

Kindhouse and Meade to Join the Lafayette School Board

By Pippa Fisher



Mark Kindhouse

The Lafayette School District Board will have two new faces at the table following the election. Mark Kindhouse and Meredith Meade will take their places on the board with 40.9 percent and 34.5 percent of the vote, respectively.

The community had the choice of three highly qualified candidates who were very familiar with Lafayette and the schools' issues. Meade says that she is "honored to be one of two of the candidates elected by our community."

Meade recognizes that the board has much work to do as it continues to shoot for incremental improvements to each child's educational experience and she recognizes that it needs to meet the challenges that all public schools face with funding and growing costs.

Kindhouse says that, although he ran on several tangible issues such as infrastructure, teacher, budget, special education and science technology engineering and mathematics (STEM), his campaign was ultimately about values. He says, "Now I have the honor of living out



Meredith Meade Photos provided those values through service. "

He reflects that following the results of the election at the national level, of all the initial campaign ideas that he had hoped to accomplish, none now seem as important to him as collaborating, listening and working with people in the community.

"We have a rare opportunity to expand the national discourse at our local level. We may have various opinions about where our country is heading, but one fact remains: we share a common experience as Americans and Lafayette residents and that makes us more alike than different."

Both candidates are looking forward to getting started. "I am excited to work with the current board members and administration and can't wait to do my part," says Meade.

Kindhouse says, "If we are open, honest, and put values first, we can accomplish any goal set forth for this district."

Council Member Brandt Andersson Steps Down

By Pippa Fisher



Brandt Andersson Photo Pippa Fisher

In a week filled with surprising turns and political plot twists, the unexpected resignation of city council member Brandt Andersson shocked many residents and civic leaders in Lafayette.

Since first serving on the council in 2002, he says he has managed to balance family, work and public service.

"It has never been easy, but it seems to get harder with time," he said. "Fifteen years later, it is time to leave the city of Lafayette in the capable hands of our remaining council members and our exceptional staff."

All members of the city council are sad to see him go.

Lafayette Mayor Mark Mitchell noted that Brandt's resignation is a huge loss for the council and the city. "I developed an even greater appreciation for Brandt when I came on council," he said. "Brandt is a principled decision maker even when he knows his decision will be unpopular with many in the room. He is also often the first to speak up for the disadvantaged."

Council member Don Tatzin also spoke of Andersson's willingness to take a potentially unpopular position when he thinks it best for Lafayette. Indeed, city council member-elect Cam Burks refers to him as representing the pinnacle of integrity and the importance of public service.

Tatzin and Mitchell both recall how, while defending the city regarding an Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) decision in 2014, Andersson had to explain to them, discretely in an appeal, how their own complex model worked,

in order for ABAG to see how they had made an error, enabling a better outcome for Lafayette. "Few council members in the state can conduct that type of analysis," said Tatzin.

Andersson volunteered for extra assignments on the council, often traveling to distant League of California City events and driving to Marin regularly to represent Lafayette with Marin Clean Energy. Mitchell said that his work on the Environmental Task Force and the Creeks Commission has been outstanding.

City Manager Steve Falk said of the news, "I'm very sad to see Brandt Andersson go. He's been an outstanding council member — one of the best that Lafayette has ever had."

Falk continued, "He brought true expertise to matters of planning and sustainability, and led the Council's discussions about public safety matters for more than a decade. He is brilliant, thoughtful and approachable: a potent combination. He's a friend, a co-worker, a leader, and the very best example of a citizen who works tirelessly and optimistically to improve his community."

He has a wide array of talents including music — he is a gifted singer who even once arranged for his choir to serenade the council at one of his mayoral inaugurations with a song he wrote.

Andersson is keen to stress that his timing in leaving right around the election and Measure C's defeat is not significant. He has worked hard for the past two years to get the The Citizens' Vision in place. Measure C would have provided resources to implement that vision but, even without it, the Citizens' Vision remains. He had already decided that in order to give himself more time for family and work he would bow out having accomplished that goal.

The city council was slated to discuss the process for replacing Andersson soon, as it's required by law to happen within 60 days of his resignation.

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