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Staffing levels in Moraga discussed

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During his short tenure as interim town manager, Jim Holgersson asked Management Partners for a report assessing staffing levels in town and improvements that could be made. The results show that Moraga has fewer employees than comparable Bay Area cities, and that progress could be made by using software to automate some tasks. New town manager Cynthia Battenberg hopes to use the report to improve her new team's efficiency.

"In terms of staffing, my experience these first few weeks mirrors the findings of the report that Moraga's staffing level is lean and the significant vacancies (which was approximately 20 percent in March) impact operations," Battenberg said.

The report looked at the cities of Half Moon Bay, Hercules, Lafayette, Orinda and San Anselmo, five Bay Area cities with populations between 12,000 and 26,000, and median household incomes between \$100,000 and \$200,000. The first striking fact is that Moraga has the third highest median household income (\$136,336) of the cities being compared, but less than half of the total operating budget of the peer agencies. Moraga operates with fewer staff than its peers and therefore provides less service. The areas of administrative services, public works, recreation, and park and facilities maintenance are where Moraga's staffing levels are much lower than its peers.

Management Partners interviewed staff and found important strengths and organizational values that should be recognized and preserved as new people come on board. First and foremost the consultant noted the quality of existing employees who understand the importance of public service and try to serve the community as best they can with limited resources. The consultant wrote that this value is found in all levels of the departments with both newly hired and long-term employees.

The consultant also noted that Moraga staff still relies on manual systems to record and capture data, which can present an obstacle to understanding the work that needs to be done compared to what can be done with existing staffing levels.

During her comments to the council about the report, Battenberg indicated that two vacant positions would stay open in order to save money and invest in needed technology.

Management Partners also noted that Moraga does not track the workload and performance of its employees, which makes it difficult to explain service levels to the community, and recommended that the town develop such measures.

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[back](#)

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