



Fire Districts

Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire

Board of Directors

Wednesday, Oct. 7, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 21, 7 p.m.

Moraga Library Community Room
1500 St. Mary's Road, Moraga
For meeting times and agendas,
visit www.mofd.org

ConFire Board of Directors

Tuesday, Oct. 13, 1:30 p.m.

Board Chamber room 107,
Administration Building,
651 Pine St., Martinez

For meeting times and agendas,
visit <http://alturl.com/5p9pu>.

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MOFD to Leave Local 1230?

By Nick Marnell

Rumblings abound among the Moraga-Orinda Fire District rank and file of a desire to break off from their parent labor union and form their own local, according to a district union representative.

"Nothing specific, we're just looking at our options," said firefighter-paramedic Mark DeWeese. "We always want to look at what's out there. What if we had our own union? We have 50 guys in our district and there have always been a bunch who think that it would be better for us to go off on our own."

Both MOFD chief Stephen Healy and Vince Wells, president of the International Association of Firefighters, Local 1230, declined to comment.

"We're not looking to leave IAFF," said DeWeese, the district union representative. As to the pros of breaking off to form a separate local, "I'd rather not answer that," he said.

Mike Mohun, San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District captain and president of Local 3546, which split from its parent union in 1993, cited the benefits of a break-

away by using simple logic. "The larger the group you belong to, the smaller you are," he said. "In a smaller organization, you have more of a say."

The SRVFPD captain said that he favors the hands-on approach he employs at his local chapter. "I work in San Ramon," he said. "I am in constant contact with my employees, the chief officers, the board of directors. I am much more geographically accessible."

According to Mohun, the breakaway of MOFD would also take a burden off of Local 1230.

"The more employees that you represent, the more difficult it becomes to manage them," he said. "It'll be much easier for ConFire." Wells is a captain with the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District.

"There's no urgency," said DeWeese, who noted that the membership meets regularly to discuss such topics. As for any affect of a possible split on the district residents, "It wouldn't be a big deal. Not much would change for the citizens of Moraga and Orinda," he said.

Lamorinda Fire News Briefs

By Nick Marnell

Stations 16 and 43 Construction

A structural engineer told Contra Costa County Fire Protection District chief Jeff Carman that he concurred with the opinion of the district contractor that fire station 16 in Lafayette was not doomed to the wrecking ball. "There's no reason why we can't rebuild it," said the chief. Initial plans call for the stripping of the structure down to the frame and rebuilding from there.

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District, though, plans to raze its dilapidated station 43 and erect a totally new structure on Via Las Cruces in Orinda. Initial estimates approach \$4 million. Fire chief Stephen Healy said that the district may need to purchase a temporary station to house the station 43 crew during construction.

Representatives from Brandis Talliman LLC, a San Francisco-based investment banking firm, plan to outline public and private financing options at the Nov. 4 district meeting.

MOFD is Hiring

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District is seeking firefighter-paramedics. Fire chief Stephen Healy said that the district extended its application period this time from one to two months to broaden the pool of potential applicants. "The best candidates are taking a lot of tests," he said.

The deadline for applying is 5 p.m. Nov. 13. More details, along with the employment application, are available at the district website, mofd.org.

ConFire Ambulance Contract

The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors awarded the available county ambulance contract to the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District, and the district's contract negotiations with the county emergency medical services agency should be completed by mid-October, according to ConFire chief Jeff Carman. The district then plans to finalize an agreement with American Medical Response, the current county emergency medical transport provider, to subcontract for ambulance service. ConFire takes over the available county ambulance contract in January.

"We are working to merge our two dispatch centers," said Carman. The Contra Costa Regional Fire Communications Center in Pleasant Hill operates 24 hours a day, every day of the year, with ConFire dispatchers providing fire and medical service to most of the county. The center also contracts for dispatch service with the Moraga-Orinda Fire District. ConFire will add AMR dispatchers to the center to systematically deploy ambulance calls after the first of the year.

ConFire and AMR transmit via different radio frequencies, but by January, the chief said that AMR dispatch will merge into the ConFire radio frequency.

"We're making good progress, but there's not a lot of breathing room," said Carman. "But that's the way I like it."

Lafayette

Even More Love in Lamorinda



From left, Planning and Building Director Niroop Srivatsa, Council Member Don Tatzin, and City Manager Steven Falk at the Art and Wine Festival.

Photo C. Tyson

For the past 20 years, the city of Lafayette has been producing the distinctive green "Love Lafayette" bumper stickers seen around town. This year at the recent Art and Wine Festival, city manager Steven Falk wanted to spread the love beyond the city limits and came up with two more bumper stickers: "Adore Orinda" and "Amour Moraga." This came as a bit of a surprise to both the town manager of Moraga, Jill

Keimach, and the city manager of Orinda, Janet Keeter. Keimach calls the new mobile advertising, "a great gesture," while Keeter was startled, saying, "First I've heard of it."

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