MEETING of the ROSS TOWN COUNCIL
THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2026
Held In-Person and Teleconference via Zoom
Council Member Kircher participated from 409 Sarah Drive, Corona del Mar, CA

1. 6:04 p.m. Commencement.
Mayor Julie McMillan; Mayor Pro Tem Elizabeth Robbins; Council Members Teri Dowling; Bill Kircher, Jr. (remote participation), Mathew Salter; Town Manager Christa Johnson; Assistant Town Attorney Mariam Sleiman.

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. Introduction of the New Building Inspector II, Matt Tahja
Planning and Building Director Roberta Feliciano introduced the Town's new Building Inspector II, Matt Tahja. She provided background on Mr. Tahja's educational and professional experience.

Mayor McMillan and Council Members welcomed Mr. Tahja, and a round of applause followed.

Mr. Tahja thanked the Council and expressed excitement for working with the Town.

5. Open Time for Public Expression.
Michael Rosenbaum expressed outrage regarding unsolicited and unprofessional email correspondence sent by Council Member Salter on May 17th as well as his defiance to follow historical institutional Council rules. He sometimes personally disagrees with Council actions but accepts its decisions, and he demanded the Council review its procedures manual.

Diane Rudden discussed Tuesday's Age Friendly Ross meeting where housing options were discussed, said she will put Home Match pamphlets in the Post office, and mentioned that the Older Adults Community Resource Guide is available at Town Hall.

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

6. Proclamation acknowledging National Gun Safety Day in the Town of Ross, June 5, 2026
Mayor McMillan read the Proclamation into the record, acknowledging June 5, 2026 as National Gun Safety Day in the Town of Ross.

7. Mayor's Report.
Town facilities: Jeff Kuhn and the Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) proposed a new path forward for our Town Facilities at the April 29 Council meeting. Please take a look at their power point with its legacy concept for the Town's 99-year-old public safety building as envisioned by Dan Winey and Gensler Architects:

https://www.townofrossca.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/town_council/meeting/4614/council_4-29_presentation_v7.7_web.pdf
And please watch the short (less than 2 minute) YouTube video about the concept: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_2oUvgfJUs

The following week, the Council directed staff to expeditiously amend the 2023 Facilities Master Plan with the CAC concept. Tonight the Council will consider issuing an RFP for an architect to do this.

Budget for 2026-27: Tonight we will consider approval of the Town's budget for 2026-27. The Council discussed these issues at our February and April meetings. The Town is in excellent financial shape, thanks to staff's careful stewardship, prudent expenditures and excess revenue over the past few years (which unfortunately has ended). The proposed budget includes initial planning and environmental work to rehabilitate the Ross Common play field, last done in the early 1980s.

Thanks to Volunteers: I am amazed with and gratified by Ross residents' generosity, diligence and creativity to enhance our Town and build community. Heartfelt thanks to:

- RPOA for the beautiful new lights at the Ross Post Office, installed in early May, and the colorful flower baskets around downtown;
- Ross Auxiliary for the lovely Ross Spring Dinner May 9, and Roseanna and Wally Lourdeaux for hosting the cocktail party in their gorgeous garden;
- Ross School Parent Teacher Organization for an over-the-top Ross Garden Walk and Market May 17, and the generous Glenwood Avenue residents who opened their stunning gardens to our community.

Congratulations to Ross School: Each year more than 10,000 public school students take the state-mandated test, the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), measuring knowledge and skills across various subjects. Ross School students scored in *the top 1%* in both English and Math. Congratulations to Ross School students, administrators, teachers and parents on this excellent achievement!

Fourth of July Parade and Festivities: Thanks to Ross Recreation and Town staff, the community is looking forward to the 4th of July parade and festivities! Get your bikes, cars, floats, pooches and pies ready for a fun red, white and blue morning! See you there (parade begins at 10 am)!

8. Council Committee & Liaison Report:
Council Member Dowling reported at the April 2nd Ross Town Council meeting, she shared that at the March TAM Board meeting, she voted 'no' on behalf of the Town of Ross to a Measure AA Expenditure Plan revision. The revision reduces funding to Ross and other Marin cities and towns to maintain a viable pavement rehabilitation program and local roads improvement. As a town without a commercial base, Ross depends on this funding and is unlikely to qualify for funding from a new reimagined roadway category. The revision was passed by the TAM Board. Except for Ross, all cities and towns in Marin and the Board of Supervisors voted to support this revision.

At the TAM Board meeting this month, she will share the Council was disappointed with this decision; however, they request that in the future, TAM prioritize the support to cities and towns by leaving funding intact, especially for smaller towns in Marin like Belvedere and Ross. She will also request that TAM offer more opportunities in the future for smaller towns to apply for TAM funding and acknowledging TAM's efforts to improve regional traffic congestion. She will vote on behalf of Ross to support their 2026/27 annual budget and the 2026 Measure AA sales strategic plan which includes this change in the budget.

She also reported that she and Mayor Pro Tem Robbins spent a couple of hours prior to the meeting today which is an opportunity for them to talk to people going into the Post Office. The one repeated comment is about parking. She will request that in the future they discuss parking spaces in Ross.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins reported on RVPA's June 4th meeting. Other than the upcoming election to renew the parcel tax, there were no particular items discussed; although tonight, the Council will discuss the new structure of the RVPA.

Mayor McMillan reported that the Ross Valley Fire Board met last night and they approved the 2026-27 budget. The Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority met in late May and approved their budget.

Council Member Salter reported that MCE's CEO is on an indefinite leave of absence. He further described MCE Board member efforts to approve a Finance Committee to review the agency's finances. The Board is going through a governance review, as well to determine the optimal structure for the agency.

Council Member Kircher noted that the MCE information is from a Closed Session and should not have been publicly announced or discussed.

9. Staff & Community Reports

a. Ross Property Owners Association

Andy Mascaroni, RPOA Boardmember, gave the following report:

- August 21st is Live on the Common with Super Diamond
- September 19th-Emergency First Aid Class on the Ross Commons from 9am to 12 noon.
- October 16th is Live on the Common, with no act as of yet.
- November 15th is the Turkey Trot at 9am followed by a Downtown Sip and Stroll from 4pm to 7pm.
- December 7th is the Winter Fest/Tree Lighting.
- May 9th is the Spring Dinner with 140 people thus far who purchased tickets.
- Hanging flowers have gone up and look beautiful that replace the banners.
- New pendant lights are at the Post Office and he wondered if they could replace some of the operational fixture lights with LED lights in the back for workers.
- They are working on a Historical Walk. Tom Gaffney has made plaques which will be installed in 12 locations. Each plaque will have a QR code that will reference a description. Town Manager Johnson clarified that this will come to the Council in August.
- The last Ross Common event was with Petty Theft on April 17th and it was extremely successful with over 2,000 attendees.

b. Town Manager

Town Manager Johnson gave the following report:

- As requested by the Age-Friendly Task Force, the Town is moving forward with a modest audio improvement project in the Council Chambers to improve meeting access. The work includes repositioning the existing speakers behind the dais, installing improved speaker mounts and safety hardware, and adding assisted-listening receivers and headphones for public use. This is a limited, low-cost project intended to improve the in-room meeting experience for residents who may be hard of hearing, allowing them to fully participate in and improve access to Council meetings. The timeline of the project is short-term, though uncertain due to product supply, but should be soon.
- The new steel truss bridges arrived yesterday at Natalie Coffin Greene Park. Some additional work still needs to be done before they can be open to the public, but if you would like to see what they look like you are welcome to take a look.
- All phases of the Shady Lane pathway improvements are now completed from Lagunitas Road to Bolinas Avenue. The contractor will return in July to apply the slurry seal, lane striping, and bicycle sharrows to the roadway.
- The final pavement restoration at the four townwide drainage project locations will be completed on Monday. Expect some delays on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard as you are coming from or going toward Kentfield Monday June 15.
- Speaking of delays on Sir Francis Drake, the big paving project between Bolinas Avenue and El Camino Bueno is scheduled to start on June 22 and will be completed just before the 4th of July holiday, so please plan accordingly for traffic delays during that time.
- Please note that Town Hall will be closed on Friday, June 19, for the Juneteenth holiday. Public safety will of course still be operating.
- The Town will be celebrating the 4th of July with a parade and celebration on Saturday, July 4th. The parade kicks off at 10:00 am with Ross PD, Fire, music, Uncle Sam himself, members of the Ross Town Council, dogs on parade, and floats of all shapes and sizes. A community picnic celebration on Ross Common follows the parade. Music at the event this year will be provided by Windy Hill Bluegrass and the Shady Ladies Chorus. There will be complimentary popcorn, free hotdogs provided by Ross Police Officers Association, and additional food and beverage for purchase. Kids of all ages can enjoy our bounce houses, lawn games, and face painting. We'll also be returning our mechanical bull and adding an inflatable joust and a Pie Baking competition. For those interested in entering the contest, the parade, or volunteering, please contact the Ross Recreation department.

Council Member Salter asked and the Town Manager provided an update on their new Police Chief, Inspector, and Public Works Director. He suggested staff prepare a "Meet the new Staff" for the August Ross Reporter, and Town Manager Johnson said they usually do this each time someone is hired. She believes the new Police Chief was in the last one, but she would be happy to provide a recap for all new employees.

10. Consent Agenda

The following items will be considered in a single motion, unless removed from the Consent Agenda. There were no public requests to remove any items or public comment. Mayor Pro Tem Robbins requested removal of Item 10k, and Council Member Salter also recused himself from participation in this item.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins moved, and Council Member Dowling seconded, to approve Consent Agenda Items a, b, d, e, f, g, h, i, j and l. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

a. **Minutes:**
   - **Budget Hearing, April 23, 2026.**
   - **Regular Meeting, April 29, 2026.**
   - **Special Meeting, May 6, 2026.**

b. **Town Council to approve Demands: April 2026**

c. **Town Council to receive a report on the Status of Vacancies for the Town of Ross for calendar year 2026 as required by AB 2561.**

d. **Town Council to review the Town's FY 2026/27 Investment Policy and consider adopting Resolution No. 2634 to approve the FY 2026/27 Investment Policy.**

e. **Town Council to consider adopting Resolution No. 2624 re-appointing Josefa Buckingham, Mark Fritts, and Stephen Sutro to the Advisory Design Review Board for three-year terms ending August 25, 2029.**

f. **Town Council to consider adopting Resolution No. 2625 appropriating Road Repair and Accountability Act (SB 1) funding to the Annual Operating Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026/27, estimated as of January 2025 to be $65,545, to fund portions of various pavement rehabilitation projects for the FY 2026-27 Roadway fund budget and adopting the list of projects to be funded by SB 1 in FY 2026-27.**

g. **Town Council to consider authorizing the Town Manager to execute an amendment to the Professional Services Agreement with CSG Consultants for Building Plan Review, Inspection, and Building Official Services to increase the not to exceed amount of the agreement to $160,000 for Fiscal Year 2025-26.**

h. **Town Council to consider authorizing the Town Manager to execute an agreement with Marin IT in an amount not to exceed $172,550 for cybersecurity implementation and information technology managed services for the period July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027.**

i. **Town Council to consider authorizing the Town Manager to execute an agreement with the Town of Fairfax for police dispatch services for the term of July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2031, in the amount of $81,000 in FYE27 increasing to $120,738.34 in FYE31.**

j. **Town Council to consider adopting Resolution No. 2636 appointing the Town Manager to the Pooled Liability Assurance Network Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (PLAN JPA) Board of Directors with the Town Clerk as the alternate.**

l. **Town Council to consider adopting Resolution No. 2627 setting the dates/times for the regular Town Council meetings and annual Special Council meeting in 2027.**

<u>Item Removed from Consent Calendar:</u>

k. **Town Council to authorize the Town Manager to execute Contract Amendment #10 with Consor (formerly Quincy) Engineering in the amount of $8,236 for costs associated with additional tasks related to compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act certification for the Winship Bridge replacement project, and extend the Professional Services Agreement termination date for the Consor contract from December 31, 2026, to December 31, 2028.**

Recused: Council Member Salter recused himself because of the proximity of his residence and said he will remain in the room to make a public comment.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins asked whether the bridge project could create liability for the Town, including potential flooding impacts in Ross.

Public Works Director Rich Simonitch stated he is not aware of any specific liability risks associated with the project, said the project is expected to reduce upstream flood risk and has received a no-rise certification confirming it will not increase downstream flood elevations during a 100-year flood event.

Mayor McMillan asked whether the Town will file a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR). Mr. Simonitch confirmed that staff will do so after completion of the NEPA process. He explained that the filing is required because the project will reduce upstream flood elevations and modify FEMA flood maps. He expects FEMA approval, although the process may take time.

Mayor McMillan opened the public comment period.

Mathew Salter, a neighborhood resident, stated that the bridge is widely used by residents and children as the only safe crossing of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard for the Winship Park neighborhood. He expressed support for replacing the bridge and encouraged the Town to move forward with the project.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins moved, and Council Member Dowling seconded, to approve Consent Agenda Item k. Motion carried (4-0-1; Salter recused).

End of Consent Agenda.

11. Public Hearing on Planning Projects – Part 1.

a. **3 Willow Hill Road, Design Review, Hillside Lot Permit, Nonconformity Permit, Variance, and Town Council consideration of adoption of Resolution No. 2630 approving the project, subject to conditions.**

Scott Fletcher, Fisher Architecture, 3 Willow Hill Road, Parcel Number: 073-252-13, Zoning: R-1: B-A, General Plan: VL (Very Low Density), Flood Zone: X

Project Summary: Town Council consideration for Design Review, Nonconformity Permit, Hillside Lot Permit and a Variance. The project includes an interior remodel with new windows and doors, a Juliet balcony off the sunroom, and an exterior staircase connecting to the deck. Additionally, the project proposes reconstruction of the existing nonconforming two-level rear deck, with a reduction in size, and addition of a BBQ area and a steel trellis/sunshade at the upper level. New terraces with stacked stone walls and a hot tub are also proposed in the rear yard. A new parking deck is proposed adjacent to the garage. A Variance is required to construct the terraces, terrace walls, steel trellis/sunshade and hot tub in the side and rear yard setbacks, BBQ in the rear yard setback and a parking deck in the front yard setback.

Planning Director Roberta Feliciano presented the staff report for a proposal at 3 Willow Hill Road requesting Design Review, a Hillside Lot Permit, a Nonconformity Permit, and a Variance, along with adoption of Resolution No. 2630 approving the project subject to conditions.

The ADR Group reviewed the project and recommended approval, with suggestions to reduce the size of the sunshade trellis, simplify the staircase design, and expand the parking deck. The applicant revised the plans accordingly.

Staff found the project appropriately responds to site constraints, including steep topography, an irregular lot shape, and existing nonconforming setbacks, while maintaining neighborhood compatibility and minimizing visual impacts. Staff recommended approval of the project, subject to conditions, and noted that both staff and the applicant were available to answer questions.

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

Council Member Dowling moved, and Mayor Pro Tem Robbins seconded, to adopt Resolution No. 2630 approving the project for Design Review, Nonconformity Permit, Hillside Lot Permit and a Variance, subject to conditions at 3 Willow Road. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

b. 111 Bolinas Avenue, Design Review, ADU Permit, Nonconformity Permit and Town Council consideration of adoption of Resolution No. 2631 approving the project, subject to conditions.

Tom and Tallie Fishburne, Jochum Architects, 111 Bolinas Avenue, Parcel Number: 073-041-07, Zoning: R-1, General Plan: M (Medium Density), Flood Zone: X

Project Summary: Town Council consideration for Design Review, Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Permit, and a Nonconformity Permit. The project proposes converting the existing 492 square foot (SF) cottage into a detached ADU and transfer 206 SF of floor area to the primary residence. The scope of work includes an interior remodel with additions and no changes to exterior materials. The project also proposes to expand the rear deck to align with the addition. A Nonconformity Permit is required to allow the existing nonconforming single family residence and rear deck to be enlarged. An ADU Permit is required to transfer 206 SF as additions to the primary residence.

A Nonconformity Permit is required to allow extending the house, which is currently nonconforming with respect to setbacks. An ADU Permit is required to allow the existing 492 SF cottage to be converted to a new ADU and transfer 338 SF of floor area to the primary residence.

Planning Director Roberta Feliciano presented the staff report for the proposed project at 111 Bolinas Avenue, including requests for Design Review, an ADU Permit, a Nonconformity Permit, and adoption of Resolution No. 2631 approving the project subject to conditions. The Nonconformity Permit would allow an addition to the existing residence, which does not meet current setback requirements, while the ADU Permit would allow conversion of the existing 492-square-foot cottage into an ADU and transfer 338 square feet of floor area to the primary residence.

The ADR Group reviewed the project and recommended approval, citing support for the ADU conversion and the consistency of materials with the existing home. Staff found the project compatible with neighborhood character and noted that the ADU would contribute toward the Town's housing goals. Staff recommended approval, subject to conditions.

Council Member Salter noted that the applicant incurred approximately $10,000 in project fees and asked whether staff was considering zoning or Municipal Code changes to streamline approvals for similar properties on small lots.

Ms. Feliciano responded that staff could evaluate potential changes as part of the General Plan update and expects to present options at the August meeting. She noted that any changes would require a broader review of land use designations and zoning along Bolinas Avenue, which is currently within a single zoning district.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins moved, and Council Member Dowling seconded, to adopt Resolution No. 2631 approving the project for Design Review, ADU Permit, Nonconformity Permit, subject to conditions at 111 Bolinas Avenue. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

c. **101 Upper Road, Design Review, Hillside Lot Permit, and Town Council consideration of adoption of Resolution No. 2632 approving the project, subject to conditions.**

Property Owner: Jessica and Lexi Viripaeff, Applicant: Imprints Landscape, Street Address: 101 Upper Road, Parcel Number: 073-022-13, Zoning: R-1: B-A, General Plan: VL (Very Low Density), Flood Zone: X

Project Summary: Town Council consideration for Design Review, Hillside Lot Permit, and a Variance. The project consists of new landscape structures including a new pool/spa, pool equipment, patio, firepit, fountain wall, outdoor kitchen, retaining walls over 6-feet high, and an outdoor shower. A variance is required to allow the construction of new landscape structures within the side and rear yard setback and retaining walls over 6 feet. This project was previously approved by the Town Council on June 15, 2023, by Resolution No. 2316, and expired.

Planning Director Roberta Feliciano presented the staff report for the proposed project at 101 Upper Road and consideration for Design Review, Hillside Lot Permit, and Town Council consideration of adoption of Resolution No. 2632 approving the project, subject to conditions. She noted this project was previously approved by the Town Council at the June 2023 meeting and the current request is to reapprove the same project as the prior entitlements have expired.

The project was reviewed by the ADR Group, which recommended support, noting that the design remains consistent with the previously approved plans. Staff recommends the Council consider adoption of the resolution approving the project, subject to conditions. Staff is available to answer questions and the applicant is also present.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins commented she is in line with Council Member Salter's efforts to make things easier for people. She asked to consider a staff approval process to renew a permit that is already expired. Ms. Feliciano said the Town does have that process, but the applicants did not get to apply for an extension before it expired, and this is one of the requirements. The extension is for one year, and she can look at this, as well.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins moved, and Council Member Dowling seconded, to adopt Resolution No. 2632 approving the project for Desing Review, Hillside Lot Permit, and a Variance, subject to conditions, at 101 Upper Road. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

d. **313 Upper Toyon Drive, Design Review and Town Council consideration of adoption of Resolution No. 2633 approving the project, subject to conditions.**

313 Upper Toyon LLC, Element Outdoor Construction, 313 Upper Toyon Drive, Parcel Number: 072-061-18, Zoning: R-1: B-5A, General Plan: VL (Very Low Density), Flood Zone: X

Project Summary: Town Council consideration of Design Review and a Hillside Lot Permit. The project proposes constructing a new swimming pool on an existing flat terrace. An existing indoor pool is in the basement level. The existing indoor pool is currently under demolition, and the new outdoor pool would replace the indoor pool.

Planning Director Roberta Feliciano presented the staff report for the proposed project at 313 Upper Toyon Drive and consideration for Design Review and Town Council consideration of adoption of Resolution No. 2633 approving the project, subject to conditions.

The project was reviewed by the ADR Group which recommended approval, subject to conditions.

Staff is available to answer questions and the applicant is also present.

Council Member Salter asked how swimming pools are regulated under the Hillside Lot Ordinance. Ms. Feliciano explained that hillside lots are subject to more restrictive setbacks, which can range from 45 to 75 feet depending on the size of the residence. She noted that the proposed pool complies with the required setbacks and does not require a variance.

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

Council Member Dowling moved, and Mayor Pro Tem Robbins seconded, to adopt Resolution No. 2633 approving the project for Design Review and a Hillside Lot Permit, subject to conditions, at 313 Upper Toyon Drive. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

End of Public Hearing on Planning Project Part 1.

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

Administrative Agenda.

12. Town Council to receive and accept the Quarterly Investment Report for the nine-month period through March 31, 2026.

Town Manager Johnson presented the Quarterly Investment Report for the period ending March 31, 2026. She reported that the Town's investments comply with the adopted Investment Policy and California law and are managed with the objectives of safety, liquidity, and yield.

At the Council's direction, the Town had transferred $10 million from LAIF to a U.S. Bank investment account in September 2025. As of March 31, 2026, the account had a fair market value of $10.08 million, an increase of approximately $96,000 from the prior quarter. Town Manager Johnson explained that accrued interest paid on bond purchases will be recovered through future interest payments, and any unrealized gains or losses will remain on paper as long as the Town holds the securities to maturity. Town Treasurer Kuhn and Aaron Bonck of Time Value Investments were available to answer questions.

Council Member Salter asked Mr. Bonck to speak to the volatility in interest rates seen this year.

Aaron Bonck, Vice President and Investment Advisor with Time Value Investments, reported that the Town's portfolio remains invested in securities permitted under the Investment Policy and State law, primarily government bonds and federally insured CDs. He explained that market value fluctuations are largely driven by changes in interest rates. Interest rates increased beginning in late February and early March, resulting in potential declines in the market value of fixed-income securities. Because most of that volatility occurred after March 31, it is not reflected in the current report, but may be reflected in the next quarter's report.

Mr. Bonck further noted that the Town's investments are relatively conservative and less volatile than many other investments. Any market value changes would remain unrealized unless securities are sold before maturity.

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

The Town Council received and accepted the Quarterly Investment Report and thanked Mr. Bonck for his presentation.

13. Town Council consideration to adopt Resolution No. 2635 approving the Ross Valley Paramedic Authority Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement, and authorizing the Town Manager to execute the Agreement.

Town Manager Johnson referred to the bottom of page 4 in the financial section of the staff report, noting the section got transposed and to disregard it. There were some modest legal expenses and staff time s that needs to be reviewed and approved by all 8 of the member agencies. It is her understanding that a handful of the governing boards have already approved the amendment. She asked the Council to disregard that section. She then introduced Ross Valley Fire Department Chief Dan Mahoney.

Fire Chief Dan Mahoney presented the amended and restated JPA, noting the original agreement dates to 1982. Following a 2024 Citygate study of governance, finance, and deployment, the RVPA Board directed staff to revise the agreement to centralize operations and financial management. The updated JPA, effective July 1, 2027 upon approval, implements those directives and complies with the JPA Act.

The governance structure remains largely unchanged, but the agreement adds 2/3 vote requirements for major actions, including expenditures exceeding 3.5% of the operating budget, member removal, budget increases after adoption, and termination. The Executive Officer will now be appointed by the Board.

Financial provisions maintain the July 1–June 30 fiscal year and existing funding mechanisms, including parcel tax and transport revenues. The agreement aims to equalize tax rates over time and allows for an "up to" tax rate that can be adjusted downward if full funding is not needed. Once rates are equalized by 2031, net operating surpluses will be distributed to members for paramedic services.

Membership provisions require a 2/3 vote and member approval for new agencies, which must also adopt the supporting tax. Member removal requires a 2/3 vote for cause, and withdrawal requires two years' notice. Termination of the JPA also requires a 2/3 vote. The agreement clarifies that RVPA debts are not obligations of individual members and includes mutual indemnification protections.

Chief Mahoney noted the agreement reflects extensive review and input from the Board, member agencies, and staff over the past two years. Staff recommended adoption of Resolution No. 26-35 approving the amended JPA and authorizing execution by the Town Manager.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins questioned the 2/3 vote requirement for removing a member agency, asking whether it refers solely to a Board vote or requires approval by all member agencies. Chief Mahoney responded that it is a 2/3 vote of the Board, which represents the member agencies.

Mayor McMillan referenced Section 10.2.1, confirming the language specifies a 2/3 Board vote.

Council Member Salter asked about differences in tax rates, specifically regarding Corte Madera. Chief Mahoney explained that Corte Madera historically had a different tax rate tied to prior service levels and funding decisions, and that the new JPA aims to equalize tax rates across member agencies over approximately four years. He noted Corte Madera has already approved the agreement.

Council Member Salter confirmed the current arrangement and equalization plan. Chief Mahoney added that all agencies provide the same level of service under the RVPA.

Mayor McMillan asked which agencies have approved the JPA. Chief Mahoney responded that Corte Madera has approved it, and San Anselmo and Sleepy Hollow Fire Protection District have also approved it, while he was unsure about Kentfield.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins further noted that certain actions, such as admitting new members or adopting amendments, require a 2/3 Board vote followed by unanimous approval of all member agencies, depending on the action. She emphasized that different provisions require different levels of Board versus member agency approval under the agreement.

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

Council Member Dowling noted the JPA reflected a thoughtful two-year process. Chief Mahoney agreed, contrasting it with the original 1982 one-and-a-half-page agreement and emphasizing the collaborative effort involved in developing the revised document.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins suggested improving the review process so Council Members and Town staff have earlier input before Board action, noting this was the Council's first formal review. Mayor McMillan responded that the Town's Board liaison had opportunities to review and comment, and that the Council relies on that representation. Mayor Pro Tem Robbins acknowledged she had the opportunity to comment at the Board level but felt engagement occurred later in the process.

Council Member Kircher, attending as alternate, said earlier discussions involved significant uncertainty among member agencies, but he was pleased a workable agreement had been reached. He viewed the final JPA as the result of extensive negotiation, beneficial for maintaining participation across all jurisdictions. He added that, based on his review, the amended agreement appeared acceptable.

Council Member Dowling moved, and Mayor Pro Tem Robbins seconded, to adopt Resolution No. 2635 approving the Ross Valley Paramedic Authority Amended and Restated Joint Powers Agreement, and authorizing the Town Manager to execute the Agreement. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

14. Town Council consideration to adopt Resolution No. 2637 calling the November 3, 2026, calling for an election for renewal of the Ross Valley Paramedic Authority ("RVPA") four-year special parcel tax for 2027-2031 and requesting the Marin County Board of Supervisors consolidate the election with the Statewide General Election, in accordance with Elections Code §10002 and §10418.

Town Manager Johnson noted typographical errors in the ordinance attached to the resolution in the staff report. She explained that, if approved by Council, the ordinance would not take effect until after voter approval in November. Staff has coordinated with the Town Attorney, corrected the errors, with revisions limited to pages 6 and 7 of the ordinance, and the Council was provided a redlined version. A clean copy was also distributed, including to Council Member Kircher prior to the meeting, and additional clean copies were made available for the public in the chamber.

Fire Chief Dan Mahoney presented the staff report on the parcel tax, which funds approximately 50% of RVPA operations, with the remainder supported by transport revenues. The next four-year tax cycle would run from July 1, 2027 through June 30, 2031, requiring voter approval in November 2026. He noted projections account for potential revenue reductions (including Medicare/Medi-Cal changes), labor cost increases, inflation, and other operational factors. Tax rates may be adjusted downward during the cycle if funding needs decrease, subject to Board approval, while maintaining equalization across member agencies.

The tax is levied per parcel and by non-residential square footage. For Ross, the proposed rate increases from the current $103.50 to an additional $4 annually over the new cycle. Corte Madera would see higher annual increases to align rates across agencies within four years. The proposal also reduces the non-residential threshold from 1,500 to 1,000 square feet to standardize across jurisdictions.

Chief Mahoney recommended adoption of Resolution No. 26-37 calling the November 3, 2026 election for renewal of the RVPA parcel tax and requesting consolidation with the statewide general election.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins proposed revising the ballot language preamble from "maintain rapid 911 emergency response times and preserve the number of on-duty paramedics..." to "maintain locally controlled ambulance service staffed by paramedics available to assist in 911 emergencies," stating the existing wording is outdated and may not fully reflect current conditions or be optimal if challenged. She emphasized the change would not alter the tax structure or amounts.

Assistant City Attorney Sleiman indicated the revision may be feasible but would need confirmation with RVPA and the County to ensure legal compliance. Chief Mahoney noted the language had been reviewed by a political consultant and the County Elections Office, and he was not certain of the implications of changing it. He acknowledged that ballot language requirements include multiple constraints beyond wording content.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins reiterated that her proposed change affects only the introductory justification language, not the tax rate or structure.

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

Mayor McMillan asked whether Council preferred referring the revised ballot language to the Town Attorney and RVPA for review, with consideration at the July 9 meeting, or adopting the language as presented.

Council Member Salter supported the proposed revisions. Council Member Dowling questioned terminology in the existing wording and supported replacing "available to assist" with "available to respond," which the Council generally agreed upon. Mayor Pro Tem Robbins believed existing language is outdated and implies outcomes that are not guaranteed. She reiterated that her proposed changes affect only the ballot language preamble, not the tax structure.

Town Manager Johnson cautioned that the phrase "locally controlled" may require further review due to its applicability across multiple agencies, not just the Town of Ross.

Council Member Kircher supported further review of alternative language, noting that failure to pass the measure could eliminate the RVPA entirely and shift services to a non-local provider. He recommended vetting the language with election officials before finalizing. Council Member Dowling confirmed support to continue the item, if needed.

Mayor McMillan summarized consensus to have staff and counsel review revised language and return on July 9. Council Members generally agreed to modify "assist" and further evaluate "locally controlled."

Mayor McCormick suggested changing "locally controlled" to "local" and the only other change is replace "assist" with "respond." It would read: <u>"To maintain ~~locally controlled~~ **local** ambulance service staffed by paramedics available to ~~assist~~ **respond** in 911 emergencies, shall the Ross Valley</u>...."

Chief Mahoney suggested changing "<u>in</u> 911 emergencies" to "<u>**to**</u> 911 emergencies."

Council Member Dowling moved, and Mayor Pro Tem Robbins seconded, to continue the item to July 9, 2026, subject to various parties checking to approve the revised language to state: <u>"To maintain local ambulance service staffed by paramedics available to respond to 911 emergencies, shall the Ross Valley</u>...." Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

15. Town Council consideration to adopt Resolution No. 2626 calling the November 3, 2026, candidate election for Two (2) Regular Term Four-Year (4-year) positions on the Ross Town Council and requesting the Marin County Board of Supervisors to consolidate said election with any other elections conducted on the same day, in accordance with Elections Code §10002 and §10418.

Town Manager Johnson introduced Zach Koblick de Leon to provide the staff report.

Town Clerk/Senior Management Analyst Koblick de Leon presented Resolution No. 2626 calling the November 3, 2026, regular municipal election and requesting consolidation with the Statewide General Election under Elections Code §§10002 and 10418. He explained that two 4-year Town Council seats will appear on the ballot. State law requires Council approval of a resolution requesting the Marin County Board of Supervisors to consolidate and administer the election.

The resolution: (1) calls the election and requests consolidation; (2) identifies the two seats up for election; (3) authorizes reimbursement to the County for election costs; and (4) confirms compliance with applicable state election procedures.

Nomination filing opens July 13, 2026, and closes August 7, 2026. If an incumbent does not file, the deadline extends to August 12 for non-incumbents. The signed resolution must be submitted to the County Elections Department by August 7. Costs will be determined by the County and are budgeted by the Town. The action is exempt from CEQA. Staff recommended adoption of Resolution No. 2626.

Council Member Salter asked and confirmed a full page in the Ross Review would be prepared for this month outlining steps on how residents can file and that an e-blast can also be done for the Ross Review.

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

Council Member Dowling moved, and Mayor Pro Tem Robbins seconded, to adopt Resolution No. 2626 calling the November 3, 2026, candidate election for Two (2) Regular Term Four-Year (4-year) positions on the Ross Town Council and requesting the Marin County Board of Supervisors to consolidate said election with any other elections conducted on the same day, in accordance with Elections Code §10002 and §10418. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

16. Town Council to:

- **a) Receive a presentation on the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027 (FYE 2027) budget;**
- **b) Adopt Resolution No. 2628 approving the FYE 2027 budget, setting the public safety parcel tax rate, and amending the Town's Salary Schedule;**
- **c) Adopt Resolution No. 2629 setting the Town's appropriations limit as provided in Government Code Section 7910 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027.**

Town Manager Johnson presented the FY 2026–27 budget and thanked Council and staff, including Senior Accountant Elena Kurakina and consultant Elizabeth Ford, for their work on its development. The CIP was updated to include a $1 million Ross Common rehabilitation project and that the budget continues funding the Civic Center Campus modernization reserve. By fiscal year-end 2027, reserves are projected to total $13.7 million.

Council Member Salter asked whether updated CalPERS pension liability figures were included. Senior Accountant Kurakina stated the most recent available figures were presented at the April workshop, with CalPERS valuations issued annually each July and based on prior-year data.

Town Manager Johnson clarified that the most recent valuation showed a significant improvement in the Town's unfunded pension liability, though future valuations may fluctuate. She indicated staff will coordinate with the Finance Subcommittee and actuarial consultants to review assumptions and investment strategy.

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

Mayor McMillan thanked staff for guiding the Council through, as well as to Public Works Director Rich Simonitch for the CIP and said the Town is in good shape for the upcoming year going forward.

Council Member Dowling moved, and Mayor Pro Tem Robbins seconded, to adopt Resolution No. 2628 approving the FYE 2027 budget, setting the public safety parcel tax rate, and amending the Town's Salary Schedule; adopt Resolution No. 2629 setting the Town's appropriations limit as provided in Government Code Section 7910 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027. Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

17. Town Council to receive an update from staff regarding the status of the implementation of the Town of Ross Facilities Master Plan.

Town Manager Johnson said staff promised to give the Council regular updates regarding the Ross Facilities Master Plan. The last update was provided at the first meeting in April, and she stated Project Manager David Kelley will present.

Project Manager David Kelley gave the staff report, stating he will provide an update on the implementation of the Facilities Master Plan to cover five primary objectives: 1) Update the Council on implementation activities since the last update on April 2nd; 2) Provide a brief summary of procurement efforts with respect to professional consultants; 3) Provide a status update on their evaluation potential affordable housing partners; 4) Provide the Council with an update on the implementation on the CAC concept; and 5) Finish with an outline of key upcoming project milestones and next steps.

Since April, a significant amount of work has been completed. Major accomplishments include review and evaluation of the architectural and engineering statement of qualifications the Town received, for a total of ten which were reviewed. Staff was impressed with the qualifications of consultants who submitted proposals. Staff initiated review of two statements of qualifications for affordable housing including Brilliant Corners, who is partnering with a local non-profit called Life House, as well as a local group named Cedars. Lastly, the Council adopted Resolution 2023 which provided direction to staff to begin implementation of an amendment to the Facilities Master Plan and staff has been working on that.

In addition, other activities completed included one meeting of the Council Subcommittee to review the architectural and engineering statement of qualifications. There was a presentation given to Council by Fieldman Rolapp on potential financing options by staff. An article was prepared for the Ross Review providing an update on Facility Master Plan activities, and coordinating telecommunication efforts to address both relocation of the existing telecommunication facilities and coordination of an updated lease agreement. They prepared a comparative evaluation matrix for the committee's review of architectural and engineering firms and they also coordinated with Griffin Structures regarding a procurement implementation strategy for future Council consideration. The purpose of all of this was to prepare the Town for project validation, concept refinement of the CAC alternative and supporting environmental review and future design services.

In terms of the affordable housing RFQ, they received two statements of qualifications from Brilliant Corners and Cedars. Staff met with both project teams, held initial meetings to talk about their development experience, project goals, and how they may finance the project in collaboration with the Town. Next steps in that process include continued evaluation. They obtained lists of their local projects, identify opportunities for additional partnerships to make a project feasible, and ultimately to bring them back to Council for consideration. The goals of the Housing Element would be to enter into an exclusive negotiating agreement with the selected partner that would solidify moving forward with that partner to deliver affordable housing.

In terms of the CAC concept, the Council made a significant milestone when Resolution 2623 was adopted. It identified the concept as your preferred alternative. As such, staff has reviewed concept plans and their supporting materials, did an initial evaluation of the operational considerations particularly around fire service with the goal of supporting Town Council discussions in preparation of agenda materials and bringing that resolution forward.

The Council provided direction to staff to move forward with the preferred concept at the May 6th meeting by resolution 2623. The resolution speaks to the next step of validating assumptions. They refer to those as technical, operational, and financial. A technical validation would be to look at the space programming that was provided as part of that concept.

In terms of operations, they look at on-site circulation and there are still opportunities to see where driveways and entrances can be located and to make sure they work for safe ingress and egress, as well as identify specific number of parking spaces and where some of the elements that are identified in the current master plan were not identified on the CAC concept. This includes secure parking for police as well as the corporation yard for Public Works. As part of that amendment, they want to make sure all of those things are identified in a cohesive plan.

Lastly, the financial is to develop a fully encumbered budget that includes and identifies the cost of the full development of the civic center project.

Staff has been working on coordinating the future of critical telecommunication facilities for the civic center property. He noted one of the elements the planning team representing the telecommunication entities provided was some samples of stealth poles, which he displayed. Staff has identified one of the concerns with respect to cell towers is the visual impact of a 70 foot pole. They will seek opportunities to mitigate visual impacts of these on the site. Staff continues to work with them to identify an appropriate style and type of a tower that would work for the site while preserving flexibility for future civic center development. There are provisions in the lease agreement with the paramedic authority regarding the setback distance for the tower and its location, and they want to be sure it does not conflict with any future development of the civic center.

Looking forward, several activities planned include:

- Amendment of the FMP;
- Technical, operational, and financial validation of the CAC concept;
- Bringing forward a discussion on the procurement and project delivery strategy in coordination with Griffin Structures;
- Continue work started on the affordable housing partnership;
- Coordinate the effort PW Director Rich Simonitch has been working on—undergrounding of utilities and looking at the future development of the civic center and ensuring undergrounding work prepares for future development of the civic center; and
- To guide future environmental review.

Regarding Griffin Structures, they have been engaged under a professional services agreement by the Town to assist the Town as the owner's representative. They were founded in 1981 and have been around a long time and serving as a diversified owner's representative, have strong skill sets in program and project management, and they serve both public, private, and non-profits.

In July, staff plans on bringing forward a discussion for Council with the assistance of Griffin Structures that talks about delivery methods, looking at three delivery strategies that include progressive design build. Staff tracks the efforts by Marin County to implement progressive design with the intent to address cost, project delivery, and risk. There are pros and cons with each so staff will bring that forward for Council discussion. Progressive design build will ultimately require additional work in coordination with the Town Attorney's office on making sure they have the appropriate tools in their Municipal Code to be able to effectively implement design build. The Town Attorney has already put staff in contact with his team and they are working on scheduling a meeting to discuss next steps in preparation for this next presentation to the Council.

Mr. Kelley then presented a slide that outlines the tentative timeline with the proposed FMP amendment process. In the next item, staff is asking the Council to authorize release of RFPs, receipt of the proposals in July, followed by a staff and subcommittee evaluation proposals, and ultimately to bring back a consultant selection recommendation in August. The schedule remains preliminary and it may be adjusted by Council.

He summarized those items completed and ongoing items, stating the FMP represents a long-term investment in the Town's ability to provide critical public services, support public safety, and advance or address the Housing Element's affordable housing objectives. Staff appreciates the Council's guidance and direction as this project advances, and he was available for questions.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins referred to the timing for choosing the architecture and engineering consultant, she asked what would it take to move up the schedule on that from the August meeting to be sooner. Town Manager Johnson said they would not be able to make the July 9th meeting because of the 4th of July holiday and the packet will be published on July 2nd.

She inquired as to the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem Robbins' availability because once they get the proposals in, then they will need time for review, put them in a format to help facilitate the subcommittee meeting on Wednesday of that week and then staff must bring forward to Council an agreement. They have a standard professional services agreement and ideally, this will not take long to sign. However, if this does not happen, they have to do some back and forth, so she cannot promise when it will be. The meeting is August 13th, so she envisions they could hold a special meeting dependent on the Council's schedule so staff will do their best.

Mayor McMillan asked if the consultants need until the July date to submit their responses. She asked if that window could be shortened and meet the July deadline. Town Manager Johnson said this has not been their advice from Griffin Structures. This deadline is already pushing it and to shorten it, it is not realistic, but they will get it out as quickly as possible, and Mr. Kelley concurred with these comments noting the City is asking consultants for a fixed fee proposal.

Town Manager Johnson asked if Council Members could send their availability for the latter half of July and early August and dates they cannot make a special meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins said if the subcommittee meeting is just before the Council meeting, she wondered if they couldn't make that decision on July 11th, and she will move anything to make that work.

Town Manager Johnson said the reason she asked her if she could be available on July 9th is that she thinks it is effective to have in-person meetings. Mr. Kelley will be here as well as their consultant, Dustin Alamo with Griffin Structures. They will provide a study session with the Council regarding the procurement strategies. Often times, the submittals come bound, in different sizes, and they need to be in front of Council Members. If that day is not possible, she will schedule it earlier in the week but it will have to be by Zoom. Also, to approve a professional services agreement, the packet will be published on July 2nd, and the item must be agendized with specific information. Therefore, she asked for the Council's dates of availability.

Mayor McMillan asked if it would help if there were fewer architects the Town was asking to submit proposals. She heard from Dan Winey yesterday and he advised them of 4 firms he thinks would do a wonderful job on this project. It seems that would reduce the amount of work for staff.

Town Manager Johnson asked if the 4 firms include his own firm, and Mayor McMillan confirmed. Mayor McMillan said she and Mayor Pro Tem Robbins spoke with the Town Attorney regarding this and he does not seem to think this is a problem. Assistant Town Attorney Mariam Sleiman said this is ultimately the Council's decision.

Mr. Kelley noted that they discussed whether it was beneficial to shorten the list even further and there wasn't consensus on the top 4 firms. Assuming the Council directs staff to submit the RFP to those 10 firms, it does not mean they will all submit either, so it keeps the door open for them to submit proposals.

Council Member Salter said often the Council talks about how little staff the Town has and this is a lot of tax on staff to try and put things together. They do have a group of 10 experts that have assembled to assist in this process. He wondered how much they can leverage this group to do a lot of the heavy lifting and come back in an accelerated timeline.

Town Manager Johnson said if Assistant Town Attorney Sleiman does not have a problem with the Council continuing to talk about it under this agenda item, if the Council was to approve the release for the RFP this evening, staff gets it out tomorrow and Monday at the latest, there is no role for her or Mr. Kelley to play until they receive those proposals back. As Mr. Kelley explained, there are many things these firms need to do. We are then saying we get the proposals and we are describing to the Council we only need one or two days of staff time to go through them and put them in a matrix just to facilitate the appointed subcommittee's discussion. The subcommittee will need some time to review the documents so they have a good, healthy discussion. So, she is not seeing where the savings and time is.

Council Member Salter suggested having the proposals go to the 10 experts for review and creation of a matrix, and hopefully turn that around more quickly.

Town Manager Johnson said the Council established a subcommittee of the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem. They will come back with a recommendation to authorize her to enter into an agreement with a firm to amend the FMP. There is not a role for anybody behind staff and the subcommittee. She said a Council Member cannot delegate his decision-making to an outside group. They have a Council/Manager form of government and until this is changed, they must work through the Town Manager. In addition, there are other state laws, the Municipal Code, and her employment agreement. She is not saying there is not a role, but all Council Members indicated they did not want to appoint residents to a committee. So, she is following that, working with the subcommittee, and this is her response.

Council Member Salter said as opposed to having a fully complete agreement for the Council to approve, there could be a motion to negotiate a contract with one of the architects as opposed to having a fully baked agreement. Mayor Pro Tem Robbins asked if they could do that, or give direction to negotiate.

Town Manager Johnson said there are two ways City Managers can bring back contracts to the Council. Except for one time since she has been with the Town has she brought a contract that was negotiated and executed. That is very risky for Town Managers. It is not something that Town Attorneys will usually recommend. The best thing is to always bring an agreement to the Council attached to a staff report because this is the Council's job—to make decisions and authorize her to enter into an agreement. She would be a fool to negotiate and execute an agreement with the political contentious nature of this. She thinks the Council should be looking at this timeline. They get the proposals on July 2nds. The subcommittee meets in the early part of next week. Hopefully, the Council can indicate their availability to meet in July/early August, assuming they receive good proposals and assuming they are able to reach agreement. They have the template from the Town Attorney. They bring it to the Council and if approved, the consultant starts moving. So, she is not seeing a big delay. The Council directed her to initiate an amendment to the FMP in an expeditious manner at the last Council meeting on May 6th. Staff put this RFP together and brought it tonight to take action.

Assistant Town Attorney Sleiman noted they have started to shift toward Item 18, so she thinks timelines fit into the report, but she recommended receiving this report and go to Item 18.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins also noted that she and the Mayor can communicate with the committee.

Mayor McMillan opened the public comment period, and there were no speakers. She then moved to the next item 18.

18. Town Council to:

a) **Authorize issuance of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for professional planning, architectural, engineering, technical evaluation, and cost estimating services necessary to prepare an amendment to the Ross Civic Center Facilities Master Plan consistent with Resolution No. 2623; and**
b) **Direct staff to distribute the RFP to the ten consulting teams that previously submitted Statements of Qualifications in response to the Town's Architectural and Engineering Services RFQ.**

Project Manager David Kelley gave the staff report and PowerPoint presentation, stating staff's recommendation is to issue an RFP to the 10 consulting firms that previously submitted statements of qualifications to the Town in April. The purpose of this item is to advance implementation of Resolution 2623 to move the civic center project forward that will update the FMP and implement the Council's preferred alternative.

He then provided an historical account of the matter and reasons why an amendment to the FMP is needed as well as the actions needed to result in refinement of the preferred alternative, validate the operational requirements which he described, set a boundary between civic center uses and affordable housing and define these better, and develop implementation recommendations.

Tonight's action will enable establishment of a strong planning and implementation foundation before committing hundreds of thousands of dollars in terms of design, but what it will not do is provide construction documents, design development or select a design architect. These decisions will come later and the Council will also hold discussion on project delivery and procurement which will help inform that.

In terms of the consultant selection approach, 10 SOQs were received. When staff developed the initial RFQ, they always knew it would be a two-step process going from the RFQ to RFP which is the natural way to select a consultant for this kind of work. Staff's goal will be to obtain a fixed fee proposal. There are 6 specific tasks listed in the scope of work, which he described, and a key aspect of the way staff is bringing this forward is to maintain transparency, support competition amongst the firms, and provide for continuity in the process.

Staff understands there is strong interest in moving quickly to design as fast as possible. There have been public comments submitted as to how they can move to schematic design. There are still a number of operational issues that remain and those revolve around parking, infrastructure, utilities, public works corporation yard, secured parking, ingress and egress, and staff wants to get these resolved as quickly as possible as part of this amendment so they can avoid redesign later, change orders, and any conflicting assumptions. Right now, they have a concept and FMP and they need to marry those two together and make sure it all works, and that is how to advance this project in a coordinated fashion.

They recognize that schematic design can improve cost accuracy with a solid plan and detailed cost estimating. It will provide the Council with enough information to inform whether they would like to put a measure on the ballot and what they might ask voters to fund and notwithstanding beginning that design process will increase the scope and cost now pretty substantially. Traditionally, it is no longer a fixed fee scenario for A&E firms. It is based on project costs. Almost all architectural firms today ask for what the project cost is, and they will base their fee as a percentage of that project cost, so it is important to know the project cost. This is something the Town will touch on with Griffin Structures and procurement delivery methods to address some of that and risk issues around cost.

They recognize schematic design would advance the project into architectural design, but from his perspective, it is premature because planning has not been complete. Staff's recommendation is to maintain a planning focus at this time on amendment of the FMP and hold off on the schematic design piece before moving to the next design phase. If the Council is set on looking at schematic design, they must be ready to absorb the additional costs.

There is a middle approach the Council could implement as part of the RFP, as an enhanced concept validation concept. This is where you ask the architectural firm to a number of things—concept floor plans, building test fits to see how the layouts will work, space stacking studies, and massing studies. They are starting to get into design. It is not quite there and more advanced planning, but he wanted to lay that out as an option in case the Council would like to "design light." However, it is more than the planning work the Town is calling for in the RFP.

In conclusion, as part of these efforts, the Town would get an updated master plan, a refined concept in terms of the assistance of the CAC which includes all elements identified in the master plan, updated cost estimates along with a set of validated operational requirements, along with implementation recommendations on how the project may or may not be phased or sequenced and pros and cons and benefits thereof.

Tonight's action is the next step in implementation, which is to retain the professional services of an architect to amend the plan and prepare for implementation. Staff's recommendation is to authorize issuance of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for professional planning, architectural, engineering, technical evaluation, and cost estimating services necessary to prepare an amendment to the Ross Civic Center Facilities Master Plan consistent with Resolution No. 2623; and direct staff to distribute the RFP to the ten consulting teams that previously submitted Statements of Qualifications in response to the Town's Architectural and Engineering Services RFQ.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins said Mr. Kelley refers to the CAC's plan as the preferred alternative, but at the May 6th meeting the Council voted to adopt that and she asked why they were calling it an alternative. Mr. Kelley agreed but it is a way of characterizing the selection of the CAC alternative. The current plan had A, B, and C, and they could call it Alternative D, but really it is the concept approved by Council.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins asked how did they get from May 6th setting up the committee to choose an architect and then had the May 12 meeting to talk about the qualifications and then the next day instead of choosing an architect, they are updating the FMP.

Mr. Kelley explained there is the action the Council took to adopt Resolution 2623 which provides specific direction to staff to move forward with the plan amendment. Fast-forward to the subcommittee meeting and they discussed the SOQs received. He thinks it is fair to say there was not a consensus on the firms. Part of the conversation was around project delivery which factors into architectural selection, as well. This is where the discussion around the progressive design project delivery method was discussed.

The goal was to bring forward a conversation and discussion item among Council to outline the pros and cons of different project delivery methods. Once you have chosen that method or direction has been given on that method, it factors into what architect they might choose to do the design work. Given the Council's direction to move forward with amending the plan, understanding they want to have conversation with Council to receive direction on procurement, they think that conversation needs to have happened before an architect is selected because they may not select an architect but instead a contractor design team that does the entire project. But, what they do not have to support that effort is a complete plan.

So, the "elephant in the room" is whether the design includes a fully programmed fire station or not. This was discussed by the subcommittee and hopefully that question will be answered because does the Council want an architect to build a full fire station or not. This will be answered with the procurement conversation. He thinks they can move forward, get the resolution implemented, have a concrete plan they are basing this next procurement discussion on.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins asked why they did not insert updating the FMP instead of going straight to a procurement decision, hire an architect, and then work on the project. She feels like this should have been something that should have been talked about at the Council level because they did not get to decide that.

Mr. Kelley said staff is trying to implement the Council's direction with respect to the Resolution in providing an amendment to the FMP. As a former City Manager and Planner, he likes to have a plan in place before he goes to the next stage of designing and building a project. They want to know what they are designing and building if the Council supports a progressive design process, understanding what that program is, and this is where their goal is to have Griffin Structures provide the advice on how to move the process forward. Ultimately, if the Council decides on progressive design which he thinks there will be support for but does not know yet, there is a lot of work that goes into it and there will time necessary to make the necessary amendments to the Municipal Code.

In thinking through this, he recommended getting the FMP amended because this is what the Resolution says and the Council has directed. Then they know there is clear certainty around all validation efforts, what it is they are constructing because there are some unknown elements, but there is a lot more effort in taking the plan from concept to reality. He thinks it will ultimately save the Town money down the road by answering those planning questions upfront. Assuming the Council wants to transition to design build or progressive design build which is intended to save time on the back end and costs, it will work itself out in terms of the project timeline.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins asked what is the ballpark figure staff thinks for this phase in updating the FMP. Mr. Kelley said he would estimate several hundred thousand dollars, but he does not know. This is where the project team for completing each of the tasks, their subconsultants and what their billing rates are will all be plugged into that master spreadsheet they submit and that will be the telltale sign of what it costs. He has not done an analysis for each task and does not know their billing rates, so it could have a wide range.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins asked if it is possible to delete on page 5 the proposal that the consultant "validates and updates the previous Concept B estimates and evaluate differences resulting from the CAC concept." It talks about Concept B estimate and the cost. Concept B is not something they are considering any longer, so she asked why they would have the consultants look back at that.

Mr. Kelley said he would need to look at the RFP in more detail. He thinks the intent was to make sure that is a source of information that could be used in guiding cost estimating going forward, but the intent is not to go back and redo cost estimates for Concept B. This is part of the record for these updated cost elements and there are some additional elements that need to be included to ensure the cost is reflective of the work to carry it out. The Council and staff could look at that language.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins asked if there is any reason not to send these RFPs to the short list she and the Mayor were talking about because some of those firms were on the list at the subcommittee meeting, so they have narrowed things down a bit. It sounded from the subcommittee that there are many firms they would not consider working with, given their experience and reputation. It seems like asking them to do a lot of work.

Town Manager Johnson said staff would very much like to get this out tomorrow or Monday at the latest. They did not leave that subcommittee meeting on May 12th with a consensus about what the short list would be so she does not feel comfortable having one of the competitors telling them which four, including his own firm, they choose. If the subcommittee would like to meet and talk about that next week and short-listing it, this means the issue will be delayed further, and she was happy to do that.

Mayor McMillan suggested the Council stay with questions. She said staff said "fully burdened cost estimate" and she asked if this is something that will be concrete enough that they can use to include in the GO Bond. Mr. Kelley said his general inclination is "yes." Dustin Alamo from Griffin is here via Zoom. They have had several conversations with him about what is necessary to inform a potential bond measure. If they have solid cost estimates, especially that have been reviewed by a team of professionals who are working on civic center projects up and down California, they will be making sure the estimate is reflective of what it costs to deliver a project. So, he thinks the intent is to have a solid estimate that could inform a ballot measure.

Mayor McMillan said she thinks this is the most important thing because they need that number in order to make the filing by December 4th to have it on the ballot by March. So, that is the information they need. They also need to reconcile all operational things mentioned. One thing she did not hear Mr. Kelley say is whether they will elevate the bays out of the floodplain or not. She asked if this is something that the amendment of the FMP would address or something addressed later once there is a long-term architect chosen for the project.

Mr. Kelley said this is part of the validation effort-to determine if the bays need to be raised out of the floodplain. This will need to be part of the cost estimate and having the team have expertise in evaluating that issue and ensuring they conform with the appropriate rules and regulations is going to be critical.

Mayor McMillan suggested including this in the RFP. She also said the CAC was recommending they get as-builts of the building and also open up various areas of the structure to determine the integrity of the walls and foundation, etc. She asked if that is something that happens during amendment of the FMP. Mr. Kelley said they did not specifically call out work for as-builts. This is usually done in the schematic design phase, but that may be something staff can look at.

Mayor McMillan said she just wants to be as thorough as possible with these numbers. They do not want to go out for a bond and be off by $5 million and then be in the middle of the project and run out of money.

Town Manager Johnson asked their consultant, Dustin Alamo, with Griffin Structures to respond to this question—making sure the RFP reflects what they need to have.

Dustin Alamo, Griffin Structures, said specific to the cost estimate and the related budget, cost estimates are usually prepared by architects or representatives of construction costs and a portion of the development cost generally. There are soft costs you want to include in these. So, holistically speaking here, the cost estimate would remain at a planning level in nature, but they would be utilizing current cost market data independently verifying the consultant's information. They as owners/advisors across California and there is a lot of work in this region as well, do projects of similar civic nature. So, that type of cost information would be also validated.

Also, reflecting the specific requirements of the preferred concept, including if you are building a fire station, an essential services facility standards which increases your structural requirements and upgrade requirements, and also, considering how the Town will remain operationally continuous throughout the construction phase. If there is intention to phase this or intention to provide temporary facilities while they do this in one singular phase, they would want to insure and carry the cost for temporary housing, incorporating anticipated delivery methods and what that looks like relative to project schedule and tying all of that to escalation. You can get construction costs based on today's dollars, but we know this is an escalating market and so they want to accurately project out what the schedule looks like and all of these different considerations so they can tie escalation to it reasonably. Then, that would get wrapped into total project costs that would include the cost of work, soft costs from architectural engineering services, to testing and inspection services to furniture to utility connection fees, and then all appropriate contingencies at this stage of design. So, they want to be accurate. Precision is not as important at this stage, but accuracy is absolutely.

Mayor McMillan asked if this is a method he has used for public construction projects to determine the amount people are going out for in their GO Bond. Mr. Alamo said yes, this is exactly what he does every single day at Griffin Structures for the last 17 years. He just helped the City of Redondo Beach do the same thing and they received a GO Bond for $93.5 million to reconstruct their two fire stations and police department using a very similar format.

Mayor McMillan asked if they did not use schematic design to get their numbers but a FMP arrangement and then Mr. Alamo escalated with cost estimates. Mr. Alamo confirmed and said it involves program, planning and estimating were the basis for developing that budget, and that was part of going out to canvass the community on whether or not they would be in support of a GO Bond, and they got enough support to move forward and they put it on the ballot for approval.

Mayor McMillan said she assumes it has not been built yet, so they do not know whether the estimate for the GO Bond was right. Mr. Alamo said yes, but they are moving through the stages of it. During the design process there are checkpoints, milestones, and off ramps. So, through that process they are getting continuous updates on the estimates, evolving the design, the contingencies get reduced because there are more 'knowns' that are identified such as the example of due diligence on the building. Those elements are clearly determined and then contingencies can either be absorbed into the project or reduced. This is an iterative process that gets refined. Should there be increases in budget that are beyond the projections, then there is a value engineering aspect to it. He thinks they must go through the evolution of it on the basis of a good plan.

Council Member Salter asked why there is such an aversion to just moving forward with schematic design. There are homes in Ross that are more square footage than what they are talking about here. He thinks they are getting bogged down. They are talking about a very small, two-story structure, and he wants to understand that if they are talking about 99% of the functions going into one building, why they need to do this interim step. They have a concept and asked why they cannot start doing the schematic design, because in order to get a really good cost estimate, you want the schematic design. He saw that with FORF because they actually designed the building.

Mr. Kelley said from his perspective, the program that he is asking to move towards schematic design is focused on the building. That is one element of the project, but there are a whole host of other elements that include site improvements, secure parking for the police, the driveway on the southern portion of the civic center, no identified location for the public works corporation yard, and these elements were not included in that concept. As good as the CAC plan was, there are some elements that will need additional work and additional validation.

Council Member Salter said they are talking about a potential garage for secured parking, a driveway, a yard for public works, and some secured parking spaces. He thinks if they could go straight to an architect, they could do those elements because they do not seem very costly. The Town would need to hire some firm for $500,000 to do this interim step to tell the Town what those elements will cost them without doing the schematic design which will be where all of the costs are because they are programming a fire station and a police station in there.

Mr. Kelley said Council Member Salter asked what it would cost to amend the FMP. He thinks staff's response is they do not know. He estimates it could be anywhere from $50,000 to $200,000 as a ballpark picture. He did not say $500,000 and does not think it will cost that much, but again, based on the work proposal identified in the program costs will be dependent on billing rates and hours the consultants put together. Again, it is a prudent approach to do the planning work. It is not just identifying and coming up with estimates for costs of the facilities. It is doing all of the work to lay it out and make sure it supports CEQA and environmental review, having a project description that supports that is a critical component. Right now, there is no plan but a concept drawing on paper and if the Council decides it wants to go straight to schematic design, there is tremendous risk and unknowns that will result in change orders. Staff will be left with saying "they do not know" because there are elements that have not been well defined enough at this point.

With that said, if the Council wants to have a full discussion around the project delivery and wants to go to a progressive design right away, there is a lot of work necessary to do that, but some of the risk can be addressed through that process, but they have not had that conversation with Council and there is a lot of work that needs to go into bringing that procurement process forward. Again, it makes sense to get the plan revised, have a solid planning exhibit that defines the project with a solid cost, and this will save money in the long run.

Council Member Dowling said this project is really about time and money. She said as Mr. Kelley considers moving forward, she asked him to walk her through the sequence of time. She sees the RFP which could go out tomorrow. They have 3 weeks to get the information back, and then she asked how long the planning process will take.

Mr. Kelley said he would estimate it will take 2 to 3 months, but this will be dependent on each of the firms who submit proposals as it will be necessary for them to complete the tasks as set forth in the RFP.

Council Member Dowling said so it will take 2 to 3 months and they will have a ballpark on the dollars, have a plan and select the architect. Then, they have to have it by December in order for it to be in the March ballot measure.

Mr. Kelley said if the Council chooses to move forward with progressive design, he suggested Mr. Alamo provide a high level overview of this process or even design-build and how that may affect this next stage of project delivery. Council Member Dowling added that they will hear more about it at their next meeting and they may be able to make a decision on how they will go.

Town Manager Johnson pointed out that the first FMP took a long time to put together. This was just on demolishing the entire site except for this building. Now, the Council has another preferred concept and that is based on reusing a building over 100 years old that is partially in the floodplain. So, that will take time for an architect to review and got cost estimates and do those things. At the next meeting, staff is bringing forward the RFP and would like to get the architect on board to do the FMP and they have other things staff can be doing.

As Mr. Kelley described in the previous agenda item, they are still working on the housing, the telecommunications, on the undergrounding of utilities, and Council Member Salter missed the meeting where they had consultants bring forward a study session for the Council to look at different financing options. They need to have a debt consultant that helps the Town Council figure out the best way to bring that forward and the timing of it, the wording of the measure, etc. Staff can start working on that and they are already working on different elements of it, so there is a lot of work that needs to be done.

Mayor McMillan said she thinks the Council should wait on the procurement until the July meeting. She asked and confirmed Council Member Kircher had no questions.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins said one thing that concerns her is that they need an accurate cost estimate for a bond measure. The committee yesterday suggested that if they do go ahead to update the FMP, that it go into schematic design precisely to get a cost estimate. She does not know much about this so she relies on what she hears from their consultants and the committee, but it worries her that the committee thought that if they went with a FMP update it should go through schematic design and that would provide a number, and then they would be confident when going out for the bond measure. This is very important to ask for the right amount of money. So, if they are going to go through updating the plan, she asked if they could include schematic design.

Town Manager Johnson said she wants to make sure the Council understands and she put this in writing in a supplemental memo to the Council. Mr. Kelley has said in his presentation and the consultant has said that in many public sector bond efforts, planning level concepts combined with validated programming, site planning, escalation, contingencies, and independent cost estimating are sufficient. Schematic design may improve accuracy but is not always a prerequisite for developing a ballot measure strategy. So, what you are saying is the committee has said they need to do schematics. We said it is not necessary it will cost $400,000 to $500,000. This will add to the cost of doing this. So, they have staff, their highly experienced consultant, and staff is telling you schematic design is not necessary, it is premature, wildly expensive, and unnecessary at this point. So, she wants to be clear. This is what the Council's professional staff and their consultants are saying. A couple of you have received information from the committee yesterday and so she wants to make sure Council Member Salter understands the difference there.

Mayor McMillan said she understands the difference and she understands the schematic design might provide more precision with the cost, but it is also going to get them far down the design path. They may not have consensus on the parking, circulation, floodplain issue, corporation yard or other questions, and she looks at the amendment of the FMP as a reconciliation, coming together with the CAC concept and reconciling it with their program needs and getting down into the details. They all will have to decide if they will raise the bays out of the floodplain or compromise and do what they did in 1995 and keep replicating that mistake. Maybe it will cost millions of dollars to do that. So, there will be many compromises to get this project done for the amount that is palatable to citizens.

She worries that if they jump to schematic design, they do not have consensus on what they are building, and it will be too far down the path. They will be sitting here saying they need change orders because they never had consensus on what they need to do. Also, the way she recalls the sequencing was that the Council adopted the resolution to amend the FMP and have the subcommittee for the architect, then met one week later and realized it was very important to bring the procurement decision back to the Council. They wanted to go ahead and did not want to wait for the procurement decision, and try to amend the FMP in the meantime to get the cost estimates to put something on the ballot for a GO Bond, and then have the procurement decision whenever staff was ready. There are nuances and changes for the ordinance. So, they need to accomplish the amendment of the FMP, have the procurement discussion, get the number they need to do the GO Bond by November, and refine everything. So, this is an aggressive schedule, but this is what they need to do, especially if they will complete the paramedic facility by January 1, 2029.

Once they get all their ducks in a row, they spend the big money to do the schematic design and put pen to paper.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins asked why didn't they know there was a procurement discussion that needed to be had a long time ago. They have had consultants for over a year now and when they were ready to hire an architect, the Council was told they need procurement. They should have been this months ago so they could be ready to go to either hire an architect to do the design and they would not have been in this situation. They did not know a year ago, but probably should have known. So, she still worries a bit about the process.

Council Member Dowling said she thinks it benefits all of them to move as quickly as feasible because she worries about the paramedics and wants to be sure they have an idea of what it will cost so they can go with the GO Bond measure. If it means they have to meet more often between now and the end of the year, they should do that. They have to make that commitment to do that. She likes the process and steps outlined. They make sense and seem reasonable, and it will move them forward.

Council Member Salter said there is a part of him that realizes, especially with the three Council Members that have been here the longest, that this thing has gone on for so long. In all of his objections and stomping in trying to save the fire station, there is a part of him that feels bad about the time and energy that went into the first development of that plan because it obviously was a well thought-out long process. There was a lot of input from the public and there was also the challenge with COVID, but it was not like the Council all didn't put forth this big effort. He recognizes this and still struggles having created a lot of objections to it, but he thinks the fire station was worth it, but knows how much work it was.

What he fears about this is, going to this interim step, while it is totally feasible and makes sense, it just delays the inevitable which is hiring the architect and starting to actually program and design. When FORF created their project which they presented in January, it was a fully programmed and designed architectural plan. It is a lot of work to fit the elements instead of these blocks and say how much it will cost. They have to think about how a person gets down to the ambulance bay and it takes schematic work. So, it is just a delay of the inevitable. Once they have decided they are only building one main structure, it is not that complicated. He then referred to the Coats's house where they hired an architect and contractor and built the buildings and the Town can do the same. He does not want to wait any longer and then what he goes through as many arguments over what will be in the FMP and then debate that, and wait months and months. He suggested doing the work like FORF did and they were able to design a structure that could or could not work. But, putting blocks together seems like going backwards and it is just delaying.

Council Member Kircher said he has been listening to the discussion and regarding Council Member Salter's concerns, he does not think this is analogous to building even an expensive house because it is a special purpose building. There are functions here that do not have an analogue in a residential structure. When he heard the presentation of the CAC, it was emphasized by presenters, particularly by Dan Winey, that this is a rough concept. There are things that need to be worked out. So, it makes sense to give thought to first working out those things before getting into the details. Otherwise, they will have duplication. The intent would be to speed things up, so he is skeptical that it would.

He thinks all Council Members are on board that they all want to move ahead as expeditiously as possible. They do not want to waste any money, know this will cost a lot but this is his take on it.

Council Member Dowling moved, and Council Member Kircher seconded, to authorize issuance of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for professional planning, architectural, engineering, technical evaluation, and cost estimating services necessary to prepare an amendment to the Ross Civic Center Facilities Master Plan consistent with Resolution No. 2623; and direct staff to distribute the RFP to the ten consulting teams that previously submitted Statements of Qualifications in response to the Town's Architectural and Engineering Services RFQ. Motion carried (4-0-1; Salter no).

End of Administrative Agenda.

15. No Action Items: (Mayor)

a. **Council correspondence** – None.
b. **Future Council items** – Council Member Dowling requested a discussion later in the year regarding adding regular parking for the Post Office, as well as more 15-minute slots. Mayor McMillan also suggested discussing added take-out and pickup spaces for restaurants. Council Member Salter added discussion for a mail drop for the Post Office. Mayor Pro Tem Robbins voiced her support.

   Mayor McMillan asked if the Council needed to agendize approve replacement/renovation of the Historical Society plaques, and Town Manager Johnson stated Maureen Borthwick will be working on this upon her return.

c. **Council Member participation at the communication table at the Ross Post Office, on the next Council meeting day on July 9th** – Mayor McMillan and Council Member Dowling volunteered.

16. Meeting Evaluation.

Mayor Pro Tem Robbins said the Council had generally done a good job working through the Facilities Master Plan items and was still making progress, but expressed concern that they had been aligned earlier and were now divided over process and sequencing decisions. She noted the Council's willingness to hold additional special meetings and reiterated the Town Manager's request for Council availability between July 13 and August 7.

Council Member Salter commended Mayor McMillan for managing a long agenda effectively.

Council Member Kircher agreed the meeting was productive and said the overall tone of the discussion remained constructive.

19. Adjournment.
The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Julie McMillan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Zachary Koblick de Leon
Town Clerk/Senior Management Analyst