



MORAGA

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Town's Fiscal Year 2021-22 Mid-Year Budget Report looks good

By Vera Kochan

The Mid-Year Budget Report provides staff the opportunity to assess the town's revenues and expenditures for the first half of the 2021-22 Fiscal Year. Its purpose is to identify major variances between actual transactions and estimated budget amounts.

Administrative Services Director Annie To's Feb. 9 town council presentation outlined any significant increases or decreases to the Operating and Capital Improvement Budget.

Fund 101 – General Fund saw an increase to the beginning fund balance by \$138,032. There was an increase to the General Fund Revenue (property taxes and assessments) of \$150,000 due to projected increases in real estate valuation. Parks and Recreation saw a small revenue decrease of \$28,630 due to the lease agreement with Wedgewood Weddings for event operations at the Hacienda de las Flores. A Transfer In of \$40,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act (Fund 102 -- ARPA) was the result of a one-time payment to cover staff vacation

and administrative leave payouts due to the pandemic.

In addition, the General Fund saw an increase in expenditures by \$60,000 in the Moraga Police Department with regards to salaries and overtime. Due to retirement vacancies, the death of an officer and two injured officers, a number of shifts had to be filled with remaining officers in an overtime capacity. Also, MPD's wholesale gasoline contract with the Acalanes Union High School District was terminated resulting in gas being purchased at retail prices locally.

The remaining General Fund expenditure adjustment increase was \$1,100 in Parks and Rec due to the hiring of a security guard to monitor noise limits during the 2021 rental season at the Hacienda (that contract of \$11,000 offset the \$9,900 decrease in costs).

Other funds adjustments saw a Fund 100 revenue increase of \$2.25 million in One-Time Developer Fees (Palos Colorados Fund); Fund 102 – ARPA also saw a revenue increase of \$453,406 of which \$200,000 was transferred out for storm drain repairs; Fund 205 – Gas Tax

had an increase in expenditures of \$331,068 which was transferred out to Fund 700 for pavement resurfacing; Fund 213 – Measure K revenue increased \$300,000 with an overall \$600,000 fund transfer towards pavement reconstruction; Fund 702 – 2013 Certificates of Participation expenditures increased \$2,800; and Fund 720 – Public Safety Development Impact Fee expenditure increased \$126,000 (this entails a community surveillance program, radio system encryption, vehicle/equipment purchase, and vehicle fueling system for MPD and Moraga-Orinda Fire District).

According to To's staff report, "The Town's General Fund Proposed Budget Adjustments for FY 2021/22 would result in an increase to the projected year-end fund balance from \$4,902,047 to \$5,215,773 or \$313,726 which represents a \$138,032 adjustment to the Beginning Balance based on the FY 2020/21 Audited Comprehensive Financial Report and \$175,694 projected operating surplus. Overall, the General Fund Reserve is projected to increase from 50.0% to 52.0%."

MPD's Lt. Brian South moves on after 20 years of service to the town



Photo provided

MPD's Lt. Brian South

By Vera Kochan

To paraphrase from a 650-year-old proverb, "All good things must come to an end," the same can be held true when referring to Moraga Police Department Lt. Brian South's decision to leave after a 20-year career with the town.

South's history with Moraga began well before the police force, in that he's a hometown boy who attended Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School and later graduated from Campolindo High School. As a youngster, he always kept his eye on the prize. "Ever since I was little, all I ever wanted to do was become a police officer," he recalled. "I have always been

drawn to service, helping others and protecting the vulnerable."

Prior to his long tenure with MPD, South worked a year for the Probation Department, but not as a police officer. When he leaves Moraga his new employer will be the State of California at the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST). South's new title will be Law Enforcement Consultant with a variety of duties to perform. "POST sets hiring and selection standards of California law enforcement and the mission is to continually enhance the professionalism of California law enforcement in serving its communities," he explained. "I am looking forward to having the opportunity to positively impact the profession of law enforcement statewide in my new role."

MPD Interim Chief Jon King referred to South as a "true professional and the heart and soul of this department for many years. He's served the town as a patrol officer, detective, sergeant, lieutenant, a mentor to other officers, and my right hand and partner."

South has had his share of disturbing experiences while on the job. "I have had a lot of interesting and challenging cases over the years, but cases involving children tend to be the ones that stick with me," he remembered. "One in particular involved a very vulnerable survivor, and I have always admired her courage in working with

us and standing up to her abuser."

"Brian's been an integral part of this town," stated King. "Besides being a public servant he's been president of Moraga Police Officers Association, president of Moraga Rotary, a volunteer for many causes, and overall, a good community person."

The ever-humble South is proudest of his opportunity to have been a mentor to other officers and youths who are interested in law enforcement careers. "I was grateful to have had great mentors," South said.

When asked why he decided to leave the town he grew up in, South replied, "It was a difficult decision, and I will miss Moraga, but I am looking forward to the opportunity to impact the profession of law enforcement statewide in my new role."

South's legacy to the town is that "hopefully, I helped to contribute to the safety and well-being of the community. Moraga is a special place and I will miss the residents and the town staff who make it such a great place to live and work. I appreciate being able to serve the community and for all the opportunities that were provided to me over the last 20 years."

"As an officer, he's the model of what we look for," remarked King. "He can arrest the bad guys when he needs to; and he's a great community liaison for the department. We're gonna miss him."



Town Council:
 Wednesday, Feb. 23, 7 p.m.
Planning Commission:
 Tuesday, March 1, 7 p.m.,

Park and Recreation Commission:
 Monday, Feb. 21, 7 p.m.,
Moraga School District Board Meetings:
 Tuesday, March 8, 6 p.m.
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