




ORINDA


See public meetings schedule on this pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
City of Orinda:
 www.cityoforinda.org
 Phone (925) 253-4200
Chamber of Commerce:
 www.orindachamber.org
The Orinda Association:
 www.orindaassociation.org

COMPASS

Make the Right Move



Dana Reedy
 Broker Associate | JD
 415.205.8050
 dana@danareedyhomes.com
 DRE 01880723



Pending | 2 Jack Tree Knoll, Orinda
 5 Bed 3 Bath 2,672 Sq Ft \$1,558,000

Comments, if any, and other details being licensed by the State of California and subject to Equal Housing Opportunity laws. License Number 01880723. All material presented herein is intended for informational purposes only and is not to be construed as an offer of real estate. No statement is made as to accuracy of any description. All measurements and square footage are approximate.

Results of polling on sales tax in; Orinda looks to conservative spending measures

By Sora O'Doherty

A majority of Orinda residents approve of extending and/or increasing sales tax, but it might be difficult to get the two-thirds majority required for a tax that is specifically dedicated, according to David Metz, president of FM3 Research, the company that conducted the poll. The current half-cent sales tax has yielded approximately \$1.2 million per year. Given the present state of the economy, it is expected that the sales tax revenue will drop, probably by 10-20%. The one cent tax would generate approximately \$2 million in revenue annually.

The matter was before the city council so that it could receive the results of the poll, but they do not need to decide on the ballot measure until later this year, according to the staff

report prepared by Assistant City Manager Larry Theis. The council will take another look at the issue in May, and it is hoped that the Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Committee will have a chance to consider it prior to the next time it appears on a city council meeting agenda.

The poll included 436 Orinda residents. Not all were asked the same questions as on some issues the poll was split into two separate groups. For example, the poll question on whether or not to renew the existing half-cent sales tax and increase it to one cent was split between groups who were asked either if the increased sales tax should last for 10 years and another group who were asked if the increased tax should last until ended by the voters in another election. The polling on both was favorable, but the 10-year deadline polled higher at 64% who would definitely, probably or who leaned toward voting yes, versus 59% of the total positive for an increase not limited by time.

The city is considering putting some kind of sales tax measure on the November ballot. The current half-cent sales tax, which has been largely used to improve Orinda's roads, will expire in 2022. Owing to the complexity of election rules, however, the city has limited opportunities to put the matter to a vote before the tax expires.

The current sales tax is a general tax, which only requires a simple majority

to pass, so both sets of polling numbers seem favorable to the increased one-cent tax. However, Metz explained in response to a question from Council Member Inga Miller that if the city council wished to dedicate the revenue from the sales tax to any particular expenses, it would then require a two-thirds majority to pass. The polling numbers were not so favorable that it was likely that a one cent sales tax on the ballot would attain that level of yes votes. However, the option of retaining the current half-cent sales tax polled at 72% favorable, which would exceed the two-thirds majority required for a specific tax. Metz pointed out that in California it is very difficult to get a two-thirds vote on a revenue measure. In the March election, he said, historically high number of such measures around the state failed.

In addition to the specific sales tax questions, the poll also included questions about the general satisfaction of residents with the city's performance, and tested the idea of the city taking responsibility for private roads and/or drains. Respondents indicated a highly favorable view of the quality of life in Orinda, while the response regarding private roads and/or drains was not highly favorable. By far the most important use for the sales tax revenue, polling at 45%, is that infrastructure needs to be repaired and maintained. A majority of those who opposed

the sales tax indicated that taxes are already high and/or they are against additional taxes.

The poll was conducted in early February, before the effects of the novel coronavirus were manifest. The pandemic will affect both the amount of revenue raised by the current tax and the general revenue situation of the city, as well as the economic situation of residents. Owing to this uncertainty, the council asked Metz to conduct a tracking poll to see if the climate changes with regard to the potential tax increase.

Council member Miller expressed support for the one-cent tax, and Mayor Darlene Gee said that she is open to pursuing it. Council member Nick Kosla raised some technical points regarding the limits on what sales taxes a city may impose with City Manager Steve Salomon. Salomon agreed that had the transportation tax passed in March, it would have limited what Orinda could put on the ballot. Salomon said that if Measure J had passed Orinda could not have considered full cent unless there was special legislation. Kosla concluded that "it sounds like this is a year we can ask for full cent, but in 2022 we might not be able to." If a one-cent sales tax fails on the 2020 ballot, the city would still be able to seek a renewal of the half-cent sales tax prior to its expiration in 2022.

School news: OUSD deals with possible wildfires, distance learning; summer school plans

By Sora O'Doherty

The Orinda Union School District board met on April

13 via Zoom and dealt with two significant issues: how distance learning was going and how to protect stu-

dents from wildfires when they return to school.

A resolution to observe California's Day of the Teacher on May 13 passed unanimously. Board president Cara Hoxie observed that "Our teachers have been heroes during this distance learning," adding that what the teachers have done since they began distance learning in March is extraordinary, especially given that everyone came with different levels of comfort.

Board member Carol Brown praised the teachers for rolling out a very fast delivery of a new way of learning, "in many cases, while their own kids are home too." How exactly the day will be observed has yet to be determined. The board will brainstorm with parents' clubs and volunteers.

... continued on next Page



Orinda's Lowest Gas Prices



22 Bryant Way - Next to Casa Orinda

Visit our Snack Shop & play Lotto & Lottery

Mon - Sat 5 am - 12 am; Sun 6 am - 11 pm

- ◆ HARDWOODS
- ◆ CARPETS
- ◆ RUGS
- ◆ LINOLEUM
- ◆ TILE
- ◆ LAMINATE

FAMILY -OWNED
30 YEARS !

3344 Mt Diablo Blvd
in Lafayette
925-284-4440
lamorindaflors.com



SCHOOL SPACE FOR LEASE

30 Santa Maria Way Orinda, CA

Long-established school/space in quiet tree-lined setting w/fenced playgrd, ball field, off-street pkg.

Avail 7/1/20 for long term lease.

Agent: David Klein #00790730

Call 415.828.2188

LeapFrog Plumbing



When it comes to safety.....
We Hop To It!

\$50 OFF

Earthquake emergency shut off valve*



Reduced Toilet Cleaning Frequency



Reduced need for Toilet Paper



Auto Energy Saver

\$150 off

Tankless water heater install*

\$100 off

Toto Bidet and install*

*Limit 1 coupon per job. Exp. 5/31/20



We Hop To It!

Family-owned and serving Lamorinda since 1993

green solutions!

(925) 377-6600



www.LeapFrogPlumbing.com