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Lafayette

Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Monday, February 27, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Planning Commission

Tuesday, February 21, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd

Design Review

Monday, February 27, 7:00 pm
Lafayette Library & Learning Center
in the Arts & Science Discovery
Center at 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

School Board Meetings

Acalanes Union High School District

Wednesday, February 15, 7:30 pm
Wednesday, March 7, 7:30 pm
Board Room AUHSD Office
1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

Lafayette School District

Wednesday, March 7, 7:00 pm
LAFSD Office
3477 School Street, Lafayette
www.lafsd.k12.ca.us

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Lafayette:

www.ci.lafayette.ca.us

Chamber of Commerce:

www.lafayettechamber.org

Share your thoughts, insights and opinions with your community.

Send a letter to the editor:

letters@lamorinda weekly.com

Lafayette Motorcycle Cops Make a Dent in Driver Behavior

By Cathy Tyson



Last summer the City of Lafayette welcomed, for the first time ever, two motorcycles to patrol the mean streets of this corner of paradise. The bikes are significantly more environmentally friendly, cheaper to operate and more agile than traditional cruisers. More than six months into their tenure, how's it going?

Allocating resources in an environment of scarcity is a core economics lesson the City Manager and City Council took to heart in the decision

to add motorcycles to the police force. Lafayette residents are significantly more likely to die in a traffic collision than an assault or homicide. They figured it just made more sense to use budget resources where the risks are highest, the best way to prevent future deaths and serious injuries is to provide better enforcement. With only 17 sworn staff members for a population of about 24,000, Lafayette ties Danville for the lowest number of officer per capita in Contra Costa County.

"The motor officers wrote 678 citations during the last quarter of 2011. The total number of citations written by the police department rose by 27 percent over the last year," explained Lafayette Police Chief Mike Hubbard. "During that same time period, the number of injury accidents decreased by 20.6 percent."

For drivers who may not see a semi-concealed officer, the Chief points out that, "It's legal for them to sit behind bushes or in driveways. We even have driveway agreements that many citizens have signed, giving us permission to use their driveway to enforce traffic regulations." The most common ticket is written for speeding or cell phone usage while behind the wheel.

Mayor Carol Federighi reports that fines can vary from \$250 for talking on your cell phone while driving to \$685 for passing a school bus. "We're not doing this for the money," she said. "Lafayette gets on average on about 10 percent of the fines collected. For example a stop sign violator pays a \$350 fine, but Lafayette only receives \$35."

"Police work in a difficult, often adversarial, environment. It's understandable that people don't like receiving citations for speeding or using a cell phone while driving, but that's the law, and the job of the officer is to enforce it," said City Manager Steven Falk. "My experience with our offi-

cers is that they are well trained and very professional; if that's not the citizen's experience, then both Chief Hubbard and I want to hear about it."

Obviously no one wants to get a ticket. Quite a number of residents contacted for this story who have received them are unhappy with police tactics, but declined to speak on the record. One older gentleman, who preferred to comment anonymously, believes some of the public trust in the police department has been eroded by officers who hide out.

One recent change that parents will enjoy is new, very short term parking in front of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center. A number of normally law abiding parents had stopped in front of the new library to pick up their kids, and have been ticketed because the curb was painted red – technically no parking to accommodate a County Transit Bus that stops there. A few weeks ago the curb was re-painted white, with very clear instructions – two minute loading zone.

"We understood when we opened the library that we'd need to make adjustments to the building as we learned how it was, in practice, used by the public. This is one of those adjustments," said Falk. "We learned that several parents had received parking citations while sitting in the red zone waiting for their kids, and that felt wrong. We hope this improves the situation."

Lafayette School District Wants Help Planning for the Future

By Cathy Tyson

"Shift happens," is the creative colloquialism that describes what's going on with the Lafayette School District. Superintendent Dr. Fred Brill along with the Governing Board and District Administrators were at Stanley Intermediate School recently to kick off the official Strategic Planning Process to guide

the District for the next five years.

The process is meant "To provide direction to what the district should start doing, stop doing and keep doing" summarized Brill. Clearly staff shares a collaborative view of their vision toward student success

Input from all stakeholder

groups is critical in molding the strategic plan, with end goal of creating a roadmap for the District. This is the time for teachers, parents and the community to offer their opinions about what is working and what needs some adjustments.

District administrators are offering a number of ways for residents to

get involved. The team will be taking the show on the road visiting Burton Valley, Happy Valley, Lafayette Elementary and Springhill through the month of February with teacher meetings in the late afternoon and parent community meetings in the evening.

... continued on next page

Police Report



Lights out, 1/23/12 Scoundrels broke a resident's two decorative garden lanterns overnight. Victims heard glass breaking in the wee hours but didn't get up to check. They're out \$600 for the pair; which probably gives them a dimmer view of humanity...

Unlocked and unlucky, 1/27/12 Someone left their car unlocked with a wallet and credit cards inside, so a thief took advantage. The car left the premises, and a credit card transaction was reported from Oakland.

Not much to work with, 1/25/12 When one car's driver rear-ended another along Reliez Station Road, there was no damage, nor any injuries. Still, the person reporting the collision insisted a written report be filed with Lafayette P.D.

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