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Fire Chief Presents Plan to Town Council

By Sophie Braccini

Moraga-Orinda Fire District Chief Randall Bradley gave a presentation to the Moraga Town Council March 13 regarding the possible merger of MOFD fire station 43 in Orinda and Contra Costa Fire Protection District station 16 in Lafayette (read the related articles on pages A2 and A11).

The council did not express a definitive opinion about the consolidation plan, which Bradley estimates would save the fire district about \$1 million per year, but it appeared to be favorable to the idea.

During the meeting's public comment period, Moraga resident and former MOFD board member Dick Olsen said he believes the merger would have negative consequences for the town. "ConFire chief (Daryl) Louder indicated at the board of supervisors' meeting that one way to find funding for the new joint station would be to convert station 17 into an EMS-only station (no fire engine)," he told the council. Station 17 is on St. Mary's Road in Lafayette.

This idea not only alarms residents of Lafayette's Burton Valley neighborhood, but could have an impact in Moraga as well: "That station is the third responder for Saint Mary's," noted Olsen, who also pointed to financial concerns.

"We here in Moraga will suffer the consequences if ConFire defaults on its payments," he stated.

The Moraga and Orinda councils are scheduled to meet with the MOFD board on April 29.

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