

TOWN OF FAIRFAX PROCLAMATION
IN HONOR OF
MICHELE GARDNER
**FAIRFAX ASSISTANT TO THE TOWN MANAGER/
DEPUTY TOWN CLERK**
2013-2023



WHEREAS, Michele Gardner has served as the Assistant to the Town Manager/Deputy Town Clerk for Fairfax since February 2013, and has served ably, deftly, honorably and with superior integrity for ten and a half years; and

WHEREAS, Michele was admitted to the State Bar of California on December 16, 1991, has a Bachelor of Arts degree in addition to her Juris Doctorate degree; and

WHEREAS, Michele has been married many years to her husband Tony and they have two wonderful children, Jasmine, and Andy; and

WHEREAS, Michele came to us with no prior experience in local government, but with experience as an attorney and coordinating school events and fundraisers; she was hired due to her pleasant disposition and her confidence that she could “figure out the job;” and

WHEREAS, who knew - other than Michele, her family, and friends - that she was correct that she not only “figured out” the job, she has been extraordinary, gaining more skills daily, and taking on more responsibilities over time. She has admirably and gracefully managed everything thrown at her; and

WHEREAS, a quote by President Lyndon Johnson might also fit for the Fairfax Town Clerk position: “When the burdens of the presidency seem unusually heavy, I always remind myself it could be worse. I could be a Town Clerk.” (LBJ said “Mayor”); and

WHEREAS, as the Assistant to the Town Manager/Deputy Town Clerk, Michele has successfully addressed numerous, complex issues such as leading IT for the Town, developing a stellar records management system, and handling: virtual meetings; elections; petitions; referenda; initiatives; lawsuits; a gazillion public records requests; the Town newsletter; pleasant and, at times, unpleasant citizenry; public hearings; and Town Council meetings typically every other week (often lasting until the wee hours of the morning); and

WHEREAS, Michele did the work of two full-time staff for the first ten years of her service yet always had time to handhold with Councilmembers struggling on forms and other requirements; and

WHEREAS, Michele led the Town’s efforts to launch a new website --- she researched the “best” website solution; she coordinated with all department heads on their writeups and various documents; she coordinated with Camille Exposito on the design and other elements, and they worked to migrate over all parts on a monthly basis. The new website was launched in 2018, increasing the Town’s transparency and accessibility, and again, through Michele’s leadership it appeared seamless; and

WHEREAS, during the pandemic, she almost singlehandedly learned and established Zoom meetings for the Town Council meetings, working both behind the scenes and during meetings, somehow making it all appear easy (it was not!); and

WHEREAS, after the pandemic, again Michele mastered the ability to run hybrid meetings, a combination of Zoom and in-person meetings, ensuring all folks were able to participate, despite that often there were thirty or more in-person and with more on the Zoom; and

WHEREAS, Michele was the glue and the steady hand that “steered the ship” during two Town Manager transitions; and

WHEREAS, Michele is committed to reversing global warming, riding her ancient, broken-down bike with its terrible bike seat (covered with plastic bags – time to get a new seat!) to and from work and for work errands nearly every day for more than ten years; and

WHEREAS, Michele has clearly demonstrated her commitment to and unwavering support for the Town of Fairfax --- her attention to detail to ensure we are following the laws and regulations is unparalleled; and

WHEREAS, Michele is respected by the Town Council, her peers, the citizens of Fairfax and everyone who has worked with her, due to her extraordinary public service, dedication, and conscientiousness; and

WHEREAS, to quote Garrett Toy, the prior Town Manager, “Michele has become one of the best Town Clerks in Marin County and one of the best Town Clerks I have ever worked with.” Our current Town Manager Heather Abrams wholeheartedly “seconds” these thoughts; and

WHEREAS, Michele has devoted close to eleven years as Assistant to the Town Manager/Deputy Town Clerk and worked countless hours for our Town and the community, serving the public with integrity and intelligence.

Now, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY PROCLAIMED, that, in acknowledgment of her dedication, commitment, exemplary service, and innumerable contributions to the Town and to our community, the Town of Fairfax thanks **Michele Gardner** and wishes her success in her future endeavors (we know she will be staying on as elected Town Clerk for a while); and

BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED that the Town of Fairfax is a much better place because Michele chose to live and work here, and that December 13, 2023, is hereby proclaimed **Michele Gardner Day** in the Town of Fairfax.

Signed this thirteenth day of December 2023,

Barbara Coler, Mayor of Fairfax