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Lafayette rainbow flag flies to celebrate LBGTQ+ Pride month

By Pippa Fisher



A sizable crowd was on hand to watch Mayor Mike Anderson raise the rainbow flag June 1, and officially declare June to be Pride month in Lafayette. Photo Pippa Fisher

The city council voted at its May 28 meeting unanimously in favor of a proclamation to recognize June as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning + Pride month in Lafayette. On June 1 Mayor Mike Anderson raised the rainbow flag on the pole in Plaza Park, where it will fly for the entire month.

Before hoisting the flag in front of a group of more than 50 residents, Anderson made a few comments on the significance of the event which, he noted that despite being 50 years since the Stonewall riots, is something "some cities not too far away are struggling to come to terms with" - a veiled reference to Dublin City Council's recent, controversial decision not to fly a rainbow flag (a decision that was subsequently reversed at a June 4 special meeting.)

Council Member Teresa Gerringer had asked to place a proclamation for council consideration in support of pride month and flying the flag in June on the agenda back at the March 25 meeting.

"I was asked during the campaign by Gwen Searer, a Lafayette resident, what I would do to support the LBGTQ people who live in Lafayette and let them know that they are welcome in this community," says Gerringer. "She specifically asked if I would push to have LBGTQ Pride flags flown in June every year and commit to declaring June as Pride Month in Lafayette."

Gerringer described it as a statement of our values in Lafayette. "It speaks to what our values are in terms of the community and providing an accepting place for all; that we represent all the residents of Lafayette and that we want to make sure that everyone feels welcome and included here," she said.

Searer, a transgender woman with two daughters who has lived in Lafayette for eight years, described her decades-long struggles with depression before she transitioned. She asked that the city fly the flag "not for me. For the young people in our community who are at risk for bullying, discrimination and suicide.

"Please send a message that LBGTQ people are welcomed, respected and loved in our community," said Searer before the council's vote.

This is not the first year that has seen the rainbow flag flying in June over the Plaza but this is the first time June has been officially recognized as Pride Month in Lafayette.

The Orinda City Council also presented a proclamation in support of LBGTQ Pride Month at its June 4 meeting and will be flying a flag in support of the LBGTQ community. The Moraga Town Council was expected to declare June Pride Month at its June 12 meeting.

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