



# Lafayette Civic News

## Public Meetings

### City Council

Monday, June 23, 7 p.m.  
Monday, June 30, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,  
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

### Planning Commission

Monday, July 7, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,  
Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

### Design Review

Monday, July 14, 7 p.m.  
Lafayette Library & Learning Center,  
Arts & Science Discovery Center,  
3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

### City of Lafayette:

www.ci.lafayette.ca.us  
Phone: (925) 284-1968

### Chamber of Commerce:

www.lafayettechamber.org

### School Board Meetings

**Acalanes Union High School District**  
Wednesday, June 25, 7 p.m.  
AUHSD Board Room  
1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette  
www.acalanes.k12.ca.us

### Lafayette School District

Wednesday, June 25, 7 p.m.  
Regular Board Meeting  
Stanley Library  
3477 School St., Lafayette  
www.lafsd.k12.ca.us

Share your thoughts, insights and opinions with your community. Send a letter to the editor:

letters@lamorindaweekly.com



<b>Alarms</b>	83
<b>911 Calls</b>	17
<b>Animal Cruelty</b>	
3600 block Mt Diablo Bl	
3500 block Mt Diablo Bl (2)	
Pet Food Express	
<b>Battery</b>	
3200 block Stanley Bl	
3500 block Mt Diablo Bl (2)	
Reported at LPD	
1200 block Upper Happy Valley Rd	
<b>Auto Burglary</b>	
Brook St/Hough Av	
3300 block Mt Diablo Bl	
900 block Colina Ct	
Safeway (2)	
200 block Lafayette Cr	
800 block Mt View Dr	
3600 block Brook St	
800 block Revere Rd	
1100 block Bacon Wy	
30 block Lafayette Cr	
Lafayette Community Center	
10 block Springhill Ln (2)	
800 block Las Trampas Rd	
<b>Commercial Burglary</b>	
3100 block Old Tunnel Rd	
<b>Residential Burglary</b>	
3300 block Walnut Ln	
10 block Arbor Wy	
1400 block Rancho View Dr	
3300 block Silver Springs Ct	
<b>Disturbance:</b>	
<b>Domestic</b>	
3300 block Mt Diablo Bl	
1000 block Orchard Rd	
400 block Castello Rd	
<b>Peace</b>	
Upper Happy Valley/El Nido	
<b>Ranch Rds</b>	
3900 block Los Arabis Dr	
<b>Juvenile</b>	
3700 block Mt Diablo Bl	
<b>Hit &amp; Run</b>	
Oakwood Athletic Club (2)	



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## Updated Rules for Chicken Owners

By Cathy Tyson



Photo Cathy Tyson

It's true, chickens are not livestock. After a year of research and investigation, a volunteer dream team of poultry fans came together with city staff to craft a proposed Municipal Code regulation to accommodate backyard chickens and rabbits.

At a recent Lafayette Planning Commission meeting, after some discussion and a variety of poultry puns, commissioners unanimously agreed to send their recommendation for approval to the City Council, which will consider the new rules for small farming at its June 23 meeting.

Current regulations are geared toward large farm animals, like horses, cows and sheep, and tie chicken ownership to a home's zoning district, which excluded a large number of Lafayette residences from the chicken experience and of course, fresh organic eggs. Because of this, the number of off-the-record chicken owners has increased, with the vast majority of neighbors looking the other way.

John Keifer, affectionately known

as "Papa John," and Wendy McClain did extensive research, figuring out best practices and insights; they also analyzed how other cities handle chickens. Together with Mark Robbins, Lafayette's former code enforcement officer, and city staffers Anthony Arrivas and Greg Wolff, the group collaborated to set standards that spell out the number of chickens allowed – ranging from four chickens to a maximum of 16 depending on lot size – to coop structure requirements and more.

Small livestock will now include chickens, rabbits and "other grain fed rodents" and the regulation prohibits loud species like roosters, waterfowl, peacocks and guinea hens. Casual egg sharing is allowed.

For the record, chickens will not be allowed to cross the road and must be kept within a structure or fenced area at all times, with access to a coop that is not more than 17 feet tall and meets minimum setback requirements. Concerns by planning commissioners included smell, a minimum roaming space, the potential for bad husbandry, and commercial egg sales.

## Police Services Getting More Expensive

By Cathy Tyson

"This is my 15th budget and the 15th balanced budget I've brought to you," Tracy Robinson, administrative services director, said to the Lafayette City Council. "We're in very good financial shape this year." Squeaking by with a \$16,000 surplus, the final budget was adopted

at the June 9 council meeting.

The General Fund expenditure budget for fiscal year 2014-15 is \$12.8 million, with \$6.2 million in reserves. Increases in police services account for the majority of the 6 percent increase in expenses.

Revenue numbers are better than last fiscal year with anticipated sales tax up 4 percent and property taxes up 3 percent. While more revenue is a good thing, it unfortunately isn't enough to cover ever more expensive police services costs. Police staffing

is the city's largest single expense, representing 36 percent of the entire budget at \$5.2 million. "The rise in police costs is troubling, because Lafayette, as a contract city, has little opportunity to control them," said City Manager Steven Falk. Services are provided by the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department.

Part of the increase in the cost of police services is a request by the police chief, Eric Christensen, for additional personnel to respond to property crimes in Lafayette, which

are up by one-third over the last two years.

Costs will expand further in the future due to expected substantial increases to cover police pensions and retirement health care. City staff is already anticipating sticker shock – 8 percent for the next fiscal year, and 4.5 percent higher annually in the future. That translates to \$4.7 million for the current fiscal year, \$5.2 million in fiscal year 2014-15 and \$5.4 million in fiscal year 2015-16.

## Narrowing Options for Traffic Study

By Cathy Tyson

While everyone agrees that traffic is bad in Lafayette and studying traffic congestion issues to find solutions would be a good thing, especially if it was funded with outside grant money, there was some friction at the June 9 Lafayette City Council meeting about study particulars, specifically roundabouts. A few residents chimed in that their perception is so negative, why even include roundabouts as a potential option to solve traffic snarls?

Council members responded that all options should be on the table and that it would be premature to rule out

anything at this point; the study is meant to consider and weigh all potential solutions.

Getting a study started in the near future has certain strategic benefits – in 2016 there is likely to be a one-half cent sales tax that would fund transportation improvement projects. City leaders want to be in a prime position for Lafayette to have potential projects ready to be implemented. A decision was necessary on the scope of the project that the grant would fund; grant requests are due in the beginning of July, said Leah Greenblat, the city's transportation planner.

She explained the best opportunity for financial support is a Priority Development Area Planning Grant, which will be decided locally by the Contra Costa Transit Authority; grants range from \$70,000 to \$750,000. "There will be a small pool of competition – it's our best shot for funding," said Greenblat.

Council Member Brandt Anderson said the study is intended to be a game changer – narrow down traffic solutions to some big ideas that may or may not be worth investigating.

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