



FAIRFAX TOWN COUNCIL MEETING SUPPLEMENTAL STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE December 6, 2023
PREPARED FOR Mayor and Town Council
PREPARED BY Christine Foster, Deputy Town Clerk
SUBJECT Receive report on Councilmembers' assignments, committees, and activities in November.

* This Supplement includes Mayor Cutrano's councilmember report, which was received after the packet had been published.

RECOMMENDATION

Receive Councilmember activities report.

DISCUSSION

Every month, each Councilmember provides a list of the meetings they attended in the preceding month on behalf of the Town, for inclusion in this report. Under the agenda section entitled "Council Reports and Comments" Councilmembers may choose to highlight one of those meetings.

Mayor Cutrano

11/1—Regular Meeting of the Fairfax Town Council. [Find the agenda packet here.](#)

11/2—Department of State Subnational Government Listening Session on Plastic Pollution with the U.S. Department of State's Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment, Jose W. Fernandez.

11/3—Check-in meeting with Town Manager Heather Abrams and Director of Public Works Loren Umbertis about the recent Transportation Authority of Marin meeting and the next steps of collaboration with the County of Marin and other partners regarding the maintenance and rehabilitation of Fairfax-Bolinas Road.

11/8—Check-in meeting with Fairfax Open Space Committee Chair, Susan Pascal-Beran, regarding strategies and schedules for communications and fundraising related to the Wall Property.

11/8—Regular November meeting of the Ross Valley Fire Department Board of Directors. [Find the agenda packet here.](#)

11/10—Meeting with Vice Mayor Coler and Bill Long and Jonathan Braun of the Marin Open Space Trust (MOST) regarding the schedule for the appraisal and preliminary geotechnical report for the Wall Property and immediate next steps.

11/11—[Marin's Veterans' Day](#) program at the Marin Veterans' Memorial Auditorium with music, military exercises and a brief address.

11/14—Fairfax Town Council November Agenda Setting Meeting with Town Manager Abrams, Vice Mayor Coler, Town Attorney Coleson, and Deputy Town Clerk Christine Foster.

11/14—Town of Fairfax and County of Marin planning meeting for upcoming Fairfax-Bolinas briefing for Congressman Jared Huffman, Senator Mike McGuire, and Assemblymember Damon Connolly.

Attendees for the prep meeting included Mayor Chance Cutrano, Town Manager Heather Abrams, Director of Public Works Loren Umbertis, Supervisor Katie Rice, Supervisorial Aide Nancy Vernon, Marin

County Director of Public Works Rosemarie Gaglione, Marin County Engineering Manager Christopher Blunk, and Senior Civil Engineer Rachel Calvert.

11/14—Regular Meeting of the Town of Fairfax Community Emergency Preparedness Committee. [Find the agenda here.](#)

11/18—Check-in call with Kristin Amlie, the Town of Fairfax’s representative to the Marin Commission on Aging, regarding various transit programs to help older adults access programming around Marin.

11/21—Check-in Meeting with Marin County Supervisor for District 4, Dennis Rodoni, regarding state and federal coordination and ongoing road maintenance and rehabilitation of Fairfax-Bolinas Road, the Town’s process for Short Term Rentals, and efforts to preserve open space in and around the Town of Fairfax, including the Wall Property.

11/21—Town of Fairfax and Marin County co-led Fairfax-Bolinas Road Briefing for Congressman Jared Huffman, Senator Mike McGuire, and Assemblymember Damon Connolly. Attendees included: Mayor Chance Cutrano; Town Manager Heather Abrams; Director of Public Works Loren Umbertis; Supervisor Katie Rice; Supervisorial Aide Nancy Vernon; Marin County Director of Public Works Rosemarie Gaglione; Marin County Engineering Manager Christopher Blunk; Senior Civil Engineer Rachel Calvert; Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) Executive Director Anne Richman; TAM Project Manager Bill Whitney; Marin County Director of Emergency Management Steven Torrence; District Director for Senator Mike McGuire, Summer Cassell; District Director for Congressman Jared Huffman, Jenny Callaway.

11/27—Monthly meeting with the Fairfax Chamber of Commerce.

11/27—Special Meeting of the Ross Valley Fire Department Board of Directors. [Find the agenda packet here.](#)

11/28—Special Meeting of the Fairfax Open Space Committee. [Find the agenda here.](#)

11/29— Onsite meeting with Vice Mayor Coler, Supervisor Katie Rice, Bill Long and Jonathan Braun of the Marin Open Space Trust (MOST), and Director Max Korten of the Marin County Open Space District (MCOSD) regarding the status of the Wall Property and immediate next steps.

12/5—Special Meeting of the Fairfax Open Space Committee. [Find the agenda here.](#)

HIGHLIGHTS:

Ross Valley Fire Board (RVFB)

- *Shared Services and Interim Chief / Deputy Chief extension:* Shared Services discussions with the Central Marin Fire Department have taken longer than originally anticipated. The Ross Valley Fire Department Board of Directors extend the current agreement of an Interim Fire Chief, Interim Deputy Chief and all associated costs to backfill these positions through June 30, 2024. In addition, this structure places two incumbent Captains into Acting Battalion Chief roles and two incumbent Engineers into Acting Fire Captain roles. The Board of Directors approved for a one time use of \$178,800 from undesignated reserves. [Read the staff report here.](#)
- *Countywide Emergency Dispatch Center contract:* The Ross Valley Fire Department Board of Directors approved the staff recommendation and authorized the Board President to enter into a Contract with Marin County Fire Department for 911 Emergency Communications and Dispatch Services Starting July 1, 2024. The Board of Directors unanimously chose to fund the required startup costs for the new Countywide dispatch center utilizing undesignated reserves funds of \$481,594. For context, Novato, Southern Marin, Tiburon and Kentfield Fire Districts, the City of San Rafael and Joint Powers Authorities (JPA) of Central Marin and Ross Valley contract with the Marin County Sheriff’s Office (MCSO) for Fire and Emergency Medical Dispatch Services. In September 2022, MCSO notified these fire agencies of its intention to end the current agreement, effective June 2023. Collectively, the Fire Agencies asked for an extension

to develop an acceptable alternative. The Department's current dispatch agreement with the MCSO is due to expire on June 30, 2024. In January, The Board voted to move forward and signed a "Letter of Intent" relating to Marin County Fire Department providing "Dispatch Services". The current "go-live" date for a new Dispatch Emergency Command Center is July 1st, 2024. [Read the staff report here.](#)

- *Defensible Space Inspection Program update:* Ross Valley Fire Department Defensible Space Lead, Kathleen Cutter gave a fantastic presentation on the current status of the Defensible Space Program in the Ross Valley. The neighborhoods of Manor Hill (Tamalpais), Deer Park, Cascade Canyon, and Forrest Ave received 2,857 inspections in 2023—1,452 were initial inspections and 1,356 were re-inspections. Top three violations in the Town of Fairfax were "Lead or needle litter on ground", "Vegetation in Zone Zero", and "Trees overhand structure." [Read the staff report here.](#) [Review the presentation slide deck here.](#)
- *Increasing Staffing to Achieve Three Person Engine Companies:* the Board of Directors unanimously approved the "Labor Management Subcommittee" recommendation to increase staffing of the Ross Valley Fire Department with a position start date of July 1, 2024. Staff presented the subcommittees recommendation to the San Anselmo Town Council on October 24, 2023, the Fairfax Town Council on November 1, 2023 and the Ross Town Council on November 9, 2023. All town councils provided their Board Directors with direction to support the subcommittees recommendation. Fairfax is responsible for a 23.30% share of the fully-burdened cost of three Firefighter Paramedic positions to achieve this. As such Fairfax pay an additional \$147,262 for FY 24/25, \$156,034 for FY 25/26, and \$164,114 for SF 26/27. [Read the staff report here.](#)

Vice Mayor Coler

Nov 4 – Fairfax Age Friendly Event – Participated in Age Friendly's 6th 90+ Celebration – Delivered gift baskets and visited with Fairfaxians who are 90 and over (23 Fairfaxians were celebrated; Coler & Stephanie Mohan delivered to 4 – SM took photos, check Town website).

Nov 6 – MCE Clean Energy – met with MCE staff on legislative matters/contacts.

Nov 7, Nov 21, Nov 29, Dec 5 – Met with Town Manager on Council matters.

Nov 9 – Countywide Priority Setting Committee (PSC, for HUD funding on housing, public service, capital projects) – The Committee voted: to reappoint three community members to the PSC (Southern Marin area – Ida Green, Upper Ross Valley area – PF Feffer, Countywide – Cathy Cortez); unanimously approved: 2022-24 Application Cycle Funding Priorities, the 2022-24 Funding Cycle Timeline and Process, and the establishment of a Project Review Subcommittee (TB appointed by the PSC Chair Eric Lucan) to work with staff on reviewing applications. The PSC received a presentation on a grant application submitted to HUD for Pathways to Removing Obstacles for Housing – if awarded it would be \$3M plus would leverage an additional \$2.7M in County, CAM, MHA, FHANC and Habitat for Humanity SF funding. If awarded it would be used to create a Countywide Community Land Trust serving all of Marin County jurisdictions (if they choose to be part of it). Funding awards will be announced at the end of January.

Nov 10 - Wall Property Subcommittee – Attended meeting with MOST – Bill Long, J. Braun & Mayor Cutrano.

Nov 14 – Attended Agenda Setting meeting for Dec 6 Council mtg w/ Mayor Cutrano & Town staff.

Nov 16 - Attended Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority (MWPA) Board meeting – The Board approved: a 3rd Amendment to Willow Labs agreement for \$181K for two years (for parcel level risk assessment work); approved submittal of a \$6M grant application to the United States Forest Service under the Community Wildfire Defense Grant program (for the SRSAFRZ project, awards TB announced mid-Feb 2024); adopted a resolution Making Certain Findings of Fact, adopted a Statement of Overriding Considerations and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan Association with the Project-Specific Analysis for the San Rafael – San Anselmo Fuel Reduction Zone (SRSAFRZ) Project, and approved the SRSAFRZ Project. UPDATES: Defensible Space & Home Hardening Grants - this fiscal year, MWPA has awarded 216 resident grant applications totaling \$498,658 to residents. Residents have spent approximately \$3.3 million in additional dollars on home hardening and defensible space actions. Generally, for every \$1 of Measure C funds invested, an additional \$6.65 was spent by residents to amplify this work. Combined with the applications currently under review (totaling approximately \$194,013), resident grant funds will be exhausted soon -to accommodate residents who have completed or planned work after program funds were exhausted, a waitlist application has been opened through November with an explanation that funds may not be available to award until FY 2024/2025. Chipper Day program - the 2023 season began in mid-May (ends mid-Nov) and has completed 4,153 pickups with 13,415 cubic yards of material removed thus far. The Greater Ross Valley Shaded Fuel Break (inc. Fairfax) has completed ~20-21miles of the 38 miles in the project. The Workplan Implementation Update agenda item has a table with progress on all MWPA CORE projects. The Board received a presentation on Fire Safe Marin’s annual report for FY 2022/2023.

Nov 16 – MCE Clean Energy Board meeting (could not attend due to illness, however requested a Just Cause Zoom on Nov 16 but was told could not do so as there needs to be a quorum of Board members in a single location and there was not to be such) – The Board approved: Inclusion of Hercules into MCE – because of CPUC rules which delay inclusions, Hercules enrollment will start in April 2025. The Board received: a presentation on the Fresno Hybrid Electric Gas Turbine (EGT) with battery storage (this is conversion of a Gas Turbine (GT) project – as a EGT reduces emissions and works more efficiently); an Informational Update on Community Power Coalition and on the Customer Savings and Discount Programs. The Board approved a resolution changing the time of Board meetings from 7pm to 6pm (the meetings will remain on the 3rd Thursday of each month).

No meeting held Nov – Marin County Mayors & Councilmembers (MCCMC) Legislative Committee meeting. MCCMC LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE SCOPE OF ADVOCACY: Fiscal Protection: protect city revenues from state Local Control: support legislation that enhances local control of resources to provide services while supporting regional co-operation. Oppose unfunded mandates and preemption of local authority and control of land use Transportation Investment: promote stable transportation finance structure for state and local government. Multimodal, enhancing livable communities Housing/Land use: protect local government land use authority. Oppose punitive housing legislation, and legislation that restricts or reduces local discretion on land use decisions. Other legislation can be recommended to MCCMC at a regular meeting.

Nov 29 – Wall Property Site Visit – Hiked the property with Supervisor Rice, Mayor Cutrano, County staff (Max Korten, Carl Somers), and MOST (Bill Long, Jonathan Braun).

Nov 30 – Met with Town Attorney and Finance Director on a Town fiscal matter.

Councilmember Ackerman

11/1 Town Council regular meeting

11/7 Climate Action Committee (rescheduled monthly meeting)

11/21 County Microgrid Working Group

Meetings as needed with Town Staff and with residents

Councilmember Blash

October 31st – Fairfax Halloween. I was honored to be able to serve as a crossing guard for the Haunted Grove with members of our Chamber of Commerce!

November 1st – Regular Town Council Meeting.

November 9th - Cal Cities Roundtable Webinar: Best Practices for Zoom Disruptions. “There has been an uptick in racist, hateful, and sometimes violent public comments during remote public meetings. These incidents interfere with the public’s right to weigh in on important issues, slow routine business, and can take a mental toll on city officials, staff, and the public. This webinar explored best practices and legal tools for addressing disruptions and hate speech in public meetings—with an eye towards protecting free speech while managing attempts at organized disruption of the public’s business. This webinar was useful in light of the “hate-bombing” that took place at our November 1st Council meeting.

November 9th – Marin County Council of Mayor’s and Councilmembers Committee on Homelessness Meeting. We discussed the use of the VISPDAT (Vulnerability Assessment and Coordinated Entry) instrument. The VISPDAT is a validated questionnaire that allows social workers to use an objective index score to assess the relative vulnerability of an individual in preparation for placing them for housing. People who score 8 or above on the 17-point index are prioritized for permanent supportive housing. People who score lower may need less-intensive measures to get back on their feet. It is likely that all Fairfax campers have been assessed, but we are not allowed to find out about their vulnerability scores because there is a privacy issue due to the sensitivity of the questionnaire topics. The County is working on an updated tool that will allow them to do a more fine-grained assessment with some input from individuals with lived experience of homelessness.

The County is housing 10-12 people per month, but there are more people who need housing than there is affordable housing available for them. The County has housed over 1,500 people since 2017 including both long-term (chronic) and short-term homeless. There will be another point-in-time count of homeless individuals in late January. Good News: The South Eliseo Project Homekey Site is now open and providing 43 units of permanent supportive housing in Greenbrae. In addition, Homeward Bound’s Veteran’s Housing in Novato will open next spring and provide 24 units of permanent supportive housing. 5. November 28 – toured parts of the Greater Ross Valley Shaded Fuel Break. The Greater Ross Valley Shaded Fuel Break (GRVSFB) will create a 38-mile shaded fuel break running along the backyards of about 1,700 parcels. The fuel reduction zone includes about 1,300 acres from Fairfax to Corte Madera. The project is designed to slow the spread of wildfire to give firefighters time and space to suppress the flames. This project would reduce fire risk to several communities in the wildland urban interface (otherwise known as the WUI) while improving forest and ecosystem health by reducing non-native plant cover. Much but not all of the Fairfax section has been completed. This is a project of the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority, of which Fairfax is a member.

November 30 – The Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies webinar on housing older adults. “Over the next ten years, the US population over the age of 75 will increase by 45 percent, from 17 million to nearly 25 million. The growth is widespread, across urban, suburban, and rural communities, and sharpest among the baby boomers who will begin entering their 80s in this decade. As the population of older adults swells, so too does demand for housing that is both affordable and able to

accommodate their changing needs. Millions of older adults are cost burdened, and homelessness is on the rise.” Fairfax in particular has a large over-60 population. We need to be looking at the current and future housing and mobility needs of older adults in our community.

Councilmember Hellman

November 7: Ross Valley JEPA School Bus committee meeting - Discussed significantly poor service levels with new provider Bauer Transportation. This included buses not appearing, or hour(s) late, ineffective communication and more. President of Bauer presented a plan including buses being stationed locally, new hires, operational process enhancement and more. Next meeting in January. Subsequent discussion with community members who are encouraged to provide ongoing feedback to this committee.

November 15: Ross Valley School District Board regular meeting

November 21: SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice) cohort for county electeds.

November 27: Ross Valley Fire Department Board meeting: Two significant actions which had unanimous board support/approval:

1. Extension of funding through June 30, 2024 to support the current positions of Interim Fire Chief, Interim Deputy Chief and all associated costs to backfill these positions with existing personnel. More detail [here](#).
2. Increase staffing for a 3-person engine with a position start date of July 1, 2024 funded by each member agency paying their respective “Percentage Share” from the position date of hire. This is in alignment with standards across the County, State and per the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), a leader in the development of industry standards for the fire service. More detail here:
<https://rossvalleyfire.org/attachments/article/50489/Item%203%20-%20Attachment%201%20-%20Staff%20Report%20For%20Increasing%20Staffing%20To%20Three%20Personnel.pdf>

December 2: CPR Lifesaving skills training in Fairfax hosted by Ross Valley Fire Department

December 2: Meeting with meeting with Age Friendly Kristin Amlie

December 6: Fairfax regular town council meeting