

Wharf transfer okayed

The transfer of the Capitola Wharf into public ownership was approved last Thursday night by the City Council.

The Council ratified an agreement signed by Wharf owner Rick Karleen and City Manager Steve Burrell that gives the city title to the century-old pier in exchange for Karleen receiving an exclusive right to operate concessions on the pier for the next 17 years.

The transfer went into a 30-day escrow Friday, but can be finalized on short notice if necessary to allow reconstruction of the wharf to start this fall, Burrell said.

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Only time will tell if a pine tree in the 4400 block of Clares Street was fatally injured by construction crews installing water lines, the council was informed.

City Public Works Director Craig French said the large pine tree was examined by Dave Neff of the California Department of Forestry following complaints that roots were cut by crews installing a fire hydrant and water mains at the base of the tree.

French said Neff told him "generally the 'pine' tree is tolerant to abuse and can survive such occurrences. In this case, only time will tell if the extent of damage will kill the tree. He thinks the tree will probably survive."

French said Neff recommended spraying the tree against an infestation of

turpentine beetles and cleaning up concrete and cement from the base of the tree.