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Little decided in MOFD division races

By *Nick Marnell*

The Election Day voter turnout gave few clues to the new composition of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District governing board.

As of the Nov. 9 report from the Contra Costa County Elections Division, the Division 1 race featured a candidate ahead of his opponent by 55 votes and in Division 4, the margin was 50 votes. Only in Division 3 did a candidate show a relatively comfortable 394 vote lead. The preliminary leader in each division was the union-backed candidate: Greg Baitx over Nathan Bell (1), Steven Danziger over Steve Anderson and Red Smith (3) and Michael Donner over Lucy Talbot (4).

The Elections Division is auditing the Election Day returns, plus adding all absentee and provisional ballots. As of Nov. 9 an estimated 108,000 ballots had yet to be counted. Mail-in ballots needed only be postmarked by Nov. 6 and did not have to be received by Election Day.

"I am extremely grateful that my approach to the issues facing MOFD resonated with the voters. I will strive for a balanced approach while never losing sight of our core mission which is to serve and protect the community," Danziger said. Likely due of the closeness of the races, many candidates declined to comment, as did district director Craig Jorgens, supporter of three non-union-backed candidates.

Per county records, MOFD voter turnout averaged 56 percent, higher than the 48 percent reported for the county as a whole. Through the Nov. 9 updated tally, Division 1 voters had cast 2,304 votes, Division 3 voters had cast 3,154 with 3,238 votes cast in Division 4. The county expects to certify the election results by Dec. 4.

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