

Letters to the Editor

Note from the Editor:

Due to an incredibly large volume of candidate endorsement letters, we were only able to include one letter per candidate, but have noted if multiple letters were received. A complete list of Letters to the Editor will be included online at www.lamorindaweekly.com.

Road work woes

I am a homeowner in Orinda and definitely not an engineer. We have been pleased that our road is currently being resurfaced and we're thankful to our city for making this happen. That being said, I have a serious question about the best practices used by our road contractor with the resurfacing and whether our city or EBMUD understands the process enough to mitigate the expense either to EBMUD ratepayers or the city of Orinda.

Specifically, after our road was scraped, a heavy vibrating steamroller compacted the soil prior to resurfacing. My neighbors and I all felt it, as if an earthquake rocked us for 30 minutes or more. No problem with that, but the next day we had a major water leak from our main water line in the street. I called Orinda and someone showed up for the city who marked out gas and water lines. He told me this happens a lot. EBMUD showed up and they've been here with excavators, etc. for 10 hours and I know this has been an expensive repair. My neighbor and I think this must be at least a 50K repair job given all the heavy equipment and manpower.

I spoke to the EBMUD foreman and he said this is an EBMUD expense because "we can't prove how it happened." OK, that's not my venue, but the fact is, the steamroller rolled right over many times the cap of the main water line and there's no question it busted all the water connections under the street. I asked the EBMUD foreman if that makes any sense, and he said it was crazy because, of course, that will destroy all the connections.

Like I said, I'm not an engineer, but the EBMUD foreman and I both questioned why the main water connections to the street couldn't be handled uniquely prior to compacting. I am a residential builder, and I am trying to understand the thinking that doesn't consider how to minimize this kind of damage. If the thinking by the city and contractor is that EBMUD just absorbs this practice I think it should be called out. We are all paying for this, one way or another.
David Kirk
Orinda

MOFD board of Directors election

Elect independents for MOFD Board

It is encouraging that so many citizens are standing up to run for the MOFD Board which directs our emergency services provider, managing over \$25 million tax dollars each year. In the last issue of the Lamorinda Weekly retiring Director Famulener pointed to the improved condition of the Pension by \$12 million, and that is good news. But it mostly was the result of a robust investment economy, not MOFD economies. In

2008, MOFD's Pension assets lost almost 30 percent of their value. That would be a \$50 million loss today. MOFD retirement plans are still \$75 million underfunded. Yet the employee's union is demanding that less money go to reduce this debt so that more can go to salaries which currently average \$150,000 including overtime but excluding \$200,000 in benefit costs. While our firefighters provide us great service, the management of MOFD has to remain independent of their union. This is why it would be dangerous to elect any of the three union supported candidates for the MOFD Board: Baitx, Danziger or Donner. Please elect the independent candidates (Bell, Anderson, Smith and Talbot).

Steve Cohn
Orinda

Lucy Talbot is BEST choice for Division 4

We endorse Lucy Talbot for the Board of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD). We've had the pleasure of knowing Lucy for 30 years and believe she is the best representative for the challenges facing MOFD. Lucy brings a combined business and philanthropic background with experience working closely with fire districts (in her previous career), being a small business owner with a track record of strong fiscal responsibility and serving as an active community volunteer.

She understands the importance of strong, community-minded representation in order to manage the services so critical to Orinda's daily operations. Lucy is never afraid to get involved; we know many people in the community have had a firsthand opportunity to experience Lucy's commitment to making Orinda a better place. Both of us have enjoyed working with her throughout the years on various local projects (including many at various schools) where we observed her positive, professional attitude and collaborative nature. Lucy's ability to carefully listen to the issues and develop a measured strategy for a path to solutions is critical to an organization's longevity. We are confident that Lucy understands the concerns of Orinda's citizens because she is focused on fire prevention plans as well as seeking solutions to reducing emergency response times and unfunded pension liabilities.

Please join us in voting for Lucy Talbot for MOFD Board.

Jane and Mark Zuercher
Orinda

(Other letters from Joan and Frank Maxwell of Orinda)

Nathan Bell for MOFD Board Division 1

I write in support of Nathan Bell for the Moraga Orinda Fire Division Board. I have known Nathan for well over 25 years and have worked with him in various volunteer capacities and have been impressed by his integrity and his consistent generosity of time and resources in support of community organizations. He and his wife, Melanie, have raised a fine family of five children, sent them all to Moraga schools and have been good community citizens. I have every

confidence that he will represent the citizens of Moraga well as a member of the MOFD Board which oversees the affairs of the District. He will be fair in his dealings with the firemen's union and in representing the financial realities of the District. I enthusiastically recommend him for your vote.

Marlene Jex
Moraga

(Letters of support also received from Bill Wright, and Courtney Johnson of Moraga)

Letter endorsing Red Smith for MOFD Division 3

This is a letter endorsing Red Smith, an outstanding and respected community member and friend, who is running for a position as a Board Director for the Moraga-Orinda Fire District. (MOFD). Red is well qualified for this post for many reasons including; his professional experience as a CEO in technology and finance, his deep roots in local community service with youth baseball, scouting, and various boards, and his passion for serving people in our community. We've had the fortunate experience of knowing Red through the Haas School of Business MBA program and as a supportive "dance dad" at CAPA. Many people in the community know Red and his wife Gina of over 30 years due to their involvement in the community and their hard to miss four red headed young adult children. Red's warm personality, easy laughter, ability to listen and collaborate, as well as his boundless energy and ability to inspire others, make Red Smith a valuable team member and leader. Red's goals for the MOFD include focusing on fire prevention, assisting with emerging technologies for emergency services, and to prudently manage the budget. If anyone can make a difference it is the dynamic and passionate Red Smith! Please consider joining our family as we endorse Red Smith to serve on the MOFD.

Lori and Mark Oczkus
Orinda

(Letters of support also received from Stephen and Rosemary Durant, and Eileen and Scott Hoffinger of Moraga)

Orinda City council election

Dennis Fay for Orinda City Council

I strongly support Dennis Fay for Orinda City Council. In his capacity as Chair of the Citizens Infrastructure Oversight Commission he was instrumental in developing the program to repair Orinda's roads that is now being implemented. He is dedicated to completing that plan and to finding sufficient revenue to maintain the roads in good condition in the future. Dennis is an excellent listener and knows how to develop consensus on complex and divisive issues. As a long time Orinda resident he understands the needs of this beautiful small town as

well as the economic and fiscal issues that confront it. He brings experience that will assure that the city is well managed and retains its excellent credit standing. He will also work to preserve its essential character as a charming family-oriented small town with a human scale while striving to revitalize our downtown. I urge all Orinda citizens to vote for Dennis Fay.

Brad Barber
Orinda

(Letter of support also received from Darleen Gee and Tom Trowbridge of Orinda)

Nick Kosla for Orinda City Council

One of my favorite times of the day is taking my chocolate lab for a walk down my street during the magical "golden hour" and watching the sun cast its glow over the rolling hills that are classically Orinda. I often find myself smiling as I look out, thinking about how lucky I was to grow up surrounded by such beauty and now, fortunate to return with my husband to raise our own family here. It delights me that my children visit the same library and play in the same community park that I ventured to as a child. I also can't help but feel a sense of nostalgia as we dine at the same eateries and shops like Village Pizza, Nation's Hamburgers and Loard's Ice Cream that I frequented as a child. There is so much to love about Orinda and yet I know there is much more work to be done to keep our beloved town thriving. This is why I was thrilled to hear that Nick Kosla is running for City Council. Nick also grew up in Orinda, as did his wife, Larissa. They too returned to Orinda in order to raise their family here. He is the perfect addition to the City Council as he knows and respects Orinda's history, but also understands that growth and improvement are necessary to secure the future of our town. As former Chair of the Orinda Planning Commission, Nick has the experience needed to help revitalize downtown Orinda and bring in additional restaurants and shops. Keeping Orinda safe is also at the forefront of Nick's agenda. Funding for our public services is especially important in light of the fires that have devastated many nearby areas and the knowledge that our town borders major fault lines. These are just a few of the key issues Nick intends to address if elected. Orinda needs Nick. Please join me and your fellow neighbors and vote for Nick for Orinda City Council on November 6, 2018. (If you vote by mail, please vote for Nick in October when you receive your ballot.)

Regina Gordon
Orinda

(Letters of support also received from Jack and Kiley O'Meara, Tamra Aguinaldo, Leigh Fortune Feusier and Tanya Caragol of Orinda)

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence -- we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only). Letters should be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis. Visit www.lamorindaweekly.com for submission guidelines. Email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com; Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

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