

City Hall News

From the desk of

Fort Bragg City Manager Linda Ruffing

September 11, 2008

- 1. Stage 1 Water Conservation Order Instituted.** Last Friday, the City announced a Stage 1 Water Conservation Order. The order requires residents and businesses to implement some fairly simple water conservation measures that are intended to reduce consumption by about 10%. While the City continues to have sufficient water supplies to meet demands, the very low flows in the Noyo River limit the amount of water we can divert. As of last Monday, Noyo flows at the USGS gauging station were measured at about 1.2 cubic feet per second. These are the lowest flows we've seen at this time of year since the drought of 1977. So far, the City's Newman and Waterfall Gulch water sources are maintaining their flows and about half of the City's water is taken from these sources. City staff are closely monitoring the water situation, and it is possible that more stringent water conservation requirements will be implemented in coming weeks.
- 2. Skate Plaza Update.** Two community meetings are planned by the Community Development Department and the Mendocino Coast Parks and Recreation District to give members of the public an opportunity to interact with our consultants regarding the conceptual design of a skate plaza and park amenities. The community meetings are scheduled for Thursday, October 23rd and Thursday, December 4th at 6:00 p.m. The meetings will be led by landscape architect, John Courtney, ASLA, of RJM Design Group and skate park designer, Brian Moore, of SITE Design Group. The tentative location for the meetings is at the Redwood Elementary School multi-purpose room.
- 3. Caltrans Community Planning Grant Awarded to Fort Bragg.** The City of Fort Bragg received good news last week regarding a Caltrans Community Planning Grant application submitted some time ago. Caltrans has awarded us \$76,000 to prepare a bicycle and pedestrian plan for South Main Street (from Oak Street to Highway 20). With this grant, the City has an opportunity to re-envision the South Main Street corridor to create a more attractive gateway and thoroughfare while enhancing safety for bicyclists, pedestrians and vehicles.
- 4. Terracotta Warrior.** Last Friday, a mysterious wooden crate with Chinese calligraphy was delivered to City Hall. Upon investigation, it was determined that the crate contained a life-size reproduction of a Chinese Terracotta Warrior. The warrior is a gift to the City of Fort Bragg from Citslinc, the company that took the Chamber of Commerce tour group to China last year. According to Chamber Director Debra DeGraw, our warrior is the *Armor-Clad General*. Our Public Works Crew took the 600 pound crate to Town Hall, where the warrior was unpacked with the assistance of Mayor Doug Hammerstrom. The warrior provides quite an imposing presence behind the dais.
- 5. National Public Radio's "California Report" on GP Mill Site.** In case you weren't tuned in when the "California Report" aired on Friday, September 5th, you can still hear it by going to the archives at <http://www.californiareport.org> and searching for the "Fort Bragg Cleanup." The report splices together snippets of interviews with many local folks, including: Councilmember Jere Melo, Community Development

Director Marie Jones, Georgia-Pacific's remediation consultant, Bridgette DeShields, retired Georgia-Pacific employee Paul Johnson, and community members Jim Tarbell and Thais Mazur.

6. **Major Reduction in Water Shut-offs for August.** The August water and sewer bills were the first to be processed on a monthly basis as the City has transitioned from the previous bi-monthly billing system. It was also the first month that an additional "48-hour notice" was provided to utility customers. Staff was delighted to find that water service shut-offs, which normally range around 80-100 customers, were more than halved, with only 39 customers on the August "shut-off list."
7. **State Budget Woes.** The latest proposal in the seemingly endless budget stalemate in Sacramento is to take \$349 million of affordable housing set-aside revenues from redevelopment agencies. While it's not clear how much of the Fort Bragg Redevelopment Agency's housing money is at risk, it appears almost certain that the State budget will adversely affect the Agency. As noted previously, all of the current budget proposals include taking 5% of each redevelopment agency's revenues for three years, without any obligation to repay. For Fort Bragg, this would amount to about \$70,000 each year and would substantially undermine the ability of the Agency to engage in economic and community development activities.