

REGULAR MEETING of the ROSS TOWN COUNCIL  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2026  
*Held In-Person and Teleconference via Zoom*

**1. 6:02 p.m. Commencement.**

Mayor Julie McMillan; Mayor Pro Tem Elizabeth Robbins; Council Members Teri Dowling; Bill Kircher, Jr., Mathew Salter; Town Manager Christa Johnson; Town Attorney Ben Stock.

**2. Posting of agenda/changes to agenda.**

Town Manager Johnson confirmed the agenda was posted according to government requirements.

**3. Disclosure of Ex Parte Communications on Items Where the Town Council Acts in an Adjudicatory or Quasi-Judicial Capacity**

None.

**4. Open Time for Public Expression.**

None.

**5. Mayor's Report**

First, I want to showcase Firewise, a volunteer community-based organization that provides simple, effective steps to help reduce the risk of destruction from wildfires by encouraging residents to take proactive steps. Some California insurance companies offer homeowner insurance discounts if a residence is in a Firewise site. Currently Marin has 90 Firewise groups, encompassing more than 25% of Marin's population and geography. In addition to the Barber-Winship Firewise Group approved six years ago, Ross has two other Firewise groups:

- The Laurel Grove Firewise Community recently became Firewise USA certified – congratulations! This Firewise site includes Laurel Grove and streets off Laurel Grove in Ross, Kentfield and San Rafael.
- The Lagunitas Road Firewise was recently launched and is making big strides toward becoming Firewise-certified. This site will include about 200 homes south of Lagunitas Road and West of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard on Willow, Willow Hill, Madrona, portions of Lagunitas, Thomas Court, Woodside, Bridge and Poplar. Please email [lagunitasroadross@gmail.com](mailto:lagunitasroadross@gmail.com) if you're interested in helping form this site or would like more information.

Second, I want to thank residents for attending or watching our marathon January 8 Council meeting regarding the Ross Fire Station and related issues at the Marin Art and Garden Center. Some of you were able to stay the full 5+ hours to hear the detailed, complex presentations and robust discussions. Many residents gave public comment before the meeting and/or at the meeting. Thank you for your participation and deep commitment to our Town! For those of you who were unable to attend, or who had to leave early, I encourage you to review the full reports and watch the complete recording of the meeting, found here:

- Friends of the Ross Firehouse reports:  
[https://www.townofrossca.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/town\\_council/meeting/4570/1\\_brw\\_design\\_presentation\\_123025\\_web.pdf](https://www.townofrossca.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/town_council/meeting/4570/1_brw_design_presentation_123025_web.pdf)
- Town of Ross Elections Code Report:

[https://www.townofrossca.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/town\\_council/meeting/4570/final\\_staff\\_report\\_1.2.26 -](https://www.townofrossca.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/town_council/meeting/4570/final_staff_report_1.2.26_-_adoption_of_the_section_9212_fiscal_impact_report_for_forf_intiative_web_2.pdf)

[\\_adoption of the section 9212 fiscal impact report for forf initiative web 2.pdf](https://www.townofrossca.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/town_council/meeting/4570/final_staff_report_1.2.26_-_adoption_of_the_section_9212_fiscal_impact_report_for_forf_intiative_web_2.pdf)

- **Recording of the meeting with PowerPoints:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBvd1m1J So>

Thanks to Friends of the Ross Firehouse representatives, Town Staff and consultants for providing reports and presentations. Thanks to Marin Art & Garden Center for hosting our meeting, and especially to Town Clerk Cyndie Martel, who worked for weeks to ensure the room was set up properly, and the Zoom link and PowerPoint worked well.

These issues, which include design, construction, operations and finance, are complicated and nuanced. I sincerely regret that these topics have been dividing our Town for more than a year. I am optimistic that we will find a path forward at our Council meeting tonight.

#### **6. Council Committee & Liaison Report:**

Council Member Dowling gave the following report:

- The Age Friendly Ross Task Force and the Marin Commission on Aging held a successful District 2 collaboration meeting at the University of the Redwoods with about 25 participants, including District 2 Supervisor Brian Colbert, to discuss support for older adults, people with disabilities, and caregivers; another meeting is likely this year. The Task Force also hosted its 4th annual Valentine's Day Luncheon with about 80 attendees, featuring the Shady Lady Singers, Branson A Cappella Choir, a speaker from Vivalon, and moderator Beach Kuhl.
- Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) is finalizing a 5% adjustment to the Measure AA Expenditure Plan, a half-cent sales tax approved in 2018 that generates about \$35 million for transportation projects; a 45-day public comment period and public hearing are scheduled before amendments go to local jurisdictions.
- Caltrans is updating commute lane hours between Marin and Sonoma to 6–9 a.m. and 3–6:30 p.m., with new signage being installed along the corridor.

Mayor McMillan gave the following report:

- The MCCMC meeting was held a couple of weeks ago and they will be complying with the Brown Act moving forward which means all future meetings for MCCMC will be in-person. The next meeting will be on February 25<sup>th</sup> at College of Marin in Kentfield. MCCMC is also sunseting the Homelessness Committee and it will be assumed by a Countywide Homelessness Committee.
- RVFD has launched a new website: [rossvalleyfire.org](http://rossvalleyfire.org).

Chris Martin, Town Liaison to the Marin County Flood Zone 9, reported that the Advisory Board met on November 18 and January 28 to review ongoing flood control projects, including the Granton Park Pump Station, the Lower College of Marin Restoration Project, and in-stream improvements to Corte Madera Creek.

At the January meeting, the Board discussed FEMA's determination that removal of Building Bridge 2 in San Anselmo cannot proceed until all downstream mitigation measures are completed and unanimously approved by affected property owners, with a mid-April deadline to reach consensus. It was also disclosed that the County had prior knowledge of FEMA's ruling before the November meeting but did not inform the Board, prompting concerns about transparency; the Director of Public Works committed to improved communication. Additionally, the County acknowledged similar FEMA compliance issues affecting other flood control projects, including the Corte Madera Creek Flood Risk Management project and proposed removal of the Ross fish ladder, resulting in further delays and the need for revised plans.

Council Member Salter said the Town has a Winship Bridge project, and asked if this was mentioned in any of these issues. Mr. Martin said it has not come up and it was not discussed at all, as it is not part of the Flood Zone 9 project.

Mayor McMillan inquired about the timeline for mitigating downstream flood walls associated with the fish ladder project. Mr. Martin explained that the issue is complex, as wall height adjustments significantly affect property owners, and the County has not yet determined how it will proceed.

Councilmember Salter asked whether the southern Corte Madera Creek widening project would be impacted. Mr. Martin clarified that the lower Corte Madera Creek project has been completed, with no channel widening except near the outlet where improvements have already been made. He further noted that the completed widening would not cause overflow, as the area is already within the natural basin and sufficiently downstream from the Town of Ross.

Mayor McMillan and Council Members thanked Mr. Martin for his report.

## **7. Staff & Community Reports**

### **a. Ross Property Owners Association**

Diane Doodha of RPOA reported that the organization is conducting its 2026 membership drive and provided an overview of its activities, including supporting Ross Age Friendly initiatives, organizing events such as the Ross Spring Fling, Live on the Common, Ross Auxiliary Spring Dinner, and Garden Walk for Ross School. RPOA also manages holiday lighting, Winter Fest, flower baskets, Ross Bridge decorations, and Ross Common improvements, collaborates with the Town on potential upgrades, offers emergency response classes, and will launch a Historical Walk Program led by Tom Gaffney. She expressed appreciation for the Town's ongoing collaboration.

### **b. Town Manager**

Town Manager Johnson gave the following report:

- She thanked Council Member Dowling for recognizing the successful Valentine luncheon and highlighted the improved condition of Ross Common due to recent fertilizing and seeding, noting that the fields need continued protection until Little League begins.
- She announced that Town Clerk Cyndie Martel will retire on March 30<sup>th</sup>, with recruitment for her replacement underway, as well as for the vacant Building Inspector position.

- The ADR canceled its February 17 meeting due to school winter break, with the next meeting scheduled for March 17; consequently, the Council's March 12 meeting will have no design review items.
- Finally, staff noted recent rainfall and anticipate a larger storm soon, advising residents to prepare while Public Works continues to maintain storm drains.

Council Member Salter asked and confirmed the March Council meeting will have the CIP item.

#### **8. Consent Agenda**

The following items will be considered in a single motion, unless removed from the Consent Agenda. There were no requests to remove an item or public comments.

**Council Member Dowling moved, and Mayor Pro Tem Robbins seconded, to approve Consent Agenda Items a through h. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).**

- a. Minutes:**
  - Special Meeting Closed Session, January 8, 2026**
  - Regular Meeting, January 8, 2026**
- b. Demands: December 2025**
- c. Town Council to review and consider accepting the fiscal year 2025-26 second quarter, six-month, Financial Summary Report.**
- d. Town Council consideration to accept the Investment Report for the six-month period ending December 31, 2025.**
- e. Town Council consideration to adopt Resolution No. 2604 to authorize an additional budget appropriation in an amount not to exceed \$5,460 to cover costs of holding the January 8, 2026 Ross Town Council meeting at the Marin Art and Garden Center.**
- f. Town Council consideration to adopt Resolution No. 2602 to authorize the Town Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Marin Municipal Water District regarding collaboration and enforcement of regional conservation programs.**
- g. Town Council consideration to adopt Resolution No. 2603 to amend the Town's salary schedule effective April 1, 2026, to revise the title and salary of the Town Clerk/Administrative Manager classification.**
- h. Town Council consideration to adopt Resolution No. 2607 to allow the installation of a 4-way stop intersection at the intersection of Bellagio Road, Canyon Road and Winding Way in the Town of Ross.**

**End of Consent Agenda.**

Council Member Salter requested, and the Council agreed, to move up Item 9c. to be heard first.

**9. Public Hearing on Planning Projects – Part 1.**

- c. 67 Bolinas Avenue, Design Review, Demolition Permit, Nonconformity Permit, Variance and Town Council consideration of adoption of Resolution No. 2605 approving the project, subject to conditions.**

**Brad and Jaclyn Hill, 67 Bolinas Avenue, A.P. No. 073-051-01, Zoning: R-1, General Plan: M (Medium Density), Flood Zone: AE (Floodway)**

**Project Summary:** The applicant requests approval from the Town Council for Design Review, Demolition Permit, Nonconformity Permit, and a Variance. The project proposes demolition of the existing 1,087-square-foot nonconforming single-family residence, a 220-square-foot studio shed, and a 153-square-foot detached garage. In their place, the applicant proposes construction of a new 1,334-square-foot, two-story single-family residence with an attached 222-square-foot one-car garage. The roof height will be increased from the existing 18 feet 5 inches to 27 feet 6 inches.

Planner Alex Lopez-Vega presented the staff report for 67 Bolinas Avenue, detailing a request for Design Review, Demolition Permit, Non-Conformity Permit, a Variance, and Council consideration of Resolution No. 2605 to approve the project subject to conditions. The ADR Group supported the project on January 20, 2026, with recommended revisions including removal of the second-story deck, relocation of the trash enclosure, and reduction of the lower rear deck depth. The applicant has updated the plans accordingly, and a detailed construction management plan will be required prior to issuance of a building permit. Staff recommends that the Council adopt the resolution with the stated conditions.

Mayor McMillan opened the public comment period, and there were no speakers. She also confirmed the applicant did not wish to provide a presentation.

**Mayor Pro Tem Robbins moved, and Council Member Dowling seconded, to adopt Resolution No. 2506 approving Design Review, Demolition Permit, Non-Conformity Permit, and a Variance at 67 Bolinas Avenue, subject to conditions. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).**

- a. 2 Shanley Lane, Design Review, Minor Exception Permit, a Variance and Town Council consideration of adoption of Resolution No. 2600 approving the project, subject to conditions.**

**Scott and Morgan Robertson, 2 Shanley Lane, A.P. No. 073-091-05, Zoning: R-1:B-10, General Plan: ML (Very Low Density), Flood Zone: AE (Floodway)**

**Project Summary:** The applicant requests approval from the Town Council for Design Review, Minor Exception Permit and a Variance. The project proposes to demolish the existing angled garage and reconstruct it in alignment with the main residence. The new garage will remain the same size and will match the main residence, featuring a shingle roof, gray wood siding, and a new frosted-glass garage door.

Planner Alex Lopez-Vega presented the staff report for 2 Shanley Lane, outlining a request for Design Review, a Minor Exception Permit, a Variance, and Council consideration of Resolution No. 2600 to approve the project subject to conditions. On December 16, 2025, the ADR Group supported the garage and proposed pool but did not approve the pool equipment location. The applicant revised the plans to relocate the equipment within the buildable envelope. A detailed construction management plan will also be required prior to issuance of building permits. Staff recommends the Council adopt the resolution with the stated conditions.

Mayor McMillan opened the public comment period, and there were no speakers. She also confirmed the applicant did not wish to provide a presentation.

**Mayor Pro Tem Robbins moved, and Council Member Dowling seconded, to adopt Resolution No. 2500 approving Design Review, Minor Exception Permit, a Variance at 2 Shanley Lane, subject to conditions. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).**

- b. 10 Walnut Avenue, Design Review, Non-Conformity Permit, and Town Council consideration of adoption of Resolution No. 2601 approving the project, subject to conditions.**

**Julie and Jeffrey Thomson, 10 Walnut Avenue, A.P. No. 073-171-24, Zoning: R-1:B-10, General Plan: ML (Very Low Density), Flood Zone: X (Moderate to Low)**

**Project Summary:** The applicant requests approval from the Town Council for Design Review, and a Nonconformity Permit to rehabilitate the existing landscape area exceeding 2,500 square feet. The project proposes improvements to the existing deck, pool area, and surrounding landscape. The scope of work includes repair and replacement of existing deck framing; installation of new partition walls and footings for the area below the deck, construction of a new pool equipment shed in the same location as the existing shed, realignment of the existing landscape terrace wall, replacement of pool-area paving, resetting existing brick paving below the deck, construction of new brick stairs connecting the area below the deck to the swimming pool, installation of a new stepping-stone path to the pool equipment shed, lowering the existing well head and construction of a vault with a drive-on lid, and installation of new landscape lighting.

Planner Alex Lopez-Vega presented the staff report for 10 Walnut Avenue, detailing a request for Design Review, a Non-Conformity Permit, and Council consideration of Resolution No. 2601 to approve the project subject to conditions. On January 20, 2026, the ADR Group supported the project as proposed, including the non-conformity permit for the pool shed, which remains in its existing location. A detailed construction management plan will be required prior to issuance of a building permit. Staff recommends the Council adopt the resolution with the stated conditions.

Mayor McMillan opened the public comment period, and there were no speakers. She also confirmed the applicant did not wish to provide a presentation.

**Council Member Dowling moved, and Mayor Pro Tem Robbins seconded, to adopt Resolution No. 2501 approving Design Review and a Non-Conformity Permit at 10 Walnut Avenue, subject to conditions. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).**

**End of Public Hearing on Planning Project Part 1.**

**Administrative Agenda.**

- 10. Town Council consideration to receive and file the Certification of Sufficiency of the petition for the proposed citizen-initiative entitled “Friends of Ross Firehouse Initiative.”**

Town Attorney Ben Stock introduced Miriam Sleiman from Burke Williams law firm who was available to answer questions having to do with the Election Code.

Town Manager Johnson provided the staff report and overview of the Council’s consideration to receive and file the Certification of Sufficiency of the petition for the proposed citizen-initiative, entitled “Friends of Ross Firehouse Initiative,” noting that this item requires no Council action.

Mayor McMillan opened the public comment period, and there were no speakers.

- 11. Town Council consideration to take one of the following actions as required by Elections Code 9215:**

- 1. Adopt an ordinance of the Town Council of the Town of Ross adopting the citizen sponsored initiative measure entitled the “Ross Fire Station and Public Safety Protection Initiative, a Citizen Initiative Requiring the Town to Maintain an Operational Fire Station Within Town Limits and to Prioritize the Use of the Recently Closed Fire Station at 33 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard for this Purpose.” within 10 days of February 12, 2026 or,**
- 2. Adopt a resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Ross submitting the Proposed Initiative requiring the Town to maintain an operational fire station within Town limits and to prioritize the use of the existing structure at 33 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard for this purpose,” to the voters at the next consolidated general municipal election November 3, 2026, or at a consolidated special election to be held on June 2, 2026 with the statewide direct primary; establishing the schedule for submission of ballot arguments and authorizing and requesting the County of Marin to conduct the election and appropriating an additional \$27,000 in the fiscal year 2025-26 if the special election is selected by the Town Council.**

Town Manager Johnson presented the staff report on the proposed initiative to amend the RMC, requiring the Town to maintain an operational fire station within Town limits and prioritize rehabilitation or reconstruction of the existing station. The initiative specifies minimum operational requirements based on 2024 levels, including at least one active engine, one reserve engine, and a minimum of two firefighters on duty at all times. Adoption would restrict future amendments or repeal to a vote of the electorate unless otherwise specified.

The petition was filed on October 2, 2025, and certified as sufficient by the County and Town Clerk on January 2, 2026. Under Election Code Section 9215, the Council must either: (1) adopt the ordinance without alteration, or (2) submit it to voters. Following an Elections Report ordered on October 6, 2025, and received January 8, 2026, staff recommends the Council select one of these two options at tonight's meeting.

Miriam Sleiman of Burke Williams explained that after petition certification, Election Code Section 9215 is triggered, requiring the Council to either adopt the ordinance or submit it to an election. If submitting to an election, the Council may either: (1) place it on the next regular general election in November (default under the Elections Code), or (2) order a special election. Staff consulted with the County, which recommended June 2, 2026, for a consolidated special election to align with State elections.

Holding a general election is less expensive, and the June 2 special election is also cost-effective compared to an unscheduled standalone election. If the Council orders an election, all related actions—resolution directing the County to conduct the election, ballot question, impartial analyses, and arguments for and against—must occur simultaneously, following the County's established schedule. Therefore, the Council has three options:

1. Adopt the ordinance within 10 days as currently drafted.
2. Order it to the general election in November.
3. Order it to the June 2 special election, consolidated with the County for cost efficiency.

Town Manager Johnson reported that the County estimates the cost for including the initiative measure on the November 3 general election—along with two Council seats—would be between \$3,000 and \$6,000. In contrast, a special election would cost between \$11,000 and \$27,000, depending on voter turnout and any additional measures on the ballot that could help offset expenses.

Ms. Sleiman stated the ballot question must be drafted in an impartial way that is not argumentative. The format has to be: "Should the measure XXX be adopted..." It must be 75 words, must be drafted as a "yes" or "no" question and must be a true and impartial synopsis of the purpose of the proposed measure and shall be in a language that is neither argumentative nor likely to create prejudice for or against the measure.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins asked whether the Council is expected to review the ballot wording tonight. Ms. Sleiman explained that when ordering an election consolidated with the County, the resolution requesting consolidation must be submitted in full, including the exact ballot question as it will appear, per Elections Code Section 10403.

Mayor McMillan inquired about comments on Exhibit A to Resolution 2608. Ms. Sleiman clarified that the Council cannot make changes to the exhibit, as it reflects the proponents' draft and must be submitted to voters without alteration.

Mayor McMillan opened the public comment period, and there were no speakers.

Mayor McMillan reviewed the three options for Council consideration. She confirmed there was no support for Option 1 (adopt the ordinance within 10 days) or Option 3 (order the measure to a special election on June 2, 2026, consolidated with the County for cost efficiency). By consensus, the Council supported Option 2: submit the measure to the November general election.

**Council Member Salter moved, and Mayor Pro Tem Robbins seconded, to adopt Resolution 2609 ordering the submission to the qualified electors of the Town of Ross a citizen-sponsored initiative requiring the Town to maintain an operational fire station capable of accommodating one active fire engine, one reserve engine and at least two active firefighters, and to prioritize the rehabilitation or construction of 33 Sir Francis Drake Blvd. for that purpose at the Consolidated General Election on Tuesday, November 3, 2026; establishing the schedule for submission of ballot arguments; and authorizing and requesting the County of Marin to conduct the election. Motion carried by a roll call vote of 3-2; McMillan and Dowling voting no.**

**12. Town Council consideration to form an Ad Hoc Advisory Committee to evaluate the Friends of Ross Firehouse (FORF) proposal presented to the Town Council on January 8, 2026 and its potential fiscal, technical, and service level impacts.**

At the January 8<sup>th</sup> Town Council meeting, Town Manager Johnson reported that the Council received a presentation from FORF proposing restoration of the existing fire station and establishment of a fully staffed fire company at the Town of Ross Civic Center. She noted that the proposal presents complex policy, financial, technical, and inter-agency considerations, including coordination with the Ross Valley Fire Department, regulatory compliance, and long-term fiscal sustainability.

In light of the proposal's scope and implications, the Council directed staff to return with recommendations regarding the formation of a committee to evaluate the FORF proposal, as well as related topics raised by staff and consultants. To support this discussion, the Town Manager prepared a staff report recommending creation of a limited-duration Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee composed of two Council Members. The committee would serve in an advisory capacity only, consistent with the Municipal Code, and would not have authority to negotiate agreements, direct staff, or commit Town resources. She further recommended that the committee present non-binding findings, options, and recommendations to the Council by the May 14, 2026 meeting.

Subsequent to publication of the staff report, FORF submitted a letter outlining its perspective on the proposed committee. Additionally, Ross residents Jeffrey Kuhn and Robert Herbst informed the Council that they have formed a separate seven-member Citizens Advisory Committee to examine the same issues. Their letter has been posted to the Town's website, and both individuals are expected to provide further comment during the public comment period for this agenda item.

Council Member Salter inquired whether it would be appropriate for the Treasurer and Mr. Herbst to join the Council at the table to participate in the discussion rather than provide comments during the public comment period.

Town Attorney Stock advised that the matter falls within the Mayor's discretion. He explained that individuals addressing the Council typically do so during public comment, though the Mayor may allow additional time as deemed appropriate.

Mayor McMillan responded that public comment was the appropriate format for this item and formally opened the public comment period.

Jeff Kuhn said he has no comments and asked if the Council had any questions.

Council Member Dowling referenced language in the letter indicating that the committee's composition could change during its deliberations and that discussions would remain confidential and not be disclosed to the public. She asked for clarification regarding the rationale for this approach.

Mr. Kuhn explained that, based on his experience, sensitive negotiations often require participants to speak candidly before conclusions are reached. He stated that confidentiality allows members to express their views freely without concern about public scrutiny or reputational impact. He emphasized that the group is not an official Town committee and is not subject to the Brown Act, and that their intent is not to evade transparency requirements but to preserve open dialogue during deliberations.

Regarding potential changes in membership, Mr. Kuhn noted that the committee was formed only two days prior and is already encountering scheduling conflicts. Given the anticipated two- to three-month timeframe for its work, some members may be unable to participate for the full duration and may need to be replaced to ensure continuity.

Mayor McMillan asked if they have an end time in mind for the committee to end. Mr. Kuhn said no, other than as soon as possible.

Council Member Salter said he heard Joey Buckingham from the ADR had expressed interest in joining this committee. Mr. Kuhn said they will talk with her as well as others, but it is important they have an odd number of people so they do not have tie votes, hence 5, 7 or 9.

Mr. Herbst stated that the group's objective is to work toward consensus and that neither he nor Mr. Kuhn has predetermined the outcome of its deliberations. He expressed confidence in the individuals initially identified for participation and indicated interest in including Joey Buckingham, while noting that the group does not view it as essential to maintain seven voting members.

He clarified that the committee is intended to function in an advisory capacity rather than as a formal voting body, as final decisions rest with the Town Council. He emphasized the value of including individuals with real estate expertise and diverse perspectives to inform the discussion. While the committee is beginning with seven members, he noted that they remain open to expanding participation to others as appropriate.

Council Member Dowling asked and confirmed that the group would review the Ross Fire House, restoration of a fire engine and crew, and how best to refurbish, restore and/or construct the Ross Civic Center, as well as financing and costs.

Mayor McMillan closed the public comment period. She and Council Members thanked Mr. Kuhn and Mr. Herbst for stepping forward and working on solving this issue and said the Council appreciates it.

**13. Town Council to receive a presentation from staff and NBS (consultant) of the draft Fee Study Report including evaluation of fees for services for Administration and Finance, Planning, Building, Public Works, Police, and General Plan Updates.**

Planning and Building Director Roberta Feliciano said this has been a two-year effort collaborating with the various departments within the Town, specifically Public Works, Police, Administration and Finance, and Planning and Building. Nicole Kissam, with NBS is present and attending the meeting on Zoom, to provide a background on the fee study report in draft form and she will then go through the discussion items, cost recoveries for each department, what staff's recommendation is and some points for discussion for the Council.

Nicol Kissam, NBS, provided a presentation and reviewed the goals of a fee study, the scope of their review, project approach, and summarized the results of the draft results of the draft Fee Study Report.

Director Feliciano commented on fee reductions, stating this would lead to the 69% cost recovery model for Planning and staff is asking for the Town Council to consider how that reduction would help the Town in meeting the Housing Element required 111 RHNA units by 2030, as well as consistency with existing fees and comparison fees in comparison jurisdictions. They did not want to increase the fees so high that they were so much more than other cities and towns. For the Use Permit fee, this would help small businesses in the Ross Common in the Local Service Commercial Zoning Districts. These are some of the policies to consider of why these fees would be set lower than 100%.

Ms. Kissam then continued reviewing recommendations for each department and concluded her presentation.

Director Feliciano said there are a couple of questions to consider by the Council as a general method of selecting an appropriate cost recovery target. The Council would want to consider the public and private benefits and she asked the following question:

1. To what degree does the public-at-large benefit from the service versus to what degree does the individual or entity requesting, requiring or causing the service benefit?

In response to Mayor McMillan, Director Feliciano stated the study will return in April and staff will need to know whether the Council agrees with the cost recovery proposed by staff, did they want to see 100%, were they okay with the 69% for planning fees, which the Town mostly collects. Building fees relate mostly to an increase in property value, and this is the feedback staff is seeking.

Town Manager Johnson said one of the reasons staff wanted to be sure there was a good review this evening is because only one or two Council Members were on the Council in 2016 when fees were last updated. Staff will return at the April meeting with a resolution that will list the exact fees.

Mayor McMillan opened the public comment period, and there were no speakers.

Council Member Dowling said she can see why it took two years, noting this is a very thorough report. She appreciates staff trying to recoup some of the costs but being realistic about not going to 100% which makes sense.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins said she did not realize that the Town subsidizes some things such as some planning services and use permits. Everyone feels the fees are high and it might be helpful that the Town indicate it does absorb some of the costs for some of the ADUs and use permits because it encourages what the Town wants, but they should get some credit for it, as well.

Mayor McMillan asked and confirmed that the fees were compared to other jurisdictions of Atherton, Tiburon, Belvedere, and this is another point they could make—that their fees are similar to other jurisdictions. This would be a good Ross Review article in April.

Council Member Salter emphasized the importance of clear communication regarding proposed fee increases, including detailed explanations of what fees are changing, the reasons for the adjustments, and clarification that the Town is currently collecting approximately 90% of allowable fees—effectively subsidizing certain costs. He also expressed support for allowing some discretion to waive or reduce fees in specific circumstances, such as when projects are streamlined or other unique situations arise.

Town Manager Johnson responded that, while the issue may appear to be one of terminology, the Town cannot formally waive fees. When fees do not cover the full cost of services, the difference is subsidized by the General Fund rather than redistributed among other fee payers. She noted that this structure helps ensure the Town's fees remain legally and financially defensible. Based on her experience, fee waivers can present fairness and administrative challenges for staff, including the Town Manager, as the Town must maintain consistency, accuracy, and appropriate cost recovery. She added that staff time varies by case and invited Director Feliciano to provide further operational context.

Director Feliciano explained that in some instances, if staff time spent on a project is less than anticipated, the Town may not charge the full fee. Conversely, if a project requires additional review—such as multiple appearances before the ADR—the Town may need to recover additional meeting-related costs. She noted that such situations are rare. To improve consistency and administrative efficiency, the Town is transitioning to a flat-fee structure based on averaged service costs.

Mayor McMillan thanked staff and the consultant and said the Council looks forward to revisiting this item in April.

**BREAK**

Mayor McMillan called for a break at 7:25 p.m. and, thereafter, reconvened the regular meeting at 7:35 p.m.

- 14. Town Council consideration to authorize the Town Manager to release a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to solicit proposals from qualified and experienced developers and community-based organizations – including nonprofit entities, schools, and philanthropic institutions – for the design, entitlement, financing, and construction of nine affordable housing units at the Town-owned Civic Center site located at 33 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard.**

Town Manager Johnson introduced the item and invited Project Manager David Kelley to present the item.

Project Manager David Kelley gave the staff report, background information regarding the Facilities Master Plan, and overview of staff's recommendation for the Council to consider and approve release of a RFQ to solicit proposal from qualified and experienced developers and community-based organizations for design, entitlement, financing, and construction of nine affordable housing units at the Town-owned Civic Center site located at 33 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard. If the Council takes no action, it could impair compliance with the Town's Housing Element, which he briefly described.

Council Member Kircher asked when, under an exclusive negotiating agreement (ENA), the Council would see a developer's proposal outlining how the nine-unit site would be developed, noting potential adjustments to the Facilities Master Plan might be needed.

Mr. Kelley explained that while it is ideal to have a concept proposal to reference in the ENA, detailed site plans are not required to begin negotiations. Concept proposals allow for discussions on timing and next steps and help secure Council support before a developer invests significant resources.

Council Member Kircher sought clarification on exit options if the agreement does not proceed favorably. Town Attorney Ben Stock confirmed that the Council controls the process and can structure the ENA with protections, including a time-based "off-ramp" allowing either party to withdraw if progress is unsatisfactory.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins proposed postponing the item for two months to incorporate input from the committee reviewing the Town's master plan, noting that the RFQs reference the current approved plan.

Town Attorney Stock clarified that proceeding is necessary to meet the Town's Housing Element obligations. He emphasized that the Town is already behind schedule and must provide housing on the site unless it formally amends the Housing Element, which would involve a separate process. He added that issuing the RFQ only assesses developer interest and does not commit the Town to a specific site layout.

Council Member Salter expressed concern that moving forward with the RFQ is premature, noting the Facilities Master Plan Concept B's estimated \$25 million cost, uncertain funding, and the need to potentially demolish the Public Works building, complete CEQA review, and define a clear plan. He cautioned that soliciting proposals without these details could deter developers.

Mr. Kelley clarified that the Master Plan costs do not include affordable housing, which would be privately developed, and that conceptual site graphics do not obligate the Town to specific improvements. Infrastructure costs and responsibilities would be negotiated with developers, and the first step is simply gauging interest, with a potential exclusive negotiating agreement to follow later.

Town Manager Johnson emphasized that staff is following the Council's prior direction to implement Concept B in phases, fulfilling the Town's commitments to the State Housing and Community Development department for nine affordable units and the paramedic facility by 2027. Issuing the RFQ does not create contractual obligations but allows nonprofit housing organizations to submit qualifications while enabling phased progress on architectural and infrastructure planning to meet the Town's legal obligations.

Mayor McMillan asked whether Council Member Salter's concerns centered on potential developer quality due to uncertainty with the Town's facilities planning or if the project is conceptual enough for developers to express interest, knowing nine affordable housing units are planned.

Mr. Kelley clarified that the RFQ's purpose is to assess interest and qualifications from development groups and nonprofit housing organizations. He emphasized that discussions on architectural and engineering services, sequencing, and phasing do not prevent developers from proceeding. Issuing the RFQ is intended to initiate the process, recognizing that affordable housing projects require extended timelines to secure funding, and does not commit the Town to any future action.

Town Manager Johnson added that Branson School is finalizing its own Facilities Master Plan, which includes housing, and has shown ongoing interest. Staff has also engaged with Cedars. She noted that the Town seeks to gauge whether the site is appropriately sized, whether to focus locally, or whether there is broader regional developer interest, acknowledging this is a multi-year process.

Mayor McMillan opened the public comment period, and there were no speakers.

Council Member Kircher emphasized the need to move forward, noting HCD oversight and the long timeline typical of affordable housing projects. Drawing on his experience, he highlighted that negotiations and funding alignment often take months, so beginning the RFQ process now allows the Town to demonstrate progress while awaiting the committee's recommendations.

Mayor McMillan echoed concerns about delays jeopardizing the Housing Element and stressed the importance of showing HCD that the Town is taking affirmative steps.

Council Member Dowling supported moving forward, noting the RFQ is only a preliminary step to identify interested developers and does not commit the Town to any one party.

Council Member Salter acknowledged the Town's intent but cautioned that premature action could deter qualified developers, particularly regional or nonprofit affordable housing organizations, if the Town appears unprepared or lacks a concrete plan and funding. He advocated for having a feasible plan with municipal support before soliciting interest.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins also recognized the need to advance the process but preferred a two-month postponement to incorporate the committee's input on the master plan before proceeding.

**Council Member Dowling moved, and Council Member Kircher seconded, to authorize the Town Manager to release a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to solicit proposals from qualified and experienced developers and community-based organizations – including nonprofit entities, schools, and philanthropic institutions – for the design, entitlement, financing, and construction of nine affordable housing units at the Town-owned Civic Center site located at 33 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: (3-2-0; Robbins and Salter voted no)**

- 15. Town Council consideration to authorize the Town Manager to release a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to solicit Statements of Qualifications from qualified and experienced architectural and engineering firms for implementation of the Town of Ross Facilities Master Plan, with a focus on the Ross Civic Center.**

Project Manager David Kelley presented the staff report and overview of the request and Council consideration to authorize the Town Manager to release an RFQ to solicit statements of qualifications from architectural and engineering firms for implementing the Town of Ross Facilities Master Plan, focusing on the Ross Civic Center.

He emphasized the urgency, noting that delays increase project costs, as reflected in recent KPA work. The RFQ is intended to help refine program elements, conduct additional site analysis, and assist with sequencing and phasing of improvements.

Mr. Kelley explained that the RFQ will identify firms capable of project management, design, and engineering services to advance the Master Plan into concept and schematic design drawings. The design process typically progresses through 30%, 60%, and 90% completion stages, allowing adjustments while verifying program elements from the Master Plan. Regarding timing, he thinks having an architect on board can assist Council with the necessary technical analysis that could help inform decision-making. There is a timeline with respect to the paramedic lease agreement and this is a driving factor in moving this effort forward.

Again, the background here is that costs literally escalate month by month, and what is being proposed is a best practice for a qualifications-based selection process. He said the RFQ is planned to be released next week. SOQs are due the first week in April and potentially will be awarded in May with a potential start date thereafter. The scope of work is important and needs to be discussed by the Council, and this also provides cost figures to the Town to undertake that work.

There are no fiscal implications at this time. Ultimately, the intent is to return to the Council with a Professional Services Agreement which would have a detailed scope of work and a cost proposal. Regarding environmental work, usually some preliminary design is done first which helps inform the environmental work and whether they can avoid certain impacts up front in this process and end up with a less detailed document as a result. It allows for the Town Manager to set and negotiate rates with the firm ultimately accepted.

Mayor McMillan referred to the paramedic facility and said she assumes the priority would be on that facility given the January 1, 2029 deadline. Mr. Kelley agreed this is a priority because the Council has executed that agreement with the RVPA.

Mayor McMillan confirmed with the Town Manager that the architect/engineer could support the Citizens Advisory Committee if needed, and staff could use KPA under the Town Manager's signature authority for timely assistance.

Council Member Kircher asked whether the architectural firm would understand that the project may involve modifications to Concept B or a FORF proposal to remodel an existing building. Town Manager Johnson agreed that RFQ language should clarify this and requested qualifications based on relevant experience.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins expressed concern that releasing the RFQ is premature, as the Town lacks clarity on site plans and whether projects involve renovation or new construction, suggesting a two-month delay for committee input.

Town Manager Johnson explained that the RFQ covers the entire Civic Center site, requests experience in public safety buildings, and allows more than six weeks for submissions, meaning that staff would likely review responses after the committee completes its work. She emphasized that an architect is needed to assist with phasing, temporary facilities for Public Works, Police, and paramedics, and to help plan potential pay-as-you-go implementation of the Facilities Master Plan. This support is necessary to answer Council questions and implement the Council-directed phased approach effectively.

Council Member Salter expressed concern that Concept B lacks true phasing because it requires demolition of the entire Public Safety building, including the paramedic facility. He highlighted that the approved November ballot measure will ask residents to weigh in on the site's future, creating uncertainty. He cautioned that RFQs referencing the 2023 Facilities Master Plan could result in wasted staff and architectural effort if the project scope is ultimately undefined.

Mr. Kelley responded that the architect's role is to help develop and refine the plan. While outcomes may be uncertain due to the ballot measure, preliminary work—including engineering, surveying, and soils analysis—is necessary to support future discussions and evaluate FORF's proposal. The RFQ process allows the Town to initiate this essential preparatory work.

Council Member Salter asked that the RFQ be written to state that—the Council is seeking an architect to help redo their concept based on work they are doing with the Committee to re-imagine the site and they need an architect to help the Town redo its Master Plan -- as opposed to referring to the June 2023 Master Plan as if that is what they are working on.

Mr. Kelley said this would be direction by the Council, but the intent again is that this is an RFQ to select the firm with the appropriate experience to assist them in that effort. They could include language where they hold expertise in master planning to assist the Town with this process.

Town Manager Johnson explained that the RFQ was prepared before the Council's recent agenda discussion, and staff can update the language to reflect the current process. She noted that the 2023 intent was to clear the site entirely and staff is proceeding with phased implementation to meet Council direction and the Town's contractual obligations.

She emphasized that moving elements like the paramedic facility or housing may be possible, but technical architectural and engineering expertise is needed to assess feasibility. She also highlighted that the Facilities Master Plan is based on a comprehensive needs assessment, identifying space requirements for each department given the site constraints, which would guide any updates or amendments.

Council Member Salter said the RFQ language states the Town is looking for architectural engineering services necessary for the implementation of the Town's adopted Facilities Master Plan. He thinks this is problematic because while the Council adopted this plan, it does not seem like it will be the plan they will work on.

Town Manager Johnson said if the consensus of the Council is they can change the draft RFQ document, staff can remove the reference to just doing Concept B and have it be more general, and staff can take that feedback and update it.

Council Member Kircher asked and confirmed the Town Manager could add language on the firm helping the Town with the site plan including modifications to the site plan because it may well come down to that.

Mr. Kelley agreed with the Town Manager and said his experience in working with architects is that they ask, "Have you thought of this?" While it may not be reflected in the Master Plan, it comes with this expertise to giving great feedback on how they may move forward under scenarios that may have not yet been considered but meet all of the objectives.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins said if they are including the possibility that the Master Plan might change, she asked if they would also include FORF's Master Plan as part of what is being sent out because the architect will be working on some hybrid. Town Manager Johnsons said staff can include it as a reference document to indicate they have received it from a group of residents. However, FORF did not submit a complete concept and she is planning on sending out on Monday, staff's analysis on FORF's proposal to give to the Council and the consultant team. Mr. Kelley agreed and said it might provide an opportunity for them to be creative in what they come forward with. The language could state "Review the adopted Facilities Master Plan and other appropriate documentation including recent information submitted by FORF to help inform the proposal."

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins asked if one of the statements would be changed from "To work on implementing the Facilities Master Plan" to read, "Implementing the Facilities Master Plan or FORF's plan or some hybrid plan" to make things clear. Mr. Kelley said with the Council's direction, staff could expand the language in the RFQ to be more comprehensive of the FORF proposal so it is known information and a ballot initiative.

Mayor McMillan opened the public comment period.

Jeff Kuhn noted that if the Committee reaches an agreement, the final plan will likely differ significantly from the current concept. He emphasized that architectural services will inevitably be needed for the Committee to complete its work, and any request for support would come to the Town Manager.

Council Member Salter emphasized that the Committee should be allowed to proceed first, noting that the existing RFQs reference a Facilities Master Plan that no longer exists. He suggested that any architectural support be requested directly by the Committee rather than issuing an RFQ prematurely, and felt the agenda items were brought forward too early given the current stage of planning.

Council Member Kircher supported moving forward with architects in place. He noted that having experts available could assist both the Committee and the Council in evaluating priorities, phasing, and feasibility. Architects could help determine whether the Committee's recommendations are realistic and reduce the need for the Council to make decisions outside their technical expertise.

Council Member Dowling agreed and made a motion, and Council Member Kircher seconded staff's recommended motion.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins said she does not understand why they would be doing the RFQ to have an architect they will be hiring in three months when it sounds like the committee will be needing consultants in a week or two and because they will not know what the project will look like and did not agree with the proposed motion.

Town Attorney Stock clarified that the Committee is a citizen-initiated group, not an official Town committee, and therefore not subject to the Brown Act. He distinguished between the long-term need for an architect to assist the Town (addressed through the RFQ) and the short-term needs of the Committee, which would be handled directly by the Town Manager under her signature authority. If needed, the Council could convene a special meeting, but the Committee does not hire consultants directly.

Council Member Salter raised a concern that an architect hired by the Committee could miss the broader RFQ process and not be considered for the larger project. Town Attorney Stock responded that the RFQ will be advertised for six weeks, providing ample opportunity for interested architects to apply. Short-term support for the Committee and participation in the larger project are not mutually exclusive.

Council Member Kircher said it would seem to be more efficient to use the same architects for both because otherwise, someone will have to redo all of the work, and so they are looking at least six weeks and they should move forward on this.

Town Manager Johnson explained that the architectural and engineering contract for the overall project will likely exceed \$50,000, requiring public input before Council approval. She reiterated that any short-term architectural assistance needed by staff, the Council, or the Committee—such as planning temporary facilities for Public Works and other essential services—could be retained separately under her authority.

She emphasized that engaging short-term assistance would not preclude a firm from later participating in the broader RFQ or potential RFP process. Firms providing early support, including FORF's architect, would be welcome to submit qualifications. She advised against limiting options by assuming that early involvement would exclude future consideration for the larger project.

Council Member Salter questioned why not use the Town Manager's authority to hire an architect and work with the Council and the committee without having to do an RFQ. Town Manager Johnson said she does not know what the committee will be seeking, so they need to meet and indicate their needs. They may have a need where the Town staff might be able to help. She also wants to get the best architect. She already knows Mary McGraff is not interested in working with the Town and they have KPA who has done work for them, but she is not sure who is out there, and that is why they need an RFQ.

Mayor McMillan commented that the urgency of the Police Department and paramedic building is so great and she did not want to continue phasing and extending things. They can do this in parallel with this committee, get them the technical help they need, and do the RFQs in parallel and they can see where they are in six weeks. Council Member Kircher agreed.

Mr. Kelley said there is a motion on the floor. There was discussion about whether to accept the RFQ as is or incorporate additional language and Council Member Salter proposed a friendly amendment and to add: "...and also to help the Town to evaluate its Facilities Master Plan, taking into account the Committee that has been formed and what might come out of that process.

**Council Member Dowling moved, and Council Member Kircher seconded, to authorize the Town Manager to release a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to solicit Statements of Qualifications from qualified and experienced architectural and engineering firms for implementation of the Town of Ross Facilities Master Plan, and also to help the Town to evaluate its Facilities Master Plan, taking into account the Committee that has been formed and what might come out of that process. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).**

- 16. Town Council consideration to adopt a one-time modification to extend the terms of the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore through November 2026, aligning the Town Council's annual reorganization with the certification of the November 2026 election following the Town's transition to November elections.**

Town Manager Johnson presented a staff report outlining a proposed one-time extension of the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem terms through November 2026 to align with the new November election schedule. As the last jurisdiction to shift elections to November, the Town reviewed similar transitions in Corte Madera and Belvedere (2022), where terms were extended to align reorganization with certified election results. Because the Town's annual reorganization is scheduled for July—months before the November 2026 election—staff recommends extending the terms to avoid timing misalignment. The proposed one-time adjustment complies with the Council's procedures manual and would return to standard one-year terms synchronized with November elections thereafter. Staff also provided alternative options for Council consideration.

Mayor McMillan opened the public comment period, and there were no speakers.

Mayor McMillan said she just wants to be consistent with how other jurisdictions have handled this, and Corte Madera and Belvedere have done it this way. She thinks it is better for the leadership of the Council to have a slightly longer term and having the next Mayor which would be Mayor Pro Tem Robbins start in December with the Mayor Pro Tem, which would be Council Member Dowling. The Council also just set it based on the change of the election.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins said the Council previously discussed the Mayor's term when moving elections to November, creating a one-time 20-month gap before new members are sworn in. Town policy and tradition state the Mayor serves a one-year term, with Council Members rotating the role to minimize politics and personal influence. She believes the issue is not whether to rotate the Mayor in April, but why they would not follow the established rotation practice.

She stated no one intended for a Mayor to serve 20 months and argued it would be inappropriate for the current Mayor—who supported moving the elections—to benefit from an extended term, and urged the Council to uphold its tradition and rotate the Mayor position after one year.

Council Member Salter agreed with Mayor Pro Tem Robbins, and thinks the 20-month term is too long and Mayor Pro Tem Robbins has already served in the Mayor capacity at least twice before and is confident and capable of being Mayor again. It would provide change and continuity that has been part of the Town's long-standing culture. It also provides chances for other Council Members to be placed in this leadership role, as he and Council Member Dowling are the newest members.

Council Member Dowling said she is personally comfortable with the 20 months of being Mayor. She also supported the elections to be changed in November and thought it was a good idea to be in sync with the rest of the County. It makes sense to continue to the end of November with the current leadership and then make those changes.

Council Member Kircher said the reason for making the change to November is so they could align with the other Councils and the reason for doing that is there is an election and then new people coming on the Council, so there potentially could be a change. He thinks 'chopping this up' just retreats from what they have already done which is not aligned with what they are trying to do and with what other communities have done.

Mayor McMillan said she thinks it is also better for Mayor Pro Tem Robbins not to be Mayor in an abbreviated time but for a full year because they will be able to prepare Council Member Dowling better because she will have a whole year of being Mayor Pro Tem.

Council Member Salter said possibly Mayor Pro Tem Robbins may not want to run. He asked what happens if the new person comes in and Council Member Dowling is Mayor and he is Mayor Pro Tem. She would be thrown into the Mayor's role without any experience of being a Mayor Pro Tem. Council Member Dowling disagreed and said she and Council Member Salter can handle being the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem.

Council Member Salter said he thinks Mayor Pro Tem Robbins is willing to have a shortened term and this will result in Council Member Dowling becoming Mayor sooner. So, he does not know why they would approve this. Mayor Pro Tem Robbins said she also thinks it is inappropriate for someone to have a 20-month term especially when they sort of set it up that way.

Mayor McMillan said she did not propose changing the election time so she could be Mayor longer. That was not her intent at all. She wanted Ross, as the last jurisdiction in Marin who had a spring election, to be consistent with every other jurisdiction so on-boarding to advisory boards, JPAs, etc. could occur at the same time. So, she did not do it to be Mayor for 20 months and is sorry this is being suggested as her intent.

**Council Member Dowling moved, and Council Member Kircher seconded, to adopt a one-time modification to extend the terms of the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore through November 2026, aligning the Town Council's annual reorganization with the certification of the November 2026 election following the Town's transition to November elections. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: (3-2-0; Robbins and Salter voted no)**

**17. Town Council consideration to adopt Resolution No. 2606 to approve and authorize the award of performance and retention pay to Town Manager Christa Johnson relating to her annual review.**

Town Attorney Stock gave the staff report and overview of the matter for Council consideration to adopt Resolution No. 2606 to approve and authorize the award of performance and retention pay to Town Manager Christa Johnson relating to her annual review. The Town Council recently completed her performance review and indicated a desire to consider a one-time 5% retention bonus for her performance relating to the annual performance period. The award of this retention pay would impact the Town's budget by approximately \$14,327.

Mayor McMillan opened the public comment period, and there were no speakers.

**Council Member Dowling moved, and Council Member Kircher seconded, to adopt Resolution No. 2606 to approve and authorize the award of performance and retention pay to Town Manager Christa Johnson relating to her annual review. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).**

**End of Administrative Agenda.**

**There are no Public Hearings on Planning Projects – Part 2.**

**18. No Action Items: (Mayor)**

**a. Council correspondence – None.**

**b. Future Council items –** Mayor Pro Tem Robbins requested that the Ross Review newsletter be reviewed by the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem before publication to better reflect Council activities. Mayor McMillan clarified she does not review the newsletter in advance and has not done so since the publication began. Town Manager Johnson explained the Town Clerk primarily writes the newsletter, with the Mayor contributing the "Mayor's Column." Council Member Salter supported the request and asked that a future agenda item address how Town communications are reviewed before release. Town Manager Johnson noted the staff will include resources that will be required for this item, and the Council can consider this in the budget process.

Council Member Dowling asked for language to be added to the Ross agenda to include a respectful dialogue statement, which she described which is done for all commissions in the county as well as the Board of Supervisors' agendas. Council Member Salter voiced his support.

Council Member Salter asked for a future item regarding hiring a consultant to review the fees being paid to RVFD JPA, and Mayor Pro Tem Robbins voiced her support.

Council Member Salter asked for a Council Retreat to be added back on the agenda list. Council Member Dowling voiced her support.

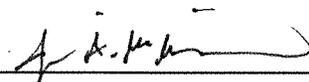
- c. **Council Member participation at the communication table at the Ross Post Office on the next Council meeting day** – Council Member Kircher and Mayor McMillan volunteered for March 12<sup>th</sup>.

**19. Meeting Evaluation.**

Council Members said they believed the meeting went fine and briefly described the hard work of the Council, who are volunteers. Council Member Salter voiced an apology to all Council Members for any bad feelings, and said he hopes they can all work together, knowing everybody's intentions are good and recognized they can professionally agree to disagree.

**20. Adjournment.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Julie McMillan, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Cyndie Martel, Town Clerk