



Fire Districts

Public Meetings

Moraga-Orinda Fire District Board of Directors Wednesday, Nov. 16, 7 p.m. Go to the website for meeting location, times and agendas. Visit www.mofd.org

ConFire Board of Directors Tuesday, Dec. 6, 1:30 p.m. Board Chamber room 107, Administration Building, 651 Pine St., Martinez For meeting times and agendas, visit <http://alturl.com/5p9pu>.

MOFD Breaks Ground, Begins Station 43 Construction

Groundbreaking for Moraga-Orinda Fire District fire station 43 took place Nov. 9 as the construction phase of the project begins in earnest. The new \$4.5 million Orinda station will be erected on the Via Las Cruces site of the razed station, which had deteriorated beyond repair.

"The construction has proceeded on time, with no delays, and we are under budget," said Fire Chief Stephen Healy. "We have received cooperation from the city and the county and there have been no problems whatsoever." Completion is expected in October 2017.

The firefighters work out of temporary quarters in the St. Stephen's Episcopal Church parking lot, less than 300 feet away from the station site. — N. Marnell



From left, Fire Chief Stephen Healy; architect Alan Kawasaki; board president Steve Anderson; Battalion Chief Sean Perkins; firefighter-paramedic Jared Costanza; neighborhood resident Ellen Dale; directors Brad Barber, Fred Weil and Kathleen Famulener; and Capt. Dan Dick
Photo courtesy MOFD

Jorgens Edges Smith for MOFD Division 5 Director

By Nick Marnell



Craig Jorgens
In keeping with the 2016 general election trend of a private citizen beating a well-known public

official, retired business executive Craig Jorgens defeated Orinda Mayor Victoria Smith for the Division 5 director seat on the Moraga-Orinda Fire District governing board.

"Voters liked my engineering and financial background," said Jorgens, during a break from taking down his campaign signs the day after the election. "We knocked on a lot of doors and met a lot of new people."

Jorgens structured his campaign around his ability to manage the fire district's \$65 million unfunded pension and health care liability,

mapping hot spots for more efficient fire and medical deployment and using data to improve MOFD response times in the Sleepy Hollow and El Toyonal neighborhoods of north Orinda.

"I learned a lot more about the fire district and I connected with more people. Casual friends became better friends, and I made a lot of new friends," Jorgens said. "I look forward to working with the other board members."

Smith came up 117 votes short despite her strong name recognition thanks to 12 years of public service on the Orinda City Council. "Sure

I'm sad," she said of the results, but she harbors no regrets about leaving her council post. "I've accomplished all I can there and it was time to move on."

For now, Smith will continue to serve on the board of the Strive for Change Foundation, an East Bay nonprofit that helps the working poor achieve economic self-sufficiency.

"I'll keep my eyes open," Smith said of future civic opportunities.

Jorgens replaces Alex Evans, who opted to not run for reelection to his north Orinda board seat.

With its New Standards Of Cover, Moraga-Orinda Fire District adds to its Roadmap of Services

By Nick Marnell

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District updated its Standards of Cover for the first time in 10 years and though the document showed district performance goals falling within acceptable, recognized standards, it confirmed the frustration of longer Orinda response

times, which continue to nag the district.

The Standards of Cover document analyzes MOFD's deployment of its fixed and mobile resources and their response to fire, medical and special emergencies within the district. Director Fred

Weil described the work as an assessment of "how well we're doing and how we can do better." The 97-page document, loaded with charts, tables, graphs and maps and presented by Fire Chief Stephen Healy at the district's Nov. 2 meeting, focuses mainly on what the district can do to improve its emergency response times.

No governmental or legal requirements exist to regulate response times, but according to the Performance Goals and Objectives on Page 73 of the Standards of Cover, the district goal is to reach all medical emergencies within Moraga and Orinda in seven minutes or less and all fires or rescues in seven minutes and 20 seconds, 90 percent of the time. The Commission of Fire Accreditation International, an industry performance evaluator, considers those goals "Superior Service Levels" for a suburban fire district like MOFD.

Orinda has always posed a response time problem for the district. Despite the fact that three fire stations are located in Orinda and two in Moraga, the district has long reported about a one-minute longer response time in Orinda than in Moraga. The September district incident report lists 56 total responses into Moraga at an average response time of 6.97 minutes 90 percent of the time, and 74 responses into Orinda at 8.23 minutes.

"The conclusion I've come to is that the street routes are oblique and therefore less direct. The roads follow the topography, which is a hilly terrain and not a grid," Healy said.

Outgoing director Alex Evans of north Orinda requested that

the chief insert into the Standards of Cover what the district can do to shorten the Orinda response times. "We know what we know about the roads," Evans said, and he urged Healy to continue to work on improving the call processing time and to keep on the lookout for equipment that might navigate those roads more quickly.

Evans also suggested that the district include in the document how it can improve the substandard water flow out of the fire hydrants, notable the older ones in north Orinda. Healy explained that the general manager of the East Bay Municipal Utility District — which owns the fire hydrants — said EBMUD would pay for 10 percent of the cost to improve water flow, as long as the fire district puts up 90 percent, but the chief said that was not a realistic option for MOFD. Orinda residents voted in 2002 and again in 2006 against measures that would have funded fire hydrant and storm drain repairs.

The chief said that even considering the 2 percent of the 1,430 district hydrants that do not measure up to current water flow standards, MOFD can meet the needs for routine emergencies any place in the district with the use of its 2,500-gallon water tender, deployed at station 44 in Orinda. "I've never been to a fire in my 10 years here where I've said, 'If only we had a good water system,'" Healy said.

The Standards of Cover, the strategic plan, the long-range financial plan and the budget documents present an accountable roadmap for MOFD operations, and each report is published on the district website.

- ◆ HARDWOODS
- ◆ CARPETS
- ◆ RUGS
- ◆ LINOLEUM
- ◆ TILE
- ◆ LAMINATE

FAMILY -OWNED
30 YEARS !

3344 Mt Diablo Blvd
in Lafayette
925-284-4440
lamorinda floors.com

LAMORINDA FLOORS
Karastan GALLERY

Is this too young to go to Cal?

Actually, it's just the right age to get an eye exam at the University of California Eye Center. And again at three years. And regularly after that. (We developed ways to test kids' eyes while they play!) We're part of the UC School of Optometry, and offer you LASIK surgery, contact lenses, and an Eyewear Center with a vast collection of designer frames, too. We take most insurance plans, and major credit cards. It's time for your whole family to go Cal!

Open to the Public 7 Days a Week • www.caleyecare.com
510.642.2020

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

Please... ...thanks

NEWSPAPER