

## Resident with broad experience is newest Belvedere councilmember

Sally Wilkinson appointed in uncontested bid for Winter's seat

By **EMILY LAVIN**  
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Since moving to Belvedere six years ago, Sally Wilkinson has worked diligently behind the scenes on many prominent city initiatives. She helped roll out the Yellow Bus

**INSIDE:** Three more seats up for grabs in November election, *page 5*

Challenge, has contributed to the city's planned update to its seawalls and chaired the most recent campaign to renew Measure E, which allowed the city to continue to fund

its fire services.

That breadth of experience, she says, has prepared her for her next, more high-profile step into civic life: a stint on the Belvedere City Council.

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Wilkinson

## Marin says schools should delay return to classrooms

Some peninsula parents petitioning to start on time

By **EMILY LAVIN**  
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Amid rising coronavirus cases and hospitalizations across Marin, public-health officials are now reversing course and asking schools to delay the start of in-person instruction until Sept. 8, the day after Labor Day. The county will have to meet strict new state guidelines if it wants campuses to reopen even by that date, but on the Tiburon Peninsula, some parents are petitioning to reopen on schedule Aug. 20.

The new county guidance, issued July 15 with the Marin Office of Education, calls for schools to adopt a phased-in approach to the school year that focuses on distance learning to start but allows for small in-person groups on campus in August to give teachers and students time to get used to new safety precautions that will be in place to help limit the spread of COVID-19.

Under the guidelines, during the first few weeks of remote learning, school districts can bring small groups of students into

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## Belvedere police ban strangleholds in response to '8 Can't Wait' project

Move comes amid protests over police brutality

By **MATTHEW HOSE**  
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The Belvedere Police Department will follow suit with Tiburon police and other law-enforcement agencies across the state and country by banning its officers from using the potentially lethal stranglehold known as the carotid restraint.

The Police Department has also banned officers from shooting from moving cars and strengthened requirements that officers intervene if they observe colleagues using excessive force.

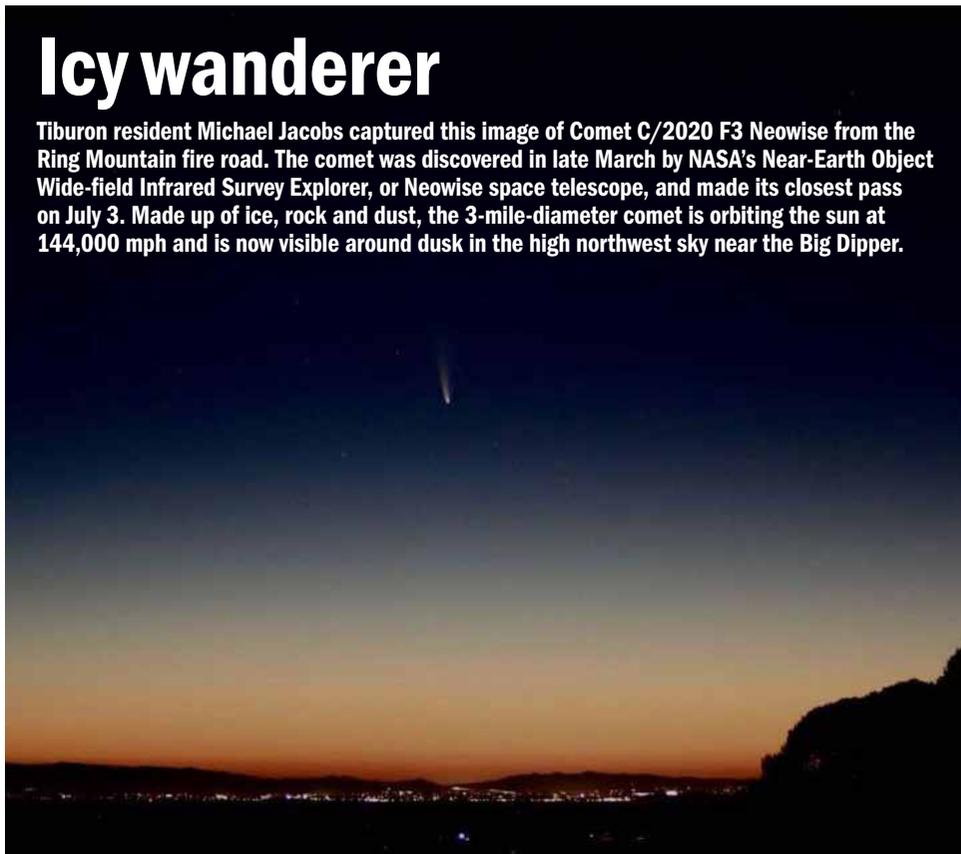
Belvedere Police Chief Jason Wu and City Manager Craig Middleton presented the updates to the city's police use-of-force policy manual to the Belvedere City Council at its July 13 teleconference meeting. The council accepted the updates without comment or a vote.

The reforms are in line with part of

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## Icy wanderer

Tiburon resident Michael Jacobs captured this image of Comet C/2020 F3 Neowise from the Ring Mountain fire road. The comet was discovered in late March by NASA's Near-Earth Object Wide-field Infrared Survey Explorer, or Neowise space telescope, and made its closest pass on July 3. Made up of ice, rock and dust, the 3-mile-diameter comet is orbiting the sun at 144,000 mph and is now visible around dusk in the high northwest sky near the Big Dipper.



## County adding citations for COVID-19 enforcement

**ROUNDUP:** Noncriminal fines for residents and businesses; another new single-day high; hospitalization rate drops; Tiburon, Belvedere see new cases

By **KEVIN HESSEL**  
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Marin saw 106 new COVID-19 cases in a single day last week, shattering the previous one-day record of 75 as the county continues to be monitored by the state for exceeding minimum case

and positivity rates. Tiburon's total case count also grew to 26, while data for Belvedere is being reported for the first time as the city hit 14 total cases, giving it the highest per-resident concentration of infections in Southern Marin.

But Marin's top public-health

official notes that despite the increase in number and percentage of new infections, the number and proportion of hospitalizations continues to fall, with fewer hospitalizations per new case.

Meanwhile, with Marin barred from any new reopenings as long as it remains on the state's watch

list, the county on July 21 was set to establish a new non-criminal citation framework. The rules would allow jurisdictions to fine residents \$25-\$500 for violating public-health orders such as face-covering and physical-distancing mandates — a lesser penalty than the misdemeanor charge and \$1,000 fine, jail time or both

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## Reports, *continued from page 23*

caller said there was a camera in the parking lot, and he believed the vehicle identification number would lead back to the red four-door Toyota driven by the group. Advice was given.

**Oh, brother:** 5:14 p.m. July 11, a Strawberry Village caller reported a young girl with a scooter was in the parking lot behind Safeway. The caller said she had seen the girl earlier that day with her older brother, but the brother was not there now. The caller asked the girl where her brother was, and the girl reportedly replied that she didn't know and was waiting for him to come back. Officers arrived to check on the girl, but she was gone.

**Bike thieves:** 6:58 p.m. July 11, a Seminary Drive caller reported her bike and her partner's bike had been stolen sometime overnight. The caller said the locks had been cut on the bikes, which had a combined worth about \$3,000. A report was taken.

**More for the taking:** 9:42 a.m. July 12, a Seminary Drive caller reported someone had stolen two e-bikes from their carport sometime between 4 p.m. July 11 and 9:30 a.m.

July 12. The caller said a \$200 Amazon package was also missing. A report was taken.

**Let it out:** 10:14 p.m. July 12, a Strawberry Village caller reported hearing a woman screaming and yelling before a car door slammed. Officers arrived and spoke with two people who said they had been having an argument. Both said they were OK and left the area.

**Anybody home?** 1:13 a.m. July 13, a caller at a Redwood Highway frontage road motel reported a man was knocking on different windows and doors. The caller said he asked the man, who was not a guest of the motel, what he was doing, and the man replied he needed to take a shower. Officers arrived and checked the area but were unable to locate the man.

**Better safe than sorry:** 5:36 p.m. July 13, a caller who works in corporate security for a bank chain with a branch on the Redwood Highway frontage road reported they had lost contact with the bank's alarm system. The caller requested officers check to make sure no one had cut the bank's phone lines or done anything else suspicious. Officers checked the bank, which was closed, and noted the building was secure, unoccupied and showed no signs of damage.

## Tiburon fire district log

**What's that smell?** 3:58 p.m. July 9, personnel responded to a report of a burning odor coming from a furnace inside an Esperanza Street home. Upon arrival, crews checked the furnace and the surrounding area for heat or signs of a gas leak, but neither was found. The homeowner was advised not to run the furnace until it was inspected by a licensed technician.

**Turn off the lights:** 1:17 p.m. July 11, personnel responded to a report of a burst of flames coming from an exterior extension cord at a Tara Hill Road home. Upon arrival, crews found a small cord running along an atrium window with multiple lights plugged into it. The cord was melted, and soot was found around the window. The cord was unplugged, and the area was checked for additional hazards. The homeowner was advised to contact a licensed electrician.

**Quick work:** 3:06 p.m. July 13, personnel responded to a report of a vegetation fire on Tiburon Boulevard. Upon arrival, crews found that a small spot fire on top of the knoll had been stopped by bystanders with fire extinguishers. Tamalpais Fire Crew had been working nearby on a different project and performed mop up at the scene.

## Southern Marin fire district log

**Sound off:** 2:49 a.m. July 12, personnel responded to a report of an unknown alarm sounding inside a home on Heron Drive. Upon arrival, crews determined the noise was a malfunctioning security alarm that was turned off at the breaker. The house was checked for smoke detectors and had only one functioning detector. Personnel installed one additional smoke detector and advised the resident to replace both and add a third outside the kitchen. The resident was also advised to call their security company to fix the malfunctioning alarm.

**Smells like smoke:** 11:17 p.m. July 12, personnel responded to a report of a smoky odor on Thomas Drive. Upon arrival, crews located a burn pit in the backyard of a home on the street. They advised the resident to extinguish the fire because of its proximity to vegetation and the house. The scene was cleared.

*Compiled by Emily Lavin. Police & Fire Reports includes items of note from public records and does not reflect all activity. Nothing in these reports should be construed as a finding of guilt.*

## Force, *continued from page 1*

the platform of the "8 Can't Wait" campaign, which is a project of Campaign Zero seeking to ban officer use of chokeholds, strangleholds and all other neck restraints. The campaign also provides several other guidelines as free, quick-to-implement policies that can dramatically reduce the number of deaths in police custody.

The plan gained considerable momentum after the Memorial Day killing of George Floyd, who died after a Minneapolis police officer applied a knee-to-neck hold for more than 8 minutes. An independent autopsy ruled Floyd suffocated due to lack of blood flow to the brain, while the official autopsy said he suffered from cardiopulmonary ar-

rest from restraint and neck compression. Both autopsies ruled his death a homicide; the four officers involved have been fired, arrested and charged.

Floyd's death has sparked nearly two months of protests across the country decrying racism and police brutality and advocating for systemic reforms to law enforcement. Three such protests have been held in Tiburon, including a June 23 march from Tom Price Park to downtown Tiburon in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement. Protesters lay face down with their hands behind their backs at the Fountain Plaza for 8 minutes, 46 seconds to commemorate Floyd.

Those protests have placed mounting pressure on police departments to change their use-of-force policies.

Tiburon Police Chief Michael Cronin on

June 12 released a matrix on the town's website that outlines changes to his department's existing use-of-force policies to align — in part — with the campaign's eight-point plan. However, Cronin initially resisted calls to outright ban the carotid hold, instead relabeling it as "deadly force application," meaning it had the same restrictions as the use of a firearm and could only be used when an officer believes there's an imminent threat to their life. After further calls from the community to ban the restraint, Cronin decided to ban it altogether later in June.

At the Belvedere council meeting, Middleton pointed out that Belvedere is "unique," with a "small-town community policing philosophy." However, he noted the city was cognizant of the larger contexts of protests against police violence throughout the country and felt it was important to set an example.

"We believe that some changes in policy are warranted in order to improve safety."

Nonetheless, Belvedere did not universally adopt the recommendations of the 8 Can't Wait movement, including a recommendation that police departments ban officers from shooting at moving cars.

Wu noted that Belvedere's current policy "severely curtails" officers from shooting at any moving car, requiring officers to move out of the way of an approaching car if possible. However, Wu said he didn't want to eliminate officers' ability to use their firearm if they perceive a car is being used as a deadly weapon.

Additionally, the city declined another recommendation of 8 Can't Wait, which requires that officers exhaust all alternatives, including less lethal options, prior to shooting their guns. Wu noted that provision would have put officers in an untenable position "by second-guessing split-second decision(s) under circumstances that are often tense, uncertain and rapidly evolving."

"For example, if an officer is responding to an active shooter who is actively killing children (at the Belvedere-Hawthorne Nursery School), it would not be feasible to first exhaust the use of verbal commands, physical control, pepper spray, batons or other lower level of force," Wu wrote in a staff report.

"Our officers are trained to go immediately to the most appropriate level of force."

He added: "De-escalation is ingrained in the policing culture of the Belvedere Police Department."

Other emphases of activists in the protests include calls to defund police departments, shifting those resources into other city services so police aren't responding to calls that might be better handled by someone like a social-services worker.

Belvedere consulted with Jon Marker, a San Rafael resident and representative of the 8 Can't Wait campaign, in crafting the updates to its policies. In an email, Marker said he appreciated the city's willingness to update its policies, but he added it would be important to keep the conversation going after the fact.

"While Belvedere is proud of the community-policing model which is currently being used, there are a growing number of examples which show that there are more effective ways and partnerships with other departments and resources to address many local issues beyond engaging an armed police force, which will keep citizens and officers more safe," Marker said. "I look forward to their continued study and recommendation of how to redirect resources to other community services."

Middleton noted at the council hearing that the Police Department has a "skeletal staff," with just enough personnel to maintain 24-hour-per-day service in the city.

"Despite these constraints, we are beginning to look at sharing some services with other jurisdictions and considering whether some outside expertise might be more appropriate in certain circumstances," Middleton wrote in a staff report.

Belvedere's Police Department budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 is \$1.66 million, accounting for 19 percent of the city's overall \$8.62-million budget. That makes it the most highly funded city department, though Belvedere's contract with the Tiburon Fire Protection District for fire services sits just higher at an estimated \$1.78 million.

*Contributor Matthew Hose is an independent writer and former Belvedere reporter and photographer for The Ark.*

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