

# City Hall News

From the desk of

Fort Bragg City Manager Linda Ruffing

July 17, 2008

- 1. Nomination Period.** Monday, July 14, 2008 marked the start of the nomination period for persons interested in running for City Council in the November 2008 election. The nomination period will remain open until Friday, August 8, 2008, unless one of the incumbents fails to file, in which case the nomination period is extended to August 13, 2008. There are two Councilmember positions to be filled by this election; the incumbents are Mayor Hammerstrom and Councilmember Melo. Anyone seeking nomination papers should see City Clerk Cindy VanWormer.
- 2. Otis R. Johnson Wilderness Park Grant.** The City received official notification from the State Resource Agency that we have been awarded \$178,238 from the Proposition 50 California River Parkways Grant Program to improve Otis R. Johnson Wilderness Park. The grant funds will be used to improve the trails; provide bike racks, picnic tables, benches, and interpretive signage; and remove non-native invasive plants in the 6.8 acre park. We expect to conduct the work next year. Many thanks are due to Grant Manager Jennifer Owen and Community Development Director Marie Jones for assembling the successful grant application.
- 3. Wave Energy Update.** The Council's wave energy ad hoc committee met last week to review the status of activities associated with PG&E's WaveConnect project and the regulatory/permitting process. The City, County and FISH (along with the Recreation Fishing Alliance, Elizabeth R. Mitchell, and Lincoln County, Oregon) have all submitted requests for rehearing to FERC regarding their preemptory establishment of national licensing policies for hydrokinetic energy projects without complying with numerous federal laws. Those requests were rejected in May, however FERC's rejection notice states that "This notice constitutes final agency action. Requests for rehearing by the Commission of this rejection must be filed within 30 days of the date of issuance of this notice." While it seems a bit absurd to file a request for rehearing for rejection of a request for rehearing, second requests were filed by all parties. Assuming that FERC will reject the second round of requests for rehearing, the next step would be a possible lawsuit in the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals. On a less litigious note, the committee discussed the possibility of requesting legislative hearings in Sacramento to discuss the permitting and regulatory process for hydrokinetic energy development (i.e., wave, tidal, and current power). In particular, the committee is interested in advancing the dialogue about ocean zoning as a means of addressing cumulative impacts, defining appropriate locations, and establishing limits on the scale and number of wave energy devices off the California coast. Following the meeting, I had a conversation with Bill Toman and Ian Caliendo at PG&E about their work on the WaveConnect applications. Despite assurances that PG&E is "working behind the scenes," it doesn't sound like much is going on.
- 4. Mill Site Remediation Update.** DTSC's monthly agency meeting to review the status of the Mill Site remediation was last Thursday. Topics of discussion included the Sea Cave Investigation Report which was released by GP last week. DTSC and the City's environmental consultants are presently reviewing the report. City, GP, DTSC, and Coastal Conservancy staff will be meeting with Coastal Commission

Executive Director Peter Douglas and North Coast District Manager Bob Merrill next week to discuss the remediation project, the OU-A RAP, and the timeframe for coastal permitting and implementation of the clean-up work for the Coastal Trail & Parkland areas.

5. **Demolition of GP Mill and Planer Buildings.** GP has applied for demolition permits for the old sawmill building and the planer building on the Mill Site. Both buildings are in a sorry state of repair, having had a considerable amount of siding removed to extricate equipment when the mill closed. Additional “delamination” of siding and roof materials has occurred during heavy windstorms and GP is rightfully concerned about safety issues. The demolition will begin later this month and materials will be recycled as feasible in compliance with the City’s construction demolition and debris ordinance.
6. **Wastewater Treatment Facility Update.** The situation at the City’s Wastewater Treatment Facility continues to improve. The facility is now meeting the limits of the City’s effluent discharge permit due to adjustments and continuous monitoring by Treatment staff. While there has been a partial failure of the primary biofilter, Treatment personnel have stepped up efforts to high pressure wash the rock media, to chlorinate the media to kill unwanted growth and to fully flush the media. A proposal has been received to drain and inspect the primary clarifier and sludge thickener and prepare a report on conditions and needs for each piece of equipment. Staff is currently awaiting a proposal for repair and/or replacement of the primary biofilter.
7. **CTC Approves Funding for Three City Projects.** The California Transportation Commission (CTC) has approved funding for the Downtown Streetscape Project, Phase III in the amount of \$1,498,000 (Transportation Enhancement funds); Street Rehab Project, Phase III, \$513,000 (State Transportation Improvement Program funds) and the Railroad Crossings Project, Phase II, \$390,000 (State Transportation Improvement Program funds). We expect to bid the projects later this year and award contracts in December with construction beginning in 2009.