

# Orinda's City Council Candidate Forum

By Andrea A. Firth



Scott Zeller

About 150 residents filled the Library Auditorium to hear from the five candidates running for three seats on the City Council. Here's a snapshot of what the three incumbents, Amy Worth, Sue Severson, and Tom McCormick and the two challengers, Scott Zeller and Dean Orr had to say during the two-hour event. Go to [www.lamorindaweekly.com](http://www.lamorindaweekly.com) for complete coverage of the candidate forum.



Tom McCormick

**Amy Worth (Incumbent)**  
Amy Worth, who is completing her third term on the City Council, often shared a historical perspective on the issues and highlighted her experience as the Contra Costa County representative to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. She stressed that Orinda's plans for downtown must be tailored and representative of a collective vision, and she supported the senior affordable housing project proposed for the old library site. Worth stated that it is probably not a good time to pursue a tax measure to fund road repairs. She wants to build on the synergies of Orinda's existing businesses and not try to be Walnut Creek.



Sue Severson

**Dean Orr**  
Having served 5 1/2 years on the Planning Commission, Dean Orr displayed a depth of knowledge regarding local development issues. He emphasized the need for absolute transparency in the Council decision-making process. Orr feels Orinda will benefit from a variety of housing options and downtown market-rate residential units will serve groups other than seniors. Regarding the affordable senior housing development, Orr said, "I believe that is a project that we will all be proud of." He proposed exploring alternate ways of packaging and bidding roadworks projects to reduce costs and the need to more actively pursue small businesses that meet residents' needs.



Dean Orr

**Sue Severson (Incumbent)**  
Completing her first term on the Council, Sue Severson espoused a roll-up-your-sleeves attitude with a community built on collaboration, consensus, and inclusiveness. "My approach [is] one of respect for people, open communication...and fiscal prudence." Severson supported some housing



Amy Worth

in downtown stressing Orinda's obligation to meet state housing requirements. She suggested additional community workshops to look for solutions to pay for Orinda's crumbling infrastructure. Severson wants to change Orinda's anti-development reputation. She does not support dissolution of the Moraga Orinda Fire District (MOFD), but she hopes the MOFD will address the issue of low-pressure fire flow.

**Tom McCormick (Incumbent)**  
Mayor Tom McCormick, who is finishing his first term, emphasized his work on the audit committee,

his efforts to revise the budget process, and the continued need for fiscal responsibility. McCormick stated the creation of housing units in downtown is an important option for older residents. He described the zoning changes in Theater Square and the recommendations of the Planning Process Review Task Force (PPRTF) report as changes that will help support businesses in Orinda. McCormick does not support dissolution of the MOFD. He said, "I do think there are some issues of fiscal responsibility that the MOFD should be looking at."

**Scott Zeller, M.D.**

A newcomer to Orinda's civic environs, Scott Zeller stated that as a physician he oversees a larger budget and staff than Orinda's and that he regularly interacts with police and fire service agencies. "I love the way Orinda is," said Zeller, and he questioned why building height should go beyond the current 35-

foot limit. To address Orinda's infrastructure needs, Zeller mentioned benefit assessment districts and suggested that the City solicit more ideas from the community. He does not support dissolving the MOFD, but he said he has spoken to many residents about the issue, and he questioned whether fire service could be delivered in another way.

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## Julie Rossiter for Orinda School Board



Logo designed by Aidan Rossiter, OIS student



For a complete list of endorsements and to learn more, visit Julie's website at: [www.julierossiter.org](http://www.julierossiter.org)

### Top Priorities

- maximize school funding and ensure best use of funds
- continue improving and updating school curriculum and resources
- partner with parents, community, teachers and administrators to ensure ultimate goal: providing best possible education for all students in Orinda

### Background

- three children in Orinda schools (ages 12, 10 and 4)
- attorney experienced in employment law, negotiation and advocacy
- legislative representative to local PTA
- Annual Fund treasurer
- leadership roles in school fundraisers
- classroom volunteer in numerous capacities
- significant experience in negotiation and building consensus to achieve results
- family involved in many community activities

### Endorsed by:

- THE CONTRA COSTA TIMES**
- ALL FIVE CURRENT SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEES:**
- Pam West, President
  - Jack Bontemps, Vice-President
  - Matt Moran
  - Pat Rudebusch
  - Riki Sorenson
- CURRENT & FORMER ORINDA ELECTED OFFICIALS:**
- Laura Abrams, former Orinda City Council Member
  - Glenn Alper, former Orinda School Board Trustee
  - Joyce Hawkins, former Orinda Mayor and Orinda Citizen of the Year
  - Linda Landau, former Orinda School Board Trustee and 2010 Orinda Citizen of the Year
  - Amy Worth, former Orinda Mayor and current City Council Member

Paid for and authorized by Julie Rossiter for Orinda School Board 2010, FPCC ID#1328545

## 25th Anniversary Happenings



Mayor Tom McCormick (R) recognizes the winners of the City's 25th Anniversary Poetry Contest (L to R) Veronika Pister, 6th Grade, Orinda Intermediate School; Chloe Morrison, 3rd grade, Glorietta Elementary; and Wade Beury, 2nd Grade, Del Rey Elementary.

Photo A. Scheck



Orinda Public Works Supervisor Bryan Rowe places the City's 25th Anniversary time capsule in its burial site on the island of the lower level parking lot at City Hall.

Photo Tod Fierner

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Letters and Opinions:**  
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**Priorities:**

- Communication and Collaboration Between Parents, Schools, District and Community
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Strategic Improvement
- Attract and Retain Quality Teachers

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## Bekki Van Voorhis-Gilbert for Orinda Schools



In addition to serving as an active volunteer in school affairs for many years, I have spent the last 18 months attending OUSD Board Meetings and talking with parents, teachers and concerned citizens about what is and what is not working in our schools. While test scores remain high, this is just one measure of how well the district is functioning. Having educated myself about our district and examined how other local school boards operate, I know with new leadership and a fresh perspective the OUSD Board can be more efficient, better protect children and teachers during the difficult economic years ahead and create a culture of collaboration.

— Rebecca 'Bekki' Van Voorhis-Gilbert, JD, MSW, PhD

Watch the Orinda School Board Candidate Forum <http://www.smartvoter.org/2010/11/02/ca/cc/pacc/3671/>  
You Watch, You Listen, You Decide.

**WHAT I STAND FOR:**

- Fiscal Integrity and Academic Excellence during Difficult Economic Times
- Responsiveness to Parents, Teachers and Community
- Transparency in Process and Communication
- Advancement of 21st Century Student Skills

**MY CREDENTIALS:**

- Active Community and Parent Volunteer
- Former Tenured Professor at CSUN/CSUEB
- Author of books and articles on Social Policy
- Attorney-at-Law

Get on Board!

Paid for by Friends of Bekki Van Voorhis-Gilbert for Orinda School Board 2010, FPCC ID #1325818

[www.bekkgilbert.com](http://www.bekkgilbert.com)



## Tyson Krumholz

The Right Choice for Orinda School Board.

Endorsed by the Contra Costa Sun Times on October 15

The right person, at the right time, for the right reason.

- For Improving Communication Between All Stakeholders
- For Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability
- For Strengthening All Alliances and Relationships
- For A Fresh Voice and a Quality Approach in Governing the Orinda Union School District

## Tyson Krumholz

offers a wealth of real time business experience, passion, dedication and promises to make OUSD an even better place for our children to learn and teachers to teach.

I respectfully ask for your vote this November.

[www.smartvoter.org/vote/krumholz](http://www.smartvoter.org/vote/krumholz)

Orindans For Tyson Krumholz 2010 School Board ID # 03-0614888