

“Given the closure of the Developmental Center at the end of 2018, the catastrophic recent fires, and other issues affecting our community, it is crucially important that Glen Ellen citizens have as many tools as possible to influence decisions affecting our future. At present, our community lacks a consistent and cohesive means for bringing our opinions and desires to decision makers in Santa Rosa, Sacramento and elsewhere.

“The Governance Committee is currently exploring the creation of a mechanism for determining and expressing the “voice of Glen Ellen” at the County and other governmental levels. In April 2017, at the recommendation of the Governance Committee, the Forum voted to form both a non-profit organization and a Municipal Advisory Council (Council). The Forum non-profit has recently been incorporated. The Council has not yet been formed.

“Over the summer of 2017 we learned that in order for a Council to have official standing as an advisory body to County government, it would need to develop bylaws approved by the County Board of Supervisors. The Governance Committee is developing a framework to draft bylaws and assess how formation of a Council would alter local control and disposition of community issues.

“Our goal over the next six months is to hold exploratory public meetings around this topic, with presentations from First District Supervisor Susan Gorin and members of Advisory Councils from other parts of the county. Once those meetings are complete, the decision on whether or not form a Council will be brought to the community for a vote. If formed, the Council will operate, as legally required, as an entity independent of the Forum.”