

## Published July 6th, 2022 MOFD celebrates 25 years of service to the community

By Vera Kochan



The Moraga Town Council honored the Moraga-Orinda Fire District with a proclamation during its June 22 Zoom meeting acknowledging the 25th anniversary of its existence and service to the communities of Moraga, Orinda, Canyon and some adjacent unincorporated areas.

Before an official fire department was formed in 1923, any fires that occurred prior to that period were extinguished by neighbors, farmhands and cowboys in the area. The Orinda Volunteer Fire Department was formed that year, while the Moraga Fire Protection District began in 1963.

The proclamation, signed by Moraga Mayor Steve Woehleke, noted that "MOFD has 65 full-time public safety professionals who responded to more than 3,250 911 calls last year." It also stated that "MOFD provides mutual aid to lend assistance across jurisdictional

First Orinda Firehouse, 1924 Photo courtesy MOFD

boundaries to assist with major disasters, fires, and other emergency responses, including the recent Caldor, Dixie, River Complex, SCU Lightening Complex, and Lava Fires," while recognizing that "the brave firefighters of MOFD are prepared to risk their lives to help save the lives of others and to protect homes and property from the destruction caused by fire."

Council members each expressed gratitude to MOFD for continuing to make its district safe; and for constantly educating the residents in fire protection techniques that the communities can help participate in.

On hand was MOFD Chief Dave Winnacker who stated, "The men and women of the Moraga-Orinda Fire Protection District are committed to this community day and night. Wildfires, medical calls, structure fires, vehicle accidents, pandemics, etc. They continue to answer the bell 24 hours a day. While we acknowledge and we appreciate all the hard work they do, we also acknowledge and appreciate the hard work that the members of the community have done to allow us to be more effective.

"The work community members have done to create defensible space and to harden their homes to follow fire-safe best practices, to be prepared for a timely evacuation when ordered, is tremendously helpful and allows our firefighters to be more effective," Winnacker added. "We appreciate that. We appreciate everyone taking ownership for this problem and the degree that the community sees that they have a role in reducing a risk of not only wildfire loss, but of structure fire loss and all of the other perils that as a community we're working to reduce."

Winnacker went on to thank the entire town staff for being such great partners in cooperation with MOFD and their needs.

Also present was MOFD Board of Directors Vice President Steve Danziger. "I just want to say thank you. We do have a fearless leader in Chief Winnacker; and our little district here that serves 14,000 properties is becoming the model not only for the Bay Area, for the state, and for even the nation. We look forward to continuing partnership with the town and some new programs coming up."

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