


Civic News Moraga

Public Meetings	
Town Council	Wednesday, January 12, 7:30 pm Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School, 1010 Camino Pablo
Planning Commission	Monday, January 3, 7:30 pm Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd
Design Review	Monday, January 24, 7:00 pm Moraga Library, 1500 Saint Marys Rd <i>Monday, January 10, has been canceled</i>
Liaison	Friday, January 14, 8:00 am Fire Station, 1280 Moraga Way

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
 Town of Moraga online: www.moraga.ca.us
 Chamber of Commerce: www.moragachamber.org
 Moraga Citizens' Network: www.moragacitizensnetwork.org

• Police Report •



Christmas vandalism, 12/13/10 Some Grinch entered the front yard of a Moraga Road homeowner and cut the electric cords to a sign that read, "Happy Birthday Jesus." Homeowner had no idea who would do this, hadn't seen anyone suspicious in the area, and mentioned to the officer that this has happened before. Reported loss, \$30.

Teen driver vs. PG & E pole, 12/15/10 At the corner of Scofield Drive and Rheem Blvd. a 16-year-old driver ran off the roadway and struck a PG & E pole. Moderate damage to car – minor damage to pole. Mom and Dad were notified and the car was towed from the scene.

Computer vanished, 12/11/10 A gentleman left his Sony Vaio notebook computer on a bench in front of Mountain Mike's pizza. The fellow went home forgetting he left it; he returned the next day at the crack of noon and found it missing. Both the computer and its bag are valued at \$779.

Annoying phone calls, 12/14/10 One fellow was making annoying calls to his brother, even after he asked him to stop. The nerve! Officers attempted to reach the pesky caller by phone, but were unsuccessful.



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Moraga's New Town Council

By Sophie Braccini



Photo Clay Serrahn

As the November election results were certified during the December 8th Town Council meeting, Moraga got itself a new Council that very much resembles the old one. To no one's surprise, Council Member Karen Mendonca succeeds Ken Chew as Mayor, and Mike Metcalf will now sit in the Vice-Mayor's seat. Although the Moraga Town Council was once known for its acrimonious meetings, the gracious statements made by each council member suggest that this Council will be one of Moraga's most civil.

The Council rallied around Mendonca to wish her well as she stepped up to the Mayor-ship. Howard Harpham, who could not be present that evening, sent a letter that summarized the Council's consensus. "I support incoming Mayor Karen Mendonca... (and) am looking forward to working closely with (her) to accomplish even more in 2011," he wrote, "Karen has demonstrated that she thinks clearly and holds the interest of the Town at heart."

Chew delivered a short and good-humored address. "It's been the opportunity of a life time," he said, "I enjoyed every moment of it." He particularly thanked staff members for their support, adding that he was "just the guy in the picture," while they do all the hard

work. Mendonca presented him with a framed gavel as a keepsake.

Vice-Mayor Metcalf congratulated Mendonca, "I think that you are going to be a terrific Mayor," he said. Metcalf encouraged new Town Manager Jill Keimach to continue the momentum of reforms begun by the previous Manager, and placed a high emphasis on the economic revitalization of the Town.

In her initial address, Mendonca detailed her priorities for the coming year (see side bar). Like Chew, she acknowledged staff and the many Moraga volunteers who serve in roles that are held by paid staff in wealthier local governments.

Moraga's frugality allows the Town to have a balanced operational budget, but does not provide for needed infrastructure maintenance. Finding new sources of revenue to tackle that difficult issue will be one of the new Mayor's top priorities.

Mayor Karen Mendonca's 15 Goals for 2011

- Fiscal**
- Develop and implement a balanced budget
 - Establish a 5-year financial strategy plan
 - Increase the general fund balance/reserve to 50% (now at 43%) of the Operating Budget
 - Increase outside funding and grants for streets and storm drain improvements
- Economic Development / Environment**
- Work with the economic development team to help create a streamlined business approval process
 - Outreach with the community to identify its priority for infrastructure investment and economic development
 - Create a vision for the Rheem Center with the community
 - Establish a task force to begin a climate change action plan or greenhouse reduction strategy (AB 32)
- Building Project/Partnering**
- 329 Rheem : finish retrofit design, planning , bid, start building
 - Camino Pablo field, work to be completed in summer 2011
 - Partner with SMC on student housing, recreation, sesquicentennial celebration, and support their effort to host a presidential debate in 2012
 - Partner with the New Rheem Theatre, teen dances and California Independent Film Festival.
- Communication**
- Redesign the web site to expand its audience.
 - Web streaming or videotaping of Council Meetings
 - Continue and enhance a consistent practice of civility in public meeting

Goal Setting Session in Moraga

Residents encouraged to attend and share thoughts

By Sophie Braccini

On Saturday, January 8, 2011, the Moraga Town Council and staff will spend their Saturday morning, from 8 a.m. to noon, at the Hacienda de las Flores listing and prioritizing their goals for the Town in 2011. Residents who have an interest in the future of their town are encouraged to come to the meeting and weigh-in on the choice of topics and how they are prioritized.

Although there will clearly be other issues addressed during the year, the sketching of a road map is essential to long term management. As residents opposed to the Dollar Tree coming to town put it, "The Council is there to enact the will of the people;" the elected members need to hear the voice of the people as they engage the Moraga Town-ship on the 2011 path.

A town is like a heavy boat, guided by a whole network of legal obligations. It is very difficult to make a sharp turn without tearing the delicate web. Getting somewhere requires a compass and a destination; this is why these sessions are organized once a year. Not only will the Town's objectives for the year be set, but they will be prioritized in order of importance.

Moraga reporter Sophie Braccini recommends that a good place for interested residents to start is with the list of goals drafted by Moraga's new mayor, Karen Mendonca (see above). Braccini suggests the following approach:

- Ask yourself if what you want to see happen in town is listed (or a variation thereof).
- Detail the goals you'd like to see achieved and list your own priorities (it can be helpful to include other like-minded residents who will also attend the Saturday meeting.)
- Prepare your arguments, and divide them into 3-minute sound bites that each person in your group will present.

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