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June 29, 2012

## A WORD FROM THE TOWN MANAGER



### Pension Progress

In my Tiburon Talk article [last month](#), I highlighted some aspects of the Council's new budget for the upcoming fiscal year. I also promised a discussion of pensions in a subsequent issue.

The Town of Tiburon has long had a modest approach to pensions and post-retirement benefits for its employees. During the free-wheeling 1990's, when governments at all levels were enlarging these benefits, the Town stood pat and declined to increase its pension formulae even though it appeared at that time that doing so was essentially a no-cost option due to high returns on pension investments. This fiscal conservatism paid off ... for as we all know those rosy projections crashed and burned in the current recession.

The Town is already at the lowest level of pension benefit when compared to the rest of Marin cities and the county, and has taken steps to eliminate, over time, post-retirement benefits altogether. Nevertheless, the Town Council feels strongly that it wants Tiburon to continue on its path of reducing pension and retirement liabilities. Public employers are legally barred from reducing existing employee pension benefits, but they may institute changes for future employees. Consequently, we are moving forward with a "second tier" of pension benefits. Starting on July 1, 2013, all new employees will have a lower benefit, which will be calculated on the average of their three highest earning years, not on the single highest year. This second tier puts Tiburon squarely at the forefront of pension reform in Marin, and is essentially as far as the Town can go without some much-needed changes at the state level.

Taken as a whole, Tiburon's pension and liability reform

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efforts really add up. In recent years the Town has:

- Eliminated all retirement medical benefits for new hires
- Required employees to pay 100% of the employee share of ongoing PERS costs (previously the Town had picked up this expense, as was typical across the state)
- Eliminated annual unused vacation payouts (the vacation time one can accrue was already capped)
- Permanently capped unused sick leave payout at separation
- Paid off its CalPERS "side funds", reducing future cost and liability

Each of these steps keeps the faith with our existing employees, who have been extremely cooperative in making some difficult changes, but saves the Town serious money today and even more so in the future. I applaud our outstanding staff for their great attitude, and thank the Town Council for its steadfast leadership in keeping the Town of Tiburon in tip-top financial shape.

### **Basket Beauties**

Lovely baskets of flowers once again grace our downtown light posts. I'd like to thank Carol Rayner and her late husband Arno for their very generous financial support for this effort. They contributed funds to pay for five continuous years of flowers! I would also like to



thank Hazel Carter, Randi Brinkman and Chuck Auerbach, the original "basketeers", who spearheaded this effort and continue to do the legwork, along with the assistance of our able Public Works crew, to make the baskets materialize each year. It's a great collaboration that benefits us all.

### **Friday Nights on Main**

Look for a new twist to FNOM: **Friday Night Flights**. Starting this evening, June 29, and on the last Friday of each month, selected wineries will present wine tasting on Main Street and Ark Row. It will still be the same great Friday Nights on Main celebration with food and fun for all ages, but now it will have an extra dimension for those who enjoy a bit of first rate vino at the end of the week. Check it out tonight!

## Library Hearing - Mark your Calendar

Interested in the proposed library expansion? If so, please note Wednesday, July 25 at 7:00 p.m. in your calendar. The Town Council will meet in special session that evening at Del Mar School (Tiburon Blvd. and Avenida Miraflores) to conduct its design review of the plan. Story poles illustrating the scope of the expansion will be erected on or before Sunday, July 15. The staff report and related materials will be on the Town's website no later than the close of business on July 19.

I wish you all a wonderful Independence Day next Wednesday.

Sincerely,



Peggy Curran

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## NEWS BRIEFS

### Summer Vegetation Management: An Important Reminder



#### **The Importance of Vegetation Management**

During the summer months, we want to remind property owners of the importance of managing the landscaping and vegetation around their homes for several reasons: traffic safety, fire safety, and resource protection.

#### **Private Property Owners' Responsibility**

It's not uncommon for private landscaping to encroach onto the public street right-of-way.

Private landscaping improvements serve to beautify homes, enhance neighborhoods, and create desirable privacy screening. Over time, however, some of these private improvements are not maintained and grow far beyond their original boundaries. The result can be overgrown vegetation that obstructs sight lines for motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists, creating safety hazards for all roadway users.

Take note of the vegetation around your home. If it blocks or obstructs lines of sight of the public street, have it

trimmed back or down. This is particularly important on corner lots. If your plants are not set back from the road far enough or are higher than 30 inches, they are likely to be in violation of Town ordinances (Section 16-5.6.6 of the Town Code) and are a public nuisance. In certain instances, through our door-hanger noticing process, the Tiburon Police Department or the Public Works Department will ask you to take necessary action. If you do not take action, you may be cited or billed for the work.

### **Fire Safety and Prevention**

Overgrown vegetation, non-native weeds and trees often become an unnecessary fire hazard. Non-natives and invasive species such as Scotch Broom, Pampas Grass, and Blue Gum Eucalyptus are rampant in Town and can present a potentially formidable fire fuel load challenge. Although they may seem to have aesthetic value, we urge you to abate this risk by aggressively removing these plants altogether or, in the case of trees, trimming them appropriately.

It is also very important to follow the Tiburon Fire Protection District guidelines of clearing a 100-foot buffer between your home and dense vegetation. If you need to encroach onto the Town's open space to achieve this buffer, please contact the Town and we will facilitate the process for you. For more information, contact [Jessica Power](#) at the Tiburon Fire Protection District at 435-7200, or the Public Works Department at 435-7354.

### **Protect our Native Species**

Finally, it's good to remind ourselves of how lucky we are to be living in an area of such unique natural beauty. Did you know that the Tiburon Peninsula has a rare and endangered plant that grows nowhere else in the world? It is called the Tiburon Jewelflower, and is found on the rocky serpentine outcroppings of our peninsula. Another endangered plant species is the Tiburon Paintbrush. Preserving the scarce habitat for these plants is important, but it is a constant challenge due to competition from invasive non-native species.



Tiburon Jewelflower

Please help us preserve our natural resources by removing non-native invasive vegetation (particularly Scotch Broom and Pampas Grass) and consider native plants for your yard that are drought tolerant and non-seeding. By doing your part with vegetation management, you will help

preserve the beautiful natural resources of our peninsula and make it a safer place for all of us.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Nguyen  
Public Works Director/Town Engineer

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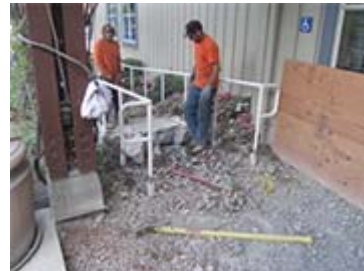
## BUILDING CODE CORNER: Code Compliance Begins at Home



Tiburon Peninsula residents may have noticed some construction work going on at Town Hall this past week. What they are seeing are some upgrades and repairs necessary to bring the Town Hall into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The scope of the project includes leveling the accessible parking spaces, restriping the stalls and access aisle, and adding new signs that, among other things, correctly identify the spaces; reducing the access ramp steepness at the front entrance to make it easier for persons in wheelchairs to climb; leveling the exterior door landings at the main and rear entrances; making all Town Hall doors easier to open; some minor bathroom upgrades; marking stair tread nosings with contrasting colored paint; modifying stair and ramp rails to better accommodate visually impaired people; and replacing the outdoor table with one that is wheelchair accessible. There will also be some tactile warning mats, or truncated domes, installed at certain locations along routes of travel to help visually impaired people know when they are entering traffic areas.

The work is being performed by Metro Construction Inc., based here in Tiburon, and is scheduled to be completed during the second week in July. In addition to improving the accessibility of Town Hall to members of the disabled



community, these upgrades and repairs illustrate the Town's high level of commitment toward complying with the same rules and regulations expected of everyone, including our local businesses, which have had to make similar repairs to their facilities.

If you have any questions about accessibility, please feel free to [contact me](#) at the Tiburon Building Division, 435-

7380.

Sincerely,

Fred Lustenberger  
Building Official

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## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### **FRIDAY NIGHTS ON MAIN**

6 until 9 p.m.  
Main Street  
June 22 through Sept. 14



Friday Nights on Main (FNOM) has returned to downtown Tiburon and will continue throughout the summer until September 14.

Join your friends and neighbors for a picnic, or dine al fresco at one of your favorite downtown restaurants. For more information, contact the Tiburon Peninsula Chamber of Commerce at 435-5633.

### **TIBURON ART FESTIVAL**

11 a.m. until 6 p.m.  
Ark Row  
August 25-26

The sixth annual Tiburon Art Festival returns to Historic Ark Row on Saturday and Sunday, August 25 and 26, with juried artists, live music, family entertainment, and other activities.



### **PLEIN AIRE COMPETITION**

Local artists have been selected to paint "in the open air" at Fountain Plaza on Saturday from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. Jurors will choose 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners for cash prizes. The artwork will be displayed from 4 to 6 p.m. on Saturday, and from 11 a.m. until 6 p.m. on Sunday. The artwork will be available for purchase in a silent auction on Ark Row. The Tiburon Peninsula has many talented artists, so be sure to take advantage of this show.

### **NEW THIS YEAR - ITALIAN STREET PAINTING**

Italian Street Painting (like they used to do in San Rafael) is coming to the Tiburon Peninsula! In addition to the Art Festival on Ark Row and the Plein Aire contest at Fountain Plaza, artists and spectators can enjoy street painting on Beach Road. Starting Saturday morning, August 25, artists

will use pastel chalk to draw in their assigned square on Beach Road in Belvedere.

Children as well as adult artists are welcome to reserve a square. Call the Belvedere-Tiburon Joint Recreation office at 435-4355 to reserve your square. Spectators should plan to visit the street a few times to watch the progress, and it's free!

Come see the fantastic variety of art and enjoy food, music and family entertainment at the Tiburon Art Festival.

For more information, contact [Cathleen Andreucci](#), or visit the Art Festival [website](#).

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## HERITAGE & ARTS COMMISSION

### ARTIST LAUREATE BIDS FAREWELL

Now that my tenure as Artist Laureate is coming to a close, I wanted to take a moment to thank all the wonderful Guest Artists who conducted the many workshops over these four years. Thank you for your time and talent - Eloise Raucher, Christina Marcu, Marilyn Spoja, Roger Felton and Jaleh Etemad.



Art Talk has been a huge success because of the facilitators who keep the conversation going through the many interesting topics - Joan Palmero and Barbara Patton.

And of course this program would not have happened unless people participated. Thank you for attending and being part of the Arts in our community. It has been a joy and a pleasure working with each of you. To date, over one hundred and thirty-six artists, from age eight to eighty plus, have enjoyed this free venue.

The Town of Tiburon and The Heritage and Arts Commission provided me this opportunity to create an arts program, that brought the community together in informal workshops and lively conversation with Art Talk. We got to know each other and appreciate our individual talents. We shared our creativity as well as our paint. And we learned how simple art can be and that everyone has an artist hidden inside. This was a wonderful four years for me. I have grown as an artist and person through this experience, but most of all I was able to shine the light on the wonderful artists around me and give a little back to this fabulous community I call home.

With Great Affection,  
Mary Musalo  
Tiburon Artist Laureate

**Editor's Note:** Ms. Musalo's term ends in August and a new Artist Laureate will be appointed by the Town Council at the September 19 meeting. Come bid farewell to Mary and stay to greet the new appointee. The meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. at Tiburon Town Hall.

## LANDMARKS SOCIETY

### **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES - BECOME A DOCENT**

Where else can you play with trains, enjoy the gorgeous San Francisco water views, commune with nature among the wildflowers, and smell the magnificent roses of the Art & Garden Center? By becoming a Landmarks Docent!

As a docent, you will have an opportunity to share the fascinating history of our area with residents, as well as visitors from around the world.

For more information, contact the Belvedere-Tiburon [Landmarks Society](#) at 435-1853. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

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## Bel-Tib Library Community Calendar

For the scoop on events and meetings sponsored by local not-for-profit community and government organizations on the Tiburon Peninsula, visit the Belvedere-Tiburon Library's excellent [community calendar](#).



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## Council and Commission Meetings



**Town Council:** First and third Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. (July 4 meeting cancelled; July 18 regular meeting; July 25 special meeting at Del Mar School at 7 p.m. to review the Library application).

**Design Review Board:** First and third Thursdays at 7 p.m. (July 5 meeting cancelled; July 19).

**Planning Commission:** Second and fourth Wednesdays at



7:30 p.m. (July 11; July 25 cancelled).

***Heritage & Arts Commission:*** Fourth Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall Conference Room (July 24).

***Parks, Open Space and Trails Commission:*** Third Tuesday every other month at 6 p.m. (July 16).

Unless stated otherwise, all meetings are held in the Town Council Chambers located at 1505 Tiburon Boulevard, Tiburon CA 94920.

Sincerely,

Town Staff  
Town of Tiburon  
435-7373

Editor: Diane Crane Iacopi

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