

Tiburon Talk

The e-Newsletter
of the Town
of Tiburon

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April 28, 2011

A WORD FROM THE TOWN MANAGER



Liabilities and Budgets and Pensions, Oh My!

As Dorothy and her scared, creaky or stuffed friends might note were they with us today, we are in dark, forbidding woods when it comes to public finance. Every newspaper edition brings more bad news. Crises

lurk around every bend: staggering increases in pension costs, unfunded liabilities, the occasional crook ripping off millions from taxpayers, deteriorating infrastructure and service reductions, all coupled with revenues lowered by the sputtering economy. The cumulative effect feels ominous to citizens, and I can attest it feels no better from the elected official or public servant point of view. Indeed, public servants often feel like public targets these days regardless of their history of service or the care they bring to that service.

So how does this context translate here in Tiburon? Fortunately, we have proven to be more resilient than many other California cities. This is thanks to a long and continuing culture of good governance by successive Tiburon Town Councils. When other cities were handing out pension increases like candy, Tiburon kept to a more measured level, wisely remaining at the low end of the spectrum. Other retirement benefits have been equally modest. Tiburon is blessed with a relatively stable housing inventory, so we have not experienced the wholesale foreclosures that have plagued other cities. Our small commercial base means reduced sales tax revenue hurts less than in cities with high dependence on that stream of income.

But we are not immune from the pressures of budgets, pension costs or societal changes. Revenues have been down for several years now, and are projected to remain down, while some costs keep rising, so the squeeze play will continue into the next fiscal year if not beyond. We are

[Bel-Tib Recreation Department](#)

[County of Marin, 3rd District](#)

[Facts About Marin Clean Energy](#)

DID YOU KNOW?



Did you know there are programs available to help make your home more energy efficient?

Energy Upgrade California is a new home upgrade program that can help make your home improvements easier and more affordable--and earn you up to \$4,000 in rebates!

Local contractors take a "whole house" approach that helps the systems in your home work together more effectively, so you can save both energy and money.

not out of Dorothy's scary forest just yet.

What we have done to address the malaise of this economy is take pro-active steps to keep our budget balanced. As I previously reported, in recent years the Town has taken meaningful and forward-thinking steps to reduce its ongoing operating costs. Two years ago it eliminated retirement medical benefits for new hires (I personally find it a pity that this has become necessary, but it is the inevitable trend in both the private and public sectors). Last year we rebalanced the employee-employer share of pension costs, saving the Town over \$100,000 annually. This year, we are looking at options to rein in future employee-related liabilities. All of this is intended to do two things: set us up for a healthier financial structure in the future, and help us achieve our policy goal of living within our means, that is, always keeping the annual operating budget at or below annual operating revenues.

Our employees have been, and I believe will continue to be, nothing less than terrific in working with our Administrative Services Director (and budget guru) Heidi Bigall and our Town Council these past few years to find the path that is fair, balanced and minimizes any impact on the services we deliver every day for the public. In this era of dysfunctional and occasionally corrupt governance from Washington D.C. to cities here in California, I am proud that we continue to take measures to live within our means and do so in a manner than honors our public servants instead of demoralizing or demeaning them.

On a more personal note, I do fear for the future of government and what that portends for the society more broadly. Will bright young people with options choose government service if it is no longer seen as a lofty aspiration, if public servants are held in low esteem and if the historical benefit-salary trade offs disappear? If we as a society denigrate public service, we will not improve it. We will send it down a spiral of low expectations and low performance, making government service the employment choice for those who couldn't do any better. I hope that is not our future in this country. We need to hold government and its public servants accountable, and wages and benefits need to be fair and in keeping with private sector norms, but I believe we can and should do so without scapegoating anyone.

Here in Tiburon, a combination of timely action and good luck has positioned us for a more positive future. Despite real belt-tightening we have managed, through the support and leadership of our Town Council and can-do cooperation from our capable and dedicated staff, to preserve what I believe is the right balance where it matters most: sound and forward-thinking public policy, fiscal prudence and a fair, supportive and respectful relationship with employees.

With a moderate investment, not only will your home be more comfortable and efficient now, but it will increase in value moving into the future. Click [here](#) to learn more.

Keep your questions coming!

Send them to [Diane Crane Iacopi](#), Town Clerk.

Our goal is to emerge from these dark and scary woods with a stronger organization and a solid fiscal footing for the challenges that lie ahead.

Sincerely,



Peggy Curran

NEWS BRIEFS

"Earth Day" Close to Home: Tiburon's Climate Action Plan



At

its April 20 meeting, the Town Council adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP) and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction Target of 15% below 2005 levels by 2020.

The purpose of the CAP is to compile existing and potential strategies that both the Town's government and the community can feasibly take to address climate change. The CAP provides a brief background on what constitutes climate change, discusses its potential impacts, and also focuses on efforts Tiburon can take to reduce its GHG emissions to begin to address the impacts of climate change.

Want to know what you can do to help the Town reach its GHG reduction target? Consider using public transit, such as local buses or ferries. The next time you need to make a short trip, consider walking or riding your bike. Encourage your children to walk or ride their bikes to school. Start a local carpool or ridesharing program with friends, family or neighbors. These are just a few of the many actions members of our community can take to help reduce GHG emissions. Together we can make a difference

not only for our community, but for the betterment of the planet.

Curious about what other actions the community and government operations can take to help reduce GHG emissions? View the document online on the Town's website at www.ci.tiburon.ca.us.

For questions regarding the Climate Action Plan, contact Associate Planner, Laurie Tyler, at lyler@ci.tiburon.ca.us.

Laurie Tyler, Associate Planner
Tiburon Community Development Department

Library Expansion Project: EIR Comment Period Underway



The Town of Tiburon is accepting written comments on the Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report (RDEIR) for the Belvedere-Tiburon Library Expansion project. The project proposes expanding the existing library building by approximately 18,000 square feet through construction of a two-story addition located between the current library building and the Tiburon Town Hall building.

The project would eliminate the existing parking lot at the Library-Town Hall complex and construct a new 52-car parking area behind the current library building and its proposed addition. The library project and Tiburon Town Hall would be served for vehicular purposes by a new driveway from Mar West Street. The current Tiburon Boulevard driveway to parking lots for both facilities would be closed.

A Draft EIR for the project was released in June 2010, but portions of that document have been revised and recirculated for public review and comment. New comments are being accepted only on impacts relating to biological resources, transportation/parking, and alternatives to the project.

If you previously submitted comments in 2010 on any of these three topics, you will need to submit new comments if you wish to have written responses to your comments prepared. Earlier (2010) comments made on any other portions of the Library DEIR, for example, visual impacts or noise impacts, will have responses to those earlier comments prepared as part of the Final EIR.

The Revised Draft EIR, as well as other project materials, is available for review at the Planning Division, Tiburon Town Hall, 1505 Tiburon Boulevard, Tiburon, California, and also at the Belvedere-Tiburon Public Library, 1501 Tiburon Boulevard, Tiburon, California. A limited number of copies are available for free on compact disc or in hard copy at Tiburon Town Hall. The RDEIR may also be viewed on the Town's website, www.ci.tiburon.ca.us, through a link in the News Box.

Written comments on the Revised Draft EIR can be submitted up to 5:00 p.m. on May 9, 2011.

Written comments should be sent to Scott Anderson, Director of Community Development, Town of Tiburon, 1505 Tiburon Boulevard, Tiburon, CA 94920, or e-mailed to sanderson@ci.tiburon.ca.us.

Scott Anderson, Director
Tiburon Community Development Department

Building Code Corner: Residential Building Reports (RBRs)

A Report of Residential Building Records, or RBR, is a Building Division records review and inspection process intended to maintain and upgrade the safety of housing within the Town to ensure the health and safety of its residents. It involves a review of the Town's building records and a physical inspection of dwelling units prior to their sale or exchange. It provides an itemized report that identifies relevant findings and deficiencies, including zoning violations, expired building permits, and code violations noted at the time of inspection.



Deficiencies are classified as either "Mandatory" or "Advisory." Mandatory items are those deficiencies that present a serious health or safety concern and must be corrected within 30 days of the transfer of ownership, or such other period of time as may be agreed to by the Building Official. Advisory items are those deficiencies that, in the judgment of the Building Official, do not present serious health or safety concerns and are recommended, but not required, to be corrected. The report concludes with a "Notice to Prospective Purchaser" disclosure statement that must be signed by the new owner and returned to the Building Division within 30 days of the transfer.

Some commonly asked questions regarding RBRs include

what kinds of things the Building Division looks for during the inspection process, what is the fee for this service, and what can happen if one fails to comply with the requirements. The following are answers to these and a few other questions that might be of interest to readers:

What mandatory correction items can I expect to be addressed on my report?

Deficiencies that rise to the level of presenting a serious health or safety concern include such things as non-safety glazing in windows and doors located in code-defined hazardous areas, unsafe stairways or those lacking usable handrails, fall hazards such as missing or non-compliant deck guardrails, dangerous electrical wiring and panels, unbraced foundation cripple walls (usually found in older homes), unsafe swimming pool enclosures and drains, and missing or inoperable smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Every situation is different and depending on the circumstances, the specific requirements for correcting these items may vary from one property to the next.

How much is the fee for this service and how do I schedule the inspection?

Currently, the RBR fee is \$250.00 and inspections may be scheduled through the Building Division front desk. Inspections are usually conducted at 1:00 P.M and usually takes 30 minutes to an hour. The fee includes one reinspection of the dwelling to verify compliance with the mandatory requirements identified in the RBR report; additional site visits, if required, may incur a \$75 reinspection fee depending on the circumstances.

Do I need a building permit to correct the work listed on the RBR report?

Usually not, however, extensive corrections or those resulting from previous work done without building permits may require a separately obtained permit to authorize the work.

Are there consequences for failing to comply with the mandatory requirements of the RBR report?

Yes, as stated on each and every RBR report: "Failure to make the required corrections within 30 days will incur a fine of \$103 per day (Municipal Code 13A-8)." If circumstances warrant, an extension of this time period may be authorized by the Building Official.

What if the illegal work was done before I became the owner of the home?

The current owner of a dwelling unit is responsible to

correct illegal or unsafe conditions regardless of when the condition first occurred.

Fred Lustenberger
Building Official

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Upcoming Special Events

Salmon "Kiss and Release"
Saturday, April 30, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Blackie's Pasture

Bring the kids and help release salmon hatchlings into the Bay. Members of the Tiburon Volunteer Fire Department will sell BBQ food and soft drinks. The event is free and open to the public.

For more information, contact the Tiburon Salmon Institute at 435-2397.

"Walk Your History"
Saturday, May 7 - Walks start from 9:30 a.m.
Belvedere Park

Two free walks come alive with "living history" in Belvedere and Tiburon. The walks begin and end in Belvedere Park, where a BBQ lunch and music will follow.

Bring the kids...bring the dog...enjoy the day!

For more information, or to be a docent for the event, call Pam at the Landmarks Office (435-1853) or e-mail her at lmsoffice@sbcglobal.net.

Tiburon Wine Festival
Saturday, May 14, 1 - 4 p.m.
Pt. Tiburon Plaza

Tickets are on sale now at the Chamber office for \$65.00. Last year, tickets sold out almost three weeks in advance, so don't delay!

For more information, call 435-5633, or send an e-mail to tibcc@sbcglobal.net.

Artist Laureate Programs

Artist Laureate Workshop
Saturday May 21, 10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Town Hall Community Room (2nd Floor) "Collage" with Jaleh A.Etemad

Jaleh is a very gifted artist whose work has been shown in galleries in the Bay Area, Hawaii and New Mexico, as well as internationally in Paris, Stockholm, Oslo, Rome, and Beijing.

Jaleh's techniques of collage on canvas are so creative and interesting that you are drawn into the creative process by a real professional. Jaleh will help us to create our own masterpiece by using her unique skills.

Reservations are a must! A list of materials needed will be provided when you contact: marymusalo@aol.com

Artalk
Tuesday, June 21, 7 p.m.
Town Hall Lobby
Free to the public

Come join us as we continue the conversation about Latin American artists, with Joan Palmero. For more information, contact Artist Laureate, Mary Musalo, at marymusalo@aol.com.

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](#).



Council and Commission Meetings



Town Council: First and third Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. - (May 4 and May 18).

Design Review Board: First and third Thursdays at 7 p.m. - (May 5 and May 19).

Planning Commission: Second and fourth Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. - (May 11 and May 25).

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

Parks, Open Space and Trails Commission: Third Tuesday every other month at 6 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room (the next meeting is May 17).

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings listed above are in the Council Chambers at Tiburon Town Hall, 1505 Tiburon Boulevard.

Sincerely,

Town Staff
Town of Tiburon
435-7373

Editor: Diane Crane Iacopi

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