

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
CITY COUNCIL
STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: January 15, 2019
To: Honorable Mayor and Honorable City Councilmembers
From: Councilmember Sarah Gurney
Subject: Approval of City Sponsorship of Sebastopol Walks Program and Assistance with Publicity
Recommendation : That the Council approve continued sponsorship and assist with publicity
Funding: Currently Budgeted: _____ Yes _____ No XX N/A
Net General Fund Cost: N/A
Amount: \$0

INTRODUCTION: This item is to request that the City Council Approve Continued City Sponsorship of the Sebastopol Walks Program in its 11th Year and Assistance with Publicity

BACKGROUND:

For 10 of the last 11 years, Sebastopol Walks has organized and conducted more than 120 walks around town, with more than 3,000 participants. Sebastopol Walks has introduced people to the fun of exploring our town on foot and discovering what makes Sebastopol such a great place to live and visit. Locals, locals with out-of-town guests, residents of other Sonoma County cities, out-of-county and international visitors have enjoyed the walks. They have become a tourist attraction.

The inspiration for the walks was a booklet called Sebastopol Walks, its first edition funded by the City. For the second edition, then Mayor and now City Councilmember Sarah Gurney organized two dinner walks and raised enough money for the booklet's second printing. Funding for the third edition came from the sales of the book, most of which were at our local Copperfields Books. The store has sold over 1000 copies. The booklet has been the number one holiday best seller for several years. It's an inexpensive gift and/or souvenir and has been presented to many Sister City/other visitors to City Hall.

The program has emphasized the value of exercise for good health. Already in existence when Sonoma County Health Action started the iWALK campaign, Sebastopol WALKS was highlighted as the demonstration program. It has inspired several other local walking programs: for example, one at the Senior Center; iMOSEY based at the Hospital; at least one private women's group; and a sister program in Novato.

DISCUSSION:

The 4-person volunteer team [Geoffrey Skinner, Richard Nichols, Kathy Oetinger, and Councilmember Gurney] who has successfully led Sebastopol Walks for 10 years is returning for another season of walks for 2019 after their successful 2018 season.

The group proposes 10 walks, from February through November. As before, Walk events will be held on the last Saturday of each month, meeting at The Plaza at 9 AM, departing at 9:15 AM, and returning around noon. It is possible that, due to the Memorial Day and Thanksgiving holidays, the May and November events may be advanced one week. Walks vary in length, based upon the route chosen by the morning's leader.

Some walks will be mainly for exercise to show participants how to connect places in town by foot and others will be informational. Some are new routes and new subject matter; some are updated versions of favorites. There have been **three progressive dinner walks featuring local restaurants**.

The WALKS build interest in Sebastopol as a walkable community and help people experience the connectivity of our network of streets, sidewalks, paths, trails and alleys. Participants learn that they can get around town without driving their car. They also learn about our town's social, cultural, and political history as well as municipal educational components.

The group seeks City sponsorship, in part in order to secure insurance coverage. The group also requests minimal help with publicity: posting on the City's Facebook page and website, placing flyers in the lobby at City Hall, installing the banner on the Gazebo at the Plaza, etc.

If available, the 2019 yearly schedule will be distributed at the Council meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the City Council approve City Sponsorship of the Sebastopol Walks Program 2019 and assistance with Publicity.

It's Our 11th Year!

SEBASTOPOL WALKS

EXPLORE LOCALLY

FEBRUARY 23, 2019

Bring a Friend

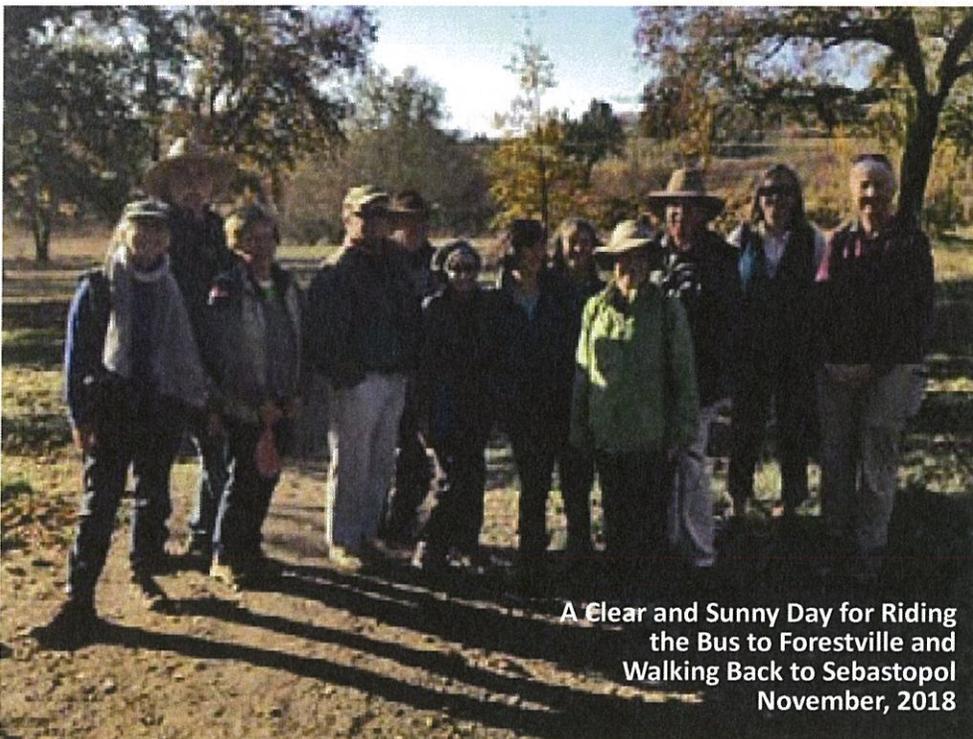
Walk & Talk About Pedestrian Safety

Saturday 9:00 a.m. to noon
3.5 –4 Easy Miles, Easy Pace

Learn about the City's efforts to improve pedestrian safety. We'll visit the Sebastopol Police Department to enjoy "coffee and donuts" and a discussion with Police Chief James Conner about pedestrian safety. Then walk through the neighborhoods using some of the "smart crosswalks" en route to the HAWK and the RRFB. Return downtown via the bike trail. Estimated end time at 12:30 pm.

Wear shoes that can get wet. Bring water, a snack, and a hat.
Rain cancels.

Leader: Council Member Sarah Gurney



A Clear and Sunny Day for Riding the Bus to Forestville and Walking Back to Sebastopol
November, 2018

MARCH 30 Saturday, 9AM

Opportunity Knocks Part 2

Leader: Patrick Slayter, Vice Mayor

APRIL 27 Saturday, 9AM

Watersheds, Historical—or a New Walk TBD

Leader: Geoffrey Skinner

MAY 18 Saturday, 9AM

A Tree Walk

Leader: Virginia & Chris Anderegg

JUNE 29 Saturday, 9AM

A Walk "Behind the Scenes"

Leader: Simon Lowings

JULY 27 Saturday, 9AM

Hidden Sebastopol

Leader: Richard Nichols

AUGUST 24 Saturday, 9AM

Neighborhoods & Sculptures Walk

Leader: Diana Rich & Max Caruso

SEPTEMBER 28 Saturday, 9AM

A Walk Through The Laguna

Leader: Simon Lowings

OCTOBER 26 Saturday, 9AM

A Local Walk TBD

Leader: Neysa Hinton, Mayor

NOVEMBER 30 Saturday, 9AM

A Bus Ride to Forestville—and a Walk Back to Sebastopol

Leader: Marsha Sue Lustig



THANK YOU
to our SPONSOR
The City of Sebastopol