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The State of the Town

By Sophie Braccini



Ken Chew (on right) after his presentation Photo
Andy Scheck

Moraga Mayor Ken Chew presented the customary State of the Town Address on November 17. Addressing a group of about 50 interested residents, he listed the highlights of 2010 - from the local government's perspective. In his usual relaxed, and sometimes even humorous, style he portrayed a town where all's well that ends well, if not for unfunded infrastructure maintenance.

Chew started with a series of slides listing the objectives, now accomplished, that he set when his term as mayor began a year ago. The most significant of these achievements are: a balanced budget; the completion of the Specific Plan; the transfer of the corporation yard out of the Hacienda de las Flores to the newly acquired building at 321 Rheem; the completion of the retrofit of the Town Hall at 329 Rheem; the agreement with the School District for the improvement of the sports field at Camino Pablo Elementary; the upgrading of the lighting assessment district through a popular vote; the completion of the Revenue Enhancement study and the subsequent appointment of a volunteer Economic Development Team, as well as the initiation of community outreach to determine whether or not residents would support additional taxes to fund infrastructure maintenance.

The Mayor pointed out that the Town continues to be able to provide essential services to its residents in spite of the cuts that have been required in order to stay financially balanced. "The per capita spending for government in Moraga is \$376.09; it is \$444.55 in Lafayette and \$616.16 in Orinda." He attributed this result to the exceptional dedication of Town staff.

Chew indicated that next year's priorities would be the implementation of the Specific Plan, community outreach to build a consensus regarding town finances, the budget, the conclusion of the Hetfield development project, and the support of local businesses.

He concluded by naming all of the fun events that take place in Moraga every year, from Cinco de Mayo, to the 4th of July, the Pear Festival and the Oktoberfest (which is, the Mayor confided, his favorite). "Moraga continues to be a great place to play, learn, live and one day, grow old," said Chew.

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