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INVITATION

Meet the Candidates and inform yourself about the two open space initiatives called J and K!

Candidates' Night Forum

Wednesday, October 1, 7:30 p.m.
 JM Auditorium

Moderator:

Budd MacKenzie of Lafayette
 Attorney with Local Civic Involvement

6 Town Council Candidates
 + Fire District Candidates

Open Space Initiative Forum

Monday, October 13, 7:30 p.m.
 Soda Center at St. Mary's College

Moderator:

Lee Borrowman
 Editor of Lamorinda Weekly

Speakers: Dick Loewke, Yes on J
 Renata Sos, Yes on K
 Bob Reynolds, No on Both

Hosted by

Moraga Citizens' Network

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LAMORINDA Community

Candidates Speak Out on Civic Pride

Federighi sees two other components, civic organizations and business leaders actively promoting civic pride. Those include the Rotary, the Community Foundation and the League of Women Voters. "Our hardworking Chamber of Commerce...has contributed immeasurably to the downtown's vitality." Finally, "Volunteers work many hours for no pay on the City Council, commissions, committees, and task forces to support down-

town revitalization, protection of our hillsides and ridgelines, road maintenance and repair, public safety and more."

Mayor Mike Anderson also has a multi-faceted view of the factors that contribute to civic pride. He believes that, "Civic pride in Lafayette comes from residents who have found a place that supports their lifestyles, has people compassionate and concerned for the needs of others, and provides an inter-

esting, stimulating, yet safe place for children and adults to learn and grow. Our governmental agencies provide the 'stage set' that encourages and protects this healthy community. This 'infrastructure for living' includes our outstanding schools, parks, open and undeveloped ridgelines, living creeks and public safety. This 'stage' is reliable but flexible, accommodating the routine and usual and allowing for the spontaneous and unusual.

... continued from page 2

Upon this stage, businesses and residents can freely express themselves, making our City vibrant and alive."

Lastly, "Our residents are the stars of the show, living well, caring for others, volunteering to assist civic processes and supporting the less fortunate." When all of the above noted interests work together they make a city where residents feel joyful and proud.

Mayor Lobbies Sacramento to Not Take Redevelopment Funds

By Cathy Tyson

As the record breaking budget impasse looks like it may be coming to a close in Sacramento, Lafayette's Mayor Mike Anderson urged Governor Schwarzenegger, Senator Tom Torlakson and Assembly Member Loni Hancock to not dip into city redevelopment money to help balance the state budget.

At press time, more than two months past their deadline, Republican and Democratic leaders say they have reached a compromise, but are mum on the details. At issue is the state's \$17.2 billion deficit. Three plans were being debated: one from the Governor and one from each

party. Obviously there are many items on the table, but what would directly affect Lafayette are redevelopment funds proposals. In prior budget proposals, Schwarzenegger's and the Republican's plan shifts 5% of redevelopment funds to schools and community colleges. The Republican plan also redirected funds set aside for low income housing. Democrats proposed a much smaller shift of redevelopment funds to schools and community colleges totaling \$98 million.

"The total hit to Lafayette could be well above \$500,000! Obviously these

funds not only provide jobs and stimulate local economies, but - statewide-generate an estimated 310,000 good-paying jobs, \$32 billion in total economic activity and \$1.6 billion in state and local taxes each year," said City Manager Steve Falk.

In an open letter dated September 4, 2008 to Schwarzenegger, Torlakson and Hancock Anderson states, "The development of a long term solution for our budget crisis cannot be based upon the pilfering of funds designated for the redevelopment of our local communities. Balancing the State budget in this way is not in California's long term interest and will, in-

stead, wreak long term damage on the State and further dim California's future financial prospects."

"For the State to raid local redevelopment funds now is akin to farmers eating their seed corn. It might result in a "full belly" but will ultimately result in starvation. I urge you to resist the temptation to take the easy way out and instead stand firm for genuine, long lasting fiscal reform..."

To see the entire letter, go to the Lafayette City website www.lovelafayette.org and click on the City Manager's Weekly Message, and scroll down to "State of the State."

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- Stanley Middle School Music Volunteer
- Lafayette Summer Music Jazz Workshop Drum Technician

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Moraga Candidates to Town Council on Participatory Democracy

... continued from page 3

We're about people, family and friends, all living in a community we are proud to call home."

Harpham would like to see even more volunteerism, "To reduce Town expenditures on outside consultants, I propose the formation of a Moraga Professional Advisory Board; comprised of Moraga citizens with expertise in specialized areas such as engineering, law, finance and technology, selected by the Town Manager, they would assist our Town Staff whenever such expertise is needed. We can't completely eliminate consulting fees, but we can reduce them substantially by offering a new way to see 'participatory democracy' in action."

Kolbe adds an example of a committee that could be formed right now, "Moraga's seniors have recently petitioned the Council to create a Senior Services Commission, modeled after Lafayette's. The cost would be negligible, but it would facilitate the identification and response to the needs of the 20% of our residents who are over 60 years old."

Karen Mendoca, who has firsthand experience as a volunteer on the Parks and Recreation

Commission, pushes the notion of participatory democracy beyond volunteerism, and praises the way citizens get involved in the decision making in town, "A participatory democracy invites citizens to make meaningful contributions to the decision-making process by directly taking part in that process. The Town of Moraga is a commendable example: citizens are encouraged to participate in all Town meetings, meetings are publicly noticed, communication networks and advocacy groups keep residents informed, the Town maintains a detailed website, and volunteerism is the solid cornerstone of our community."

Dennis Wanken agrees: "As a former Moraga School Board president and member, I could not agree more that we Moragans exemplify the true spirit and practice of participatory democracy. During the five years I served on the school board, one thing that could be counted on would be spirited and lively public comment and debate on public policy issues before the board. Participatory democracy is the essential mechanism by which we citizen stakeholders have our voices heard. We Moragans can truly be proud of

ourselves by the letters we write to the editor, by our attendance at our local legislative meetings, and our spirit of volunteering in the many laudable venues of our community."

Metcalf adds, "People want to be informed, most want a say. Participation is encouraged. Public meetings truly are public forums, where people can voice their opinions and be heard. Sometimes it's difficult for Town leaders to digest what's been said and reach consensus, but it happens. This takes teamwork of elected leaders and citizens. That's participatory democracy."

Brad Kvederis, on the other hand, is skeptical when it comes to citizens' information and involvement, "Moraga has the potential to be a good participatory democracy, but falls short right now. I'm glad our town is still small enough that one person can make his voice heard, but simply being small is a mixed blessing: Too often for a town our size, officials seem to be trying to guess what the citizens want, not acting on a clear mandate. In my door-to-door campaigning, many people I visited didn't even know there were big housing developments proposed right in their back yards. Sometimes, this disconnect is because our size makes large-scale, cohesive political activism difficult. Others, it's because the town ought to be more proactive about gathering input from the people and neighborhoods that its decisions affect - my own candidacy is a direct result of this. We need to be a lot more active in publicizing what's coming up before the Town Council, and make more use of the public referendum as a policymaking tool."

Mendoca agrees that citizen participation could be improved further. "If there is one area that could be improved, it is the way in which opinions are sometimes expressed," she says. "Passionate beliefs, if not checked, easily can give way to uncivil behavior and personal attacks. Each of us must be willing to engage in civil discourse that respects others' different points of view. It is essential that civic leaders themselves set a positive example and uphold behavioral norms that ensure a successful participatory democracy and the productive exchange of ideas."

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