormed based on the question "What does our community want from the local community college that we don't have now?" The Community College Advocacy Group and its various subcommittees are hoping to provide a report at the September meeting of the College of the Redwoods Board of Trustees which will be held here in Fort Bragg. The next meeting of the Advocacy Group will be held on Thursday, July 9th at 10:00 a.m. at Fort Bragg Town Hall.

6. **Good News on the Byrne JAG Grant.** The City received notification that we have been awarded $19,969 from the FY 2009-10 Recovery Act Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program. These funds will be used to offset costs for the School Resource Officer (SRO) position from April-June 2010, as the Title II Formula Grant that funds the SRO position expires in April 2010. Hopefully, the City will be successful in securing other funding to continue the SRO program in FY 2010-11.

7. **Sustainable Communities Grant Retained & Repurposed.** After three months of negotiations, the California Pollution Control Financing Authority finally confirmed that the City will be able to utilize the funding that it received for the Mill Site Specific Plan to complete planning, design and engineering activities associated with the public portions of the mill site and surrounding areas. Specifically, the City has been allocated $320,000 for planning, design and engineering activities associated with the southern segment of the Coastal Trail project (i.e., South of Soldier's Bay), the Noyo Center, and the Highway 1 corridor. The repurposing of the grant funds involved a difficult negotiation and Community Development Director Marie Jones deserves credit for her persistence and success!

8. **June Issue of "Crime Prevention Connection."** June's Crime Prevention Connection newsletter is available for viewing at http://city.fortbragg.com/police. Topics addressed in the newsletter include travel safety, safe graduation, surviving a robbery or assault and leaving children home alone. If there are any topics you'd like to see addressed through the Police Department's crime prevention newsletter, please pass them along to Administrative Secretary Kira Magness.

9. **NPDES Permit Approved with Little Fanfare.** Public Works Director Dave Goble attended the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board's monthly meeting in Santa Rosa last week where the agenda included action to approve the City's five-year National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. The NPDES permit regulates the City's discharges of treated wastewater through our ocean outfall. City staff concurred with all of the requirements imposed by the permit and the Regional Board approved the permit with very little discussion.

10. **Noyo Beach Clean-Up.** The City of Fort Bragg, the Mendocino Coast Dog Owners Group (MCDOG), and the California Coastal Commission are jointly sponsoring a "Sweep the Beach" clean-up project at Noyo Beach on **Sunday, June 28, 2009 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** Gloves, trash bags, interpretive information and bumper stickers will be available and prizes will be placed around the beach to reward beach-cleaners and their canine sidekicks.