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## Orinda recognizes Transgender Day of Remembrance

By Sora O'Doherty



Photo courtesy City of Orinda

As a matter for the good of the city, the Orinda City Council on Nov. 7 issued a proclamation in recognition of Transgender Day of Remembrance. The proclamation was accepted by Hen King of Lamorinda PFLAG. PFLAG is an organization of LGBTQ+ people, parents, families, and allies who work together to create an equitable and inclusive world and was founded in 1973.

Mayor Inga Miller read out the proclamation, which acknowledges that all people deserve respect for their dignity, safety and well-being through the promotion of equal and fair treatment for everyone; and members of the transgender community are valued and productive members of the city of Orinda and contribute to its progress, compassion and prosperity. However, the proclamation goes on to say that transgender people continue to face high levels of discrimination, fear, stigmas and bias that can fuel abuse and violence against people who identify as transgender.

Transgender Day of Remembrance helps bring public awareness to hate crimes against transgender people and honors the memory of those harmed and killed by senseless acts of violence each year and on this day of observation, Orinda commits to moving forward together to promote inclusion, equity and understanding toward transgender people, the proclamation continues. In conclusion, it states that the city of Orinda benefits from the diversity of its population and seeks to promote inclusion of all people as a testament to the shared values of dignity, equity and fair treatment for everyone without regard to gender identity or expression; and through its laws, policies and practices condemns acts of violence.

King spoke of her journey of acceptance as a transgender woman, and her family's understanding. King, a founding member of PFLAG, an organization dedicated to helping LGBTQIA+ people, noted that "You never know whose life you may change or even save just by being kind and respectful." She expressed her sincere gratitude to the city for the proclamation.

King then spoke about Kaylee Scott, a United Airlines flight attendant who passed away in March at the age of 25 by suicide. King quoted Scott's last social media post, which read, "As I take my final breaths and exit this living earth, I would like to apologize to everyone I let down. I am so sorry I could not be better. To those that I love, I am sorry I could not be stronger."

Miller thanked King for sharing the memory. "These incidents of suicide are so devastating to the entire community and have been pervasive in the community, unfortunately," she added. The mayor said that Elsie Mills of the Rainbow Community Center had brought the Transgender Day of Remembrance to the attention of the council and worked with the city on the draft proclamation.

Council Member Latika Malkani also thanked King for coming on short notice and sharing her personal stories and for "reminding us that embracing acceptance and tolerance and kindness is a way to make all of our community members feel safe and included and it is the way that we build our community."

The presentation of the proclamation can be viewed in full on the Orinda City Council's YouTube video of the meeting at [www.youtube.com/live/kCTu5dHK21Q?si=4idrBpF54Eu2AGEw](https://www.youtube.com/live/kCTu5dHK21Q?si=4idrBpF54Eu2AGEw)

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