

Published December 22nd, 2021

Dennis Fay to serve as Orinda mayor for first time, Inga Miller returns as vice mayor

By Sora O'Doherty



Dennis Fay Lamo archive

At its Dec. 14 meeting, the Orinda city council, following its usual protocol, elected Vice Mayor Dennis Fay to become Orinda's next mayor. Inga Miller, as the next highest vote-getter in the 2020 election, will serve as vice mayor, a position she has held before. Miller served as mayor in 2019 and was reelected to the city council in 2020.

As Fay steps up to his first term as mayor, he is replacing Amy Worth, who has served 23 years on the Orinda city council and has held the office of mayor for an historic five terms. Worth will remain on the council. Although Fay and Miller were warmly welcomed after being sworn in by city clerk Sheri Smith, the real kudos of the evening went to Worth, as public figures expressed their respect and affection for her.

Jill Ray, representing Contra Costa County Supervisor Candance Andersen who was unable to attend, expressed the supervisor's feeling that Worth has served "with great respect and decorum, has worked collaboratively to find common good." Ray offered the supervisor's congratulations on Worth's six terms of service, having served as mayor five times, and said that she looks forward to working with mayor Fay.

Former mayor Joyce Hawkins praised Worth as "the queen of complimenting anyone and everyone with whom she has worked," and as "an epitome of graciousness and diplomacy." Hawkins congratulated Worth on a job well done, and thanked her for her years of service. Worth spoke about how instrumental Hawkins was on getting Worth onto the council and preparing her to serve.

The council members read out a heartfelt proclamation honoring Worth's service as mayor. The proclamation crowned Worth as "the queen of Zoom," being the first mayor in Orinda's history to lead a complete year's worth of city council meetings remotely, "bringing city government to Orinda's living rooms," and having the best Zoom backgrounds of any elected official in the Bay Area. The proclamation says that Orinda has benefited from Worth's deep understanding of regional transportation and solid waste issues, adding that the city also enjoyed Worth's knowledge of and perspective on Orinda's history.

Living up to Hawkins' words, Worth took the opportunity to thank everyone on the council, city staff, the executive team, city volunteers and partners, and her family. She said it had been an honor to serve, and that having the entire year on Zoom was a lot of fun. She praised the city for keeping government running during the pandemic, and thanked the county for its help, especially with COVID. She recognized the Orinda library, an institution close to her heart, that has been in Orinda for 100 years, and this year celebrated the 20th anniversary of the new library building. She thanked state and federal representatives, Congressman Mark DeSaulnier, state Sen. Steve Glazer and Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan. Worth noted that it was especially poignant that in November the fourth bore of the Caldecott tunnel was named for former Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher. In thanking her family, Worth noted that she is enjoying being a grandmother in Orinda, and that her oldest grandchild is now in kindergarten at Wagner Ranch Elementary School.

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