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Islands in the Stream

Orindans now able to watch City Council meetings live from home

By Laurie Snyder



It just became easier for Orinda parents and kids to do their homework together. By clicking on "To watch LIVE City Council meetings" in the right menu on Orinda's home web page, you'll be directed to the Streaming Media Archive page shown above. From there, just click "View Event" to watch the meeting live - or on "Agenda." Clicking an active link on the agenda for a specific item will enable you to read the related staff report while simultaneously viewing the related discussion live (see example from March 4 above).

Unless a dog has eaten your computer or smart phone, Orinda, there is now no longer any reason for failing to do your homework and stay informed about the operation of your city government.

Thanks to a contract with Granicus (www.granicus.com), a service provider that streams meetings for numerous communities nationwide and recently webcast the State of the State Address by California Gov. Jerry Brown, the city of Orinda is now live streaming video of its own City Council and Planning Commission sessions. The setup is a fairly functional one, enabling residents to remotely view and hear the meetings in real time, as they are taking place, on a split screen which also displays the documents for the corresponding agenda items as they are being discussed.

Although service delivery was impacted early on by frequent video buffering issues - a glitch that other communities

across the United States have also experienced, Orinda personnel have been working closely with company representatives since webcasting began in early January. As of the City Council's last meeting in February, the hiccups to the live stream now appear to have been cured.

In an added bonus, it is also now easier to access specific discussions from meeting archives via links embedded in the 2014 meeting agendas, which take users directly to the specific footage pertaining to agenda items and their respective staff reports.

In order to live stream, you'll need to have Microsoft Windows XP SP2 or Vista 7 and Internet Explorer 8 (or newer) installed on your PC - or OS X 10.5 and Apple Safari 5 (or newer) if you're on a Mac. Microsoft Silverlight plug-ins are also recommended. To learn more, visit the city's website: www.cityoforinda.org.

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5 MORAGA WAY, ORINDA • 925.253.4600
2 THEATRE SQUARE, SUITE #211, ORINDA • 925.253.6300
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