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## Women candidates sweep Orinda City Council, school board, while adding diversity

By Sora O'Doherty

The Orinda City Council will start its next iteration with five women at the helm of the city. Incumbents Inga Miller and Darlene Gee will be joined by Latika Malkani from the Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Committee, Brandyn Iverson from the Planning Commission and longtime Orinda volunteer, Janet Riley. The election results are not yet final and certified, but the results of these races are not particularly close. This article is based upon the results as reported as of close of business on Friday, Nov. 18 and interviews with some of the newly elected officials.

All three winning candidates for the Orinda City Council expressed their ex-

citement at serving on an all-woman city council. Malkani said, "It's fabulous to know that this is the first time we have had an entirely female city council." Iverson said, "Piedmont has an all-female city council; I thought it was a kind of neat thing to see, a very encouraging trend." She added that the new city council is not a homogenous group, with more diversity, even though four of the five are attorneys.

Attorney Malkani noted that she hopes to accomplish what in large part motivated her initial 2020 council bid: to govern from her lived experience "which has given me a liking for results that are good and just, for acknowledging bias and looking for bias interrupters, for caring for today's children and tomorrow's environment." Malkani appears to be the top vote-getter in the 2022 race.

Coming from the Planning Commission, Iverson is excited to continue working on the development of Orinda's downtown. "It will

only be successful," she says, "if buildings actually get built." Iverson served two terms on the planning commission.

Riley noted that it was the fourth time she had been asked to run for the council and the first time that she chose to do so. An attorney specializing in tax and business, she gave up an active practice to serve in many volunteer positions as her children were growing up, mainly connected to the schools and also to local and national garden clubs.

Final county election results will be adopted by the city on Dec. 13 at 6 p.m. when the newly elected council members will be sworn in and the mayor and vice-mayor will be chosen and sworn in. In addition, the 2022 Mayor's Awards of Excellence will be presented.

The meeting will be broadcast over the Zoom teleconference program, and will be followed by an in-person reception honoring outgoing council members and welcoming newly elected

council members. The reception will be held at the Founders Auditorium Courtyard at 28 Orinda Way immediately after the meeting. The outgoing council members are mayor Dennis Fay and council members Amy Worth and Nick Kosla.

Orinda Union School District also had three vacant seats to fill in the 2022 election, and, like the city council, voters chose all women to fill them. The race was reasonably tight, but the top-vote getter was Edda Coleman, followed by former Orinda city council member and mayor Eve Phillips and Katie Shogan. The newly elected members will replace outgoing school board members Carol Brown, Jason Kaune and Liz Daoust. The incoming OUSD board members will take the oath of office on Dec. 12.

The Orinda City Council reorganization meeting can be viewed by Zoom Teleconference: at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/92493195201>

## It's final: Wilder developer is in default, but still working with city to complete the project

By Sora O'Doherty

The Orinda City Council on Nov. 15 officially held that the developer of Wilder, OGLLC, is in default of the development agreement. The council has so held on a number of recent occasions, but this time, the council chose to not continue the matter for discussion at a later date. The council has also held that the transfer of LLC interest allegedly completed in 2020 was not properly completed.

This does not mean that the matter is concluded. Far from it. OGLLC representative Bruce Yamamoto appeared at the meeting, and stated that the developer is

continuing to work with the city to finalize the outstanding issues. He said that the weekly meetings with Orinda staff have been particularly helpful.

Staff presented a report to the council with specific updates. Among them, a certificate of insurance has been provided, but with a lower limit than required, and is being evaluated. A \$20,000 payment has been received toward the developers' reimbursement obligations, with a commitment to make \$10,000 payments monthly, with the second payment having been received on Nov. 8. OGLLC is delinquent on property taxes for all the parcels remaining to be conveyed to the city, the Geological Hazard Abatement District (GHAD), East Bay Municipal District (EBMUD) and East Bay Regional Parks District (EBRPD).

OGLLC's proposal to eliminate the Red Tail Hawk Staging Area is being reviewed by the city and the park district. OGLLC's proposed modification to the required grazing plan and improvements are also being evaluated, and may be possibly secured by a bond held by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Work is continuing on a

number of different fronts to tie up loose ends on the development. Some are being negotiated with other agencies, including, EBMUD, EBRPD and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Council Member Nick Kosla asked specifically about resident concerns, that included a "drum of something" and some vegetation piled up near the front of the development. Yamamoto responded that the drum, as well as other drums, were illegally dumped on the property. He noted that the developer has spent some \$30,000 disposing of illegally dumped materials, including a load of concrete. Illegal dumping has been a concern to Orinda, in and around Wilder as well as along Highway 24.

Yamamoto also mentioned that there is an endowment currently valued at approximately \$5.7 million, while it is estimated that the purposes for which the endowment was established will only require about \$3.26 million. He wondered if the endowment might be restructured to provide funds for other projects to complete the development agreement. Discussions will begin on that topic with Fish & Wildlife.

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Wishing one and all a very Happy Thanksgiving and a wonderful holiday season!

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**City Council**  
**Regular Meeting:**  
 Tuesday, Dec. 6, 7 p.m. By Teleconference Only  
**Special Meeting:**  
 Tuesday, Dec. 13, 6 p.m. By Teleconference Only

**Planning Commission**  
 Wednesday, Dec. 14, 7 p.m. By Teleconference Only  
**Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission**  
 Wednesday, Dec. 14, 6:30 p.m. By Teleconference Only