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## Moraga will use WW Funds for Hacienda and Commons

*By Sophie Braccini*

Most of Moraga's Measure WW funds for recreation were spent on the renovation of the field at Camino Pablo Elementary School. The Town has until 2018 to spend the remainder of its allocation, but to get some of the \$140,000 left during this budget cycle it must submit an application by March 31, 2012.

Many needs are competing for that money, even after the Town removed Rancho Laguna Park from the picture after an Orinda resident filed a law suit against the Town. At its February 8 meeting, the Council decided to allocate \$30,000 for improvements to the bandshell at the Moraga Commons Park-an addition to the already approved \$15,000 for ADA pathway improvements-and \$42,000 for upgrades to the Hacienda de las Flores and Pavilion restrooms.

A couple of council members recused themselves from the parts of the discussion because of personal ties they have with the local foundations that will use these funds.

First, Vice Mayor Howard Harpham recused himself because his wife Louise is treasurer of the Parks Foundation that raises money for the parks and operates the Common's Band Shell during major Town events.

Then Mayor Metcalf recused himself for the second part of the discussion because his wife Sharon is a member of the Hacienda Foundation and, as an architect, the likely project manager of the proposed renovations.

Council Member Dave Trotter asked the Town Attorney to check if there was real conflict here, "These are projects to improve property that are owned by the Town, and I don't see how Sharon or Louise would benefit from this," said Trotter, "I'd like to hear guidance (about) whether recusal is really necessary."

"My experience with Town government is that it is better to exercise caution," said Metcalf.

Reach the reporter at: [sophie@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sophie@lamorindaweekly.com)

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