



Published December 12th, 2018

New MOFD board defies tradition, elects Danziger president

By Nick Marnell



New MOFD board, from left: Michael Donner, Craig Jorgens, Steven Danziger and Greg Baitx. Missing: John Jex Photo Nick Marnell

not be made based on who supported which candidates. I would hope that no members of the board - including the ones we supported - will operate from that platform."

The MOFD board elects officers at the end of every year, and traditionally, though not a district bylaw, the vice president is elected president for the succeeding year. There have been exceptions, as when former director Alex Evans turned down his nomination for president in 2014, citing an extremely heavy workload at his market research firm during an election year. Had precedent been followed, the 2019 board president would be John Jex.

"There are good reasons for tradition," cautioned one speaker. "Learn how all of this works before taking on a leadership role." The rotation of the role as president is a politically neutral mechanism, offered another speaker, stressing that with everyone given a chance to be president, contention is avoided.

Kymberleigh Korpus, Moraga town council member and MOFD liaison, agreed on the likelihood of contention. She warned that when traditions were not followed in Moraga, divisiveness and anger among town council members soon followed.

So why did Donner, a retired Oakland firefighter well versed in the nuances of the fire service, break with tradition and nominate Danziger? "Fire is steeped in tradition, and I normally honor that," Donner said. "With Steve, I made an exception. We worked together in Oakland for 20 years, and I know how well he comports himself. He is very composed, and he will be a great leader."

Despite a final plea by director Craig Jorgens to honor tradition, the board elected Danziger president by a 3-2 vote, with Jex and Jorgens voting no and Greg Baitx joining Donner and Danziger, the three union-supported directors, to vote yes.

In 2018, through November, the MOFD board voted on 28 agenda items and split only five times. The cohesiveness of the new board will be a development to watch closely throughout 2019.

Reach the reporter at: nick@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA