



Capitola *Currents*

Capitola Joins Local Trend with Plastic Bag Ban

Capitola will join many neighboring jurisdictions when its plastic bag ban goes into effect April 10, 2013. The City Council voted unanimously in January to ban point-of-sale plastic bags at all retail businesses and initiate a 25-cent charge for carryout paper bags as well.

The ban excludes restaurants, allowing takeout food containers to be placed in plastic bags. It also does not include bags used to hold such things as produce or bulk ingredients.

Shoppers are encouraged to bring sturdy reusable bags to carry their purchases.

As a coastal city, Capitola has a strong interest in protecting the marine environment. Plastic bags that find their way into the Monterey Bay Marine Sanctuary essentially remain there indefinitely since most plastic bags do not biodegrade. The new ordinance will significantly reduce the amount of plastic bag litter and, in turn, will keep our beaches, land, and creeks cleaner.

The new ordinance aims not only to restrict the use of plastic bags but also to discourage any paper single-use bags. For that reason, the City Council also approved a 25-cent charge for paper bags.

Although paper bags biodegrade quickly, making them involves a great deal of water use, water pollution, tree removal, and green house gas emissions.

Participants in government-subsidized food programs do not have to pay the paper bag fee. Capitola's action joins numerous other Monterey Bay area jurisdictions that have banned the use of plastic bags, including Santa Cruz County, the city of Santa Cruz, Watsonville, Monterey, and Carmel.



Measure O Sales Tax Increase Coming in April

Capitola voters approved a quarter-cent increase in local sales tax when they passed Measure O in the November 2012 General Election. The new tax will take effect on April 1, 2013, for a total rate of 8 ¾ percent within City limits.

Income from Measure O will go into the City's General Fund and can be used toward the City's many needs, from street projects to re-establishing our reserves. This sales tax is ongoing, but an earlier voter-approved quarter-cent

measure expires at the end of 2017.

City leaders thank the residents for supporting Measure O and the additional fiscal stability it provides.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Capitola Village

Easter Egg Hunt

March 30

City-Wide Garage Sale

April 20

Spring Garbage Clean-up Week

April 22

Capitola Kite Classic

May 4

Memorial Day

May 27

City Offices Closed

10 -11 a.m. Memorial
Day Celebration

Front lawn at City Hall

Rod & Custom Classic Car Show

June 8-9

Capitola Welcomes New Council Member, Treasurer

Capitola voters elected a new council member and treasurer in last November's General Election. Council Member Ed Bottorff and Treasurer Kym DeWitt are settling in to their new positions after taking office in December.

Ed Bottorff (Bah-torf) will serve a four-year term on the Council along with incumbent Council Member Dennis Norton; they were both the top vote-getters.

"I want to preserve the good things we have through careful use of the city's limited financial resources," said Ed, who moved to Capitola three years ago. He added that he is hopeful city residents share his goal of bringing a new perspective and en-



Council Member Ed Bottorff



Treasurer Kym DeWitt

ergy to the community discussion.

Ed may be contacted by emailing him at ebottorff167@yahoo.com

New City Treasurer Kym DeWitt is employed as chief financial officer for a local distributor, and brings more than 20 years of experience in accounting and finance in the non-profit

and for-profit sectors. She has an extensive background in financing, contract negotiation, strategic planning, budget development, forecasting, and financial statement analysis.

As she noted in her candidate statement, "As your City Treasurer you can count on me to be open, honest and accurate. Safeguarding your tax dollars and serving

with integrity will always be my top priorities." Kym, who was elected to a four-year term, will also serve on the Finance Advisory Committee.

She may be contacted by emailing her at treasurer@kymdewitt.com.

Sign Up for NIXLE Emergency Alerts

The Capitola Police Department encourages individuals who live or work in Capitola to join NIXLE to get critical information about emergencies occurring in our community. NIXLE is a free service that delivers alerts to subscribers using text messages, emails, or the web.

Our Police Department uses the NIXLE service to share information about incidents such as road closures, fires, orders to shelter in place, extreme weather emergencies, or public health advisories. NIXLE is a fast and efficient notification tool that relays the alerts to individual subscrib-

ers, and lets them choose their preferred communication method.

The Capitola Police Department is committed to keeping our community members informed of critical information. NIXLE is a useful tool that can augment other more conventional ways of communicating.

To learn more, visit the NIXLE website at www.nixle.com or visit the Capitola Police Department website at www.ci.capitola.ca.us to sign up and begin receiving alerts.

Be Prepared for Winter Storms

Our local storm season still has plenty of time remaining, and winter storms can cause flooding, power outages, and downed trees and utility lines. Take time to prepare when the forecast calls for bad weather.

For homes and businesses in areas prone to flooding, free sand and sandbags are available in the

City's Pacific Cove parking lot, located behind City Hall.

Having other necessities on hand also can keep you safer and more comfortable. Before a storm hits, collect supplies such as first-aid kits, medicines, water, non-perishable food for all household members including pets, a portable radio, flashlights, and extra batteries. Keep

these in a safe and accessible place.

During a storm, monitor weather reports for emergency advisories and instructions. Stay indoors and off the streets if possible. Do not walk or drive through flooded areas. Avoid downed power lines and broken gas lines.

Drop Off Unused Medication at Capitola Police Lobby

The Capitola Police Department lobby now has a green kiosk to drop off unused medicine as part of a partnership with Santa Cruz County recycling's Sharp Solutions pharmaceutical take-back program.

A kiosk in the police department has the added advantage of being able to accept narcotic medications, such as prescription pain killers, that are not permitted in non-law enforcement locations. These kiosks provide a safe and legal alternative to flushing medication down the drain.

To turn in medication, combine all pills in a plastic baggie to save

space. Recycle the plastic pill bottles in a curbside cart.

The new kiosk accepts the following items:

- Prescription medicines
- Over-the-counter medicines
- Pet medicines
- Medicine samples
- Vitamins
- Medicated ointments & lotions
- Inhalers
- Liquid medicines in leak-proof containers

The Capitola Police Department is located at 422 Capitola Avenue, and lobby hours are Monday noon to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Friday 8 a.m. to noon. For more information as well as locations for dropping off medical sharps such as needles and syringes, visit www.sharpmedsolutions.org.



Safely dispose of leftover medications

City-Wide Garage Sale

The annual city-wide garage sale is coming on April 20. If you plan to participate, sign up on our website, www.ci.capitola.ca.us, to be included in the event map.

Would you prefer to receive your copy of *Capitola Currents* by email? If so, please send your request to lfridy@ci.capitola.ca.us. Be sure to include your regular mailing address as well if you do not want the printed edition in the future.

General Plan Draft Coming in June

The residents of Capitola will soon have a chance to read and comment on the vision for future development in the City.

For the last two years, the City has been moving steadily through the process of updating its General Plan/Local Coastal Plan and Zoning Ordinance. We are also developing a new Climate Action Plan for Capitola.

These documents in total will ultimately impact everyone living in Capitola. They will guide any future development in the City.

Among the revisions that have come from earlier community meetings are plans to address parking needs for Capitola Village, guidelines for hotel development there, and updates of the 41st Avenue commercial corridor. The first draft of the General Plan/Local Coastal Plan will be available to the public starting in mid-June 2013.

During the approval process, it is our goal to have as much community participation and comment as possible. It

will take a little time for you to become familiar with these drafts, but your comments are important to us and the future of our City. On a plan of this size, the most effective way to communicate comments and opinions to the Planning Commission and the City Council is in written form - letters or emails. There will be opportunities for oral comments; however, the best chance to have your

comments studied and weighed is to put them in writing and submit them several days before the hearings.

As the release date nears, we will make every effort to inform everyone of its availability, the process, and the meeting dates for the approval process. All proposals will be subject to environmental review, which also includes community input.

The most effective way to communicate comments and opinions to the Planning Commission and the City Council is in written form - letters or emails.

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Named one of *Sunset*
magazine's best beach towns

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Sidewalk Safety Is a Partnership

If you walk within the city of Capitola, you may have noticed recent efforts to smooth sidewalks where roots and age have made the pavement uneven. Our city is committed to keeping walkways safe, but this goal requires a partnership with the owners of property adjoining the sidewalks.

State code places responsibility on these property owners for helping keep sidewalks clear and safe. This may come as a surprise to many.

The California Streets and Highways Code Section 5610 requires property owners whose land is adjacent to sidewalks to maintain them so they will not endanger people or property and nothing on them will interfere with the public use of the sidewalk.

What kind of elements can cause danger? These include broken and raised pavement, slopes with potential to tip wheelchairs and related mobility devices, vegetation that intrudes into the walkway,

holes around trees, vehicles parked across sidewalks, and signs, poles, stands, or benches that obstruct or narrow the path.

Property owners can easily keep hedges and plants trimmed so they do not encroach into the sidewalk and avoid parking in the right of way. Other problems may require help from the city to address.

If you have questions or need help maintaining the sidewalk by your home or business, please call Public Works Director Steve Jesberg at 475-7300.

Regular Meeting Schedule

The **City Council** meets on the second and fourth Thursday of the month. Public session begins about 7 p.m.

The **Planning Commission** meets on the first Thursday of the month at 7 p.m.