

# Lamorinda Community

## Calendar, Notes, News

# Lafayette

Calendar	
City Council	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Monday, January 26	
Planning Comm.	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Thursday, January 22	
Design Review	7pm
Community Center, Manzanita Room 500 St Mary's Road Tuesday, January 27	
City of Lafayette: <a href="http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us">http://www.ci.lafayette.ca.us</a>	
Chamber of Commerce: <a href="http://www.lafayettechamber.org">http://www.lafayettechamber.org</a>	

**Lamorinda Teen Center General Meeting**  
Wednesday,  
February 11th, 7:00 pm  
Orinda Community Center  
(see story on page 4)



**Traffic Stop Produces Revealing Warrant, 1/1/09** Lafayette Police pulled the suspect over on Oakhill at Mt. Diablo Boulevard for a routine traffic stop. Unfortunately, the suspect was driving without a license. When the officer ran the suspect's name, it turned out she had an outstanding warrant in Orange County for prostitution/criminal intent. Perhaps Orange County should be known for more than just its "conservatism."

**Driving Under the Influence, 1/2/09** A concerned Lafayette husband called police when his wife drove away from their home in an intoxicated condition. Police successfully located her vehicle near the corner of Happy Valley Road and Mt. Diablo Boulevard. The woman was arrested, brought to the Lafayette Police Station and released to her husband. Most importantly, she is safe.

**Missing Fuses, No Electricity and a Hole in the Wall, 1/5/09** The owner of a Lafayette company called police when he discovered unknown suspects had removed fuses, disconnected the electricity and punched a hole in the office wall at his business. The suspects also cut the wire to the motion sensor inside the office. The owner told police he had released three employees within the last month and all had access codes to the gate and knowledge of the interior office. No actual entry was made to the building.

**Suspicious Phonebooks and Mary Jane, 1/8/09** An alert citizen called Lafayette Police when he noticed a suspicious person driving around and delivering phonebooks in his neighborhood. He told the police that phonebooks had already been delivered to his neighborhood the week before. The responding officer approached the suspicious phonebook deliverer's vehicle and noticed the odor of marijuana coming from the car. The suspect agreed to allow the officer to search the vehicle. The officer found 4 hand-rolled cigarettes containing a green leafy substance in a cigarette box on the passenger seat. The suspect was cited, arrested and released at the scene and the vehicle was towed. It is not known what happened to the phonebooks. It is possible that the suspect walked to the Shell Station to get something to eat.



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### Finance Workshop Reality Check: Expenses are up, revenue is down

**By Cathy Tyson**  
"Cost savings alone are not sufficient to meet all the City's needs," said Dan Deitrick, Chairperson of the Finance Review Committee addressing a City Council Public Workshop. Dietrick is a member independent committee that had been meeting since April to go through the city budget looking for expenditure and revenue trends and to make recommendations.

The evening kicked off with Dietrick presenting a recap of the challenges facing the city: \$18M of unfunded road repair, steeply increasing police services costs, a gap in downtown maintenance expense and four failed tax measures.

After months of analyzing information, the Committee made a number of recommendations. First on the list was that it's better to own than rent the city offices. Acquiring and redeveloping what will soon be the vacant original library building would save approximately \$50,000 per year in rent. Investigate opportunities for a more cost effective police force; a 10% reduction in cost would save \$400,000 per year. Reclassify the Youth Diversion Officer to a non-sworn position could produce a \$100,000 annual savings.

Other recommendations include: transferring the current balance in the Parking fund to the pavement management program, fund future downtown maintenance with assessment districts, and finally increase revenue using one or more of the following – property transfer tax, increase the sales tax, institute a business license fee.

The Council heard a substantial amount of public com-

ment on these suggestions. Seniors stepped forward to lobby for the original library to become a senior center. Police Chief Hubbard clarified that the Youth Diversion Officer is responsible for a number of tasks that require a sworn officer. For example if a non-sworn Youth Diversion Officer were tasked with investigation work, the department would have to contract that out at \$95 per hour, quickly eating up any cost savings.

Gabriel Froymovich, a member of the Lafayette Taxpayers' Association (LTA), had this input, "The LTA applauds the LFRC's thorough report. We would urge the City Council to strongly consider and approve most of the suggested budget cuts before considering new and burdensome taxes in today's depressed economy."

Finally late in the night, after much spirited discussion the Council adopted the following recommendations, to be overseen by the City Manager:

- Launch a study to evaluate opportunities for a most cost effective Police Services structure
- Fund additional parking through the RDA or assessment districts, use surplus parking revenue to fund downtown maintenance until an alternate source of funding is identified
- Fund future downtown maintenance with assessment districts
- Ask residents to increase revenue using one or more of the following to fund infrastructure repair, public safety and downtown vitality – property transfer tax, sales tax, business license fee, parcel tax
- Develop a communications plan for the City

### City Permit Necessary to Peddle

By Cathy Tyson



From left, Patty Battersby and Traci Reilly surrounded by her boys  
Photo Cathy Tyson

Around the end of February, any solicitor knocking on Lafayette doors must display a permit issued by the City of Lafayette along with valid photo identification. Boy and Girl Scouts, along with neighborhood kids with school fundraising projects are exempted, as are religious canvassers.

Traci Reilly got the ball rolling on the permit ordinance two and a half years ago. "This was really a group effort by neighbors and citizens who got involved and made it happen." Looking back however, and having kids at Lafayette Elementary School when she joined the Crime Prevention Committee, "this was my number one priority." This was in the aftermath of the travelling magazine salesman who recently plead guilty to the murder and rape of Elizabeth Vuori, an elderly Lafayette resident.

To qualify for the permit, a background check will be made – if the applicant has any felonies or certain categories of misdemeanors including any-

thing involving theft, violence, drugs or acts of a trespassing nature and the recently added "anything of a sexual nature," the permit will be denied.

Police Chief Hubbard explains, "We didn't want a lengthy list of the many specific crimes, so we used broad language," to encompass the myriad of reasons why a permit might be denied.

In addition, police will check to see if the applicant has any outstanding in-state or out-of-state warrants, or if the subject is on probation. Police will also check with the County as well as the California Department of Motor Vehicles and out of state motor vehicle departments.

Currently Lafayette is covered by chapter 56-4 of the Contra Costa County Code. When this Ordinance becomes enacted solicitors must comply with Chapter 4-4 of the Lafayette Municipal Code entitled, "Peddlers, Solicitors and Canvassers" instead of the County rules.

Over the course of many meetings, a number of citizens have come forward to express their opinion that all soliciting should be illegal. However, according to City Attorney Mala Subramanian that is unconstitutional.

Concerned citizens were happy with the outcome. "I support what the Committee has come up with," said Michael Olsen. "It's a black and white issue in my neighborhood. Selling door to door is just a thing of the past." Patty Battersby of the Happy Valley Improvement Association noted, "I support the new stricter ordinance. We do not want strangers coming into our neighborhoods."

The draft ordinance will come back for a second reading at the next City council meeting; thirty days after that it becomes law.

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