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Getting to know Moraga's Vice Mayor Kymberleigh Korpus

By Vera Kochan



Kymberleigh Korpus Photo Vera Kochan

Moraga's new Vice Mayor Kymberleigh Korpus was initially elected to the town council in 2016 and in December was unanimously appointed to her current position by sitting members of the council.

Korpus' decision to run for town council was motivated by her concern regarding Moraga's planning and financial issues. She had no specific goals or projects to pursue, but felt that her skills as an attorney would benefit town government in upholding local ordinances and guidelines. She felt it important to support the local economy and look ahead to any long-term impact that council decisions could have as a whole, all while serving the concerns of the community.

"I knew I would need to spend time digging into each new issue as it arose, learning how the process of running the town works, and developing relationships with residents, staff, and other town council members that would enable me to find/build the information, perspective and consensus I would need to help make good decisions." Korpus added, "I still maintain these goals today, and would like to think I have helped make some good progress toward accomplishing them."

Korpus is pleased with the work the town council has done in the first two years of her term, such as the creation of a new PD-C zone to help streamline the

planning process for commercial districts and a revision of Moraga's General Plan to faithfully implement standards set forth in Moraga's Open Space Ordinance. She feels that the town council's decisions reflected the expectations of its citizens by avoiding the approval of projects not consistent with the General Plan.

While Moraga's finances temporarily suffered through two catastrophic events -- the Rheem sinkhole and Canyon Bridge closure -- within one year, Korpus felt that "the town council has become increasingly more fiscally aware and conservative over the last two years." Of paramount importance is the addressing of fiscal and infrastructure needs over luxuries, by prioritizing the development of a storm drain maintenance program.

When asked whether being on the town council has been all that she expected, Korpus replied,

"Yes and no. I expected to work hard at it, learn a lot, and enjoy the work. I expected to form strong relationships with council members, staff and residents. I expected to disagree with the other town council members on occasion, to have meaningful debates, to win some and lose some votes, and to make at least some residents unhappy some of the time. All those boxes have been checked."

Moraga's financial pressures and finding feasible and affordable ways to improve transparency have challenged Korpus. "Reasonable people can disagree on the best ways to try to address these issues, but doing so in Moraga has proven especially challenging because of the amount of misinformation circulating in the community about town operations and town council actions." In addition, she says, "I have been making a special effort during my time on the town council to counter this trend with my communications to the public, and am hopeful we will see a decline in this phenomenon during the next two years."

Korpus' family is very proud and supportive of her efforts on the town council, but concerned about how much extra time her new responsibilities as vice mayor will entail. "My oldest son (13), is very excited about it, as he seems to think it gives him something to brag about to his friends," Korpus laughed.

Korpus will continue to focus on Moraga's infrastructural needs, the general quality of life and fiscal sustainability. She realizes that the town's personnel are going through a transition phase and has every confidence that the coming year will see progress through everyone's efforts. "Under Cynthia Battenberg's leadership, the town is actively working to streamline and update its processes, and to successfully develop and implement a realistic and cost effective long-term vision for addressing the town's infrastructure, asset, service and communication needs."

Looking to the future, Korpus stated, "I am honored to have been selected by my fellow town council members to serve as the town's vice mayor, and am pleased to be a member of the town council at this exciting time. I'm optimistic about this town council's ability to continue that work and to face any other challenges that arise."

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