



See public meetings schedule on these pages and check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements
City of Lafayette:
www.lovelafayette.org
 Phone: (925) 284-1968
Chamber of Commerce:
www.lafayettechamber.org

Lafayette Public Meetings

City Council

Regular Meeting: Monday, Jan. 22, 7 p.m.
 Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall

Planning Commission Meeting

Tuesday, Feb 5, 7 p.m.

Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Don Tatzin Community Hall

Design Review

Monday, Jan. 22, 7 p.m.

Lafayette Library & Learning Center-Arts & Science Discovery Room

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COMPASS

Replacement process begins for Council Member Teresa Gerringer

By Lou Fancher

Lafayette City Council Member Teresa Gerringer, who has served the residents of Lafayette for nearly 23 years – having been for more than a decade an elected member of the Lafayette School District Governing Board and for the last five years, a member of the Lafayette City Council – recently announced her resignation from her position effective Jan. 23.

In her Dec. 15 resignation letter, Gerringer thanked the residents of Lafayette “for allowing me to represent and work with them, my colleagues on the Council, the excellent Lafayette City staff, the business community, the schools, students, parents, and teachers, and the many committed

volunteers and community organizations, all who work together to protect and enhance the quality of life in Lafayette.”

Gerringer joined the council in 2018 and her term is not scheduled to expire until December of 2026. State law designates that the council must fill the seat within 60 days of her official resignation. The individual appointed by the council to replace Gerringer will serve only until the next municipal election is held. That election occurs in November of the current year.

City attorney Mala Subramanian at the Jan. 8 council meeting said the November election would therefore include three open positions with four-

year terms and one seat that will consist of the remaining two years of Gerringer’s term.

In 2019, the council adopted detailed policies for filling vacancies that provides for the announcement of an open position, direction to the city clerk to advertise the position for a period of no more than two weeks, and interviews scheduled upon acceptance of applications that begin with the mayor and vice mayor meeting in advance to prepare draft questions, which would be considered by the entire council at the public meeting on Jan. 26.

Council Member Susan Candell asked about the process used in the past to address filling po-

sitions between elections and recalled having advance questions submitted by all members of the council, not just the mayor and vice mayor. Subramanian said that to avoid a violation of the Brown Act – the California law passed in 1953 that guarantees the public’s right to attend and participate in meetings of local legislative bodies, such as the city council – an ad hoc “committee” of two council members would provide the full council a drafted list of questions for consideration. The council would discuss and modify the list at a meeting open to the public.

Council Member Carl Anduri verified whether or not the process

adopted in 2019 meant the advertising had to be available for two weeks, or simply any number of days set by council up to two weeks. Having confirmation from the city clerk the advertising could begin as early as the next day, Jan. 9, Anduri suggested an expedited schedule that had the candidate application window closing at 8 a.m. on Jan. 25. The interviews would be scheduled for Jan. 29 and if second interviews are necessary, on Jan. 31.

Mayor Gina Dawson, receiving no in-person or online public comments requests, returned the discussion to the council for final consideration and a vote.

Council Member We-

Tai Kwok agreed that the buffer period provided by Gerringer’s announcement in December had received wide coverage in the press and on social media. The public, Kwok said, was well aware of her pending departure and a month’s “head start” on the official replacement process was sufficient.

With no further discussion, the council reiterated the schedule as proposed by Anduri and approved the process used in the past, with the full council considering the list of questions one hour prior to the first interview on Jan. 29. The calendar and process received unanimous approval from council members.

Lafayette Chamber names Hollie Lucas-Alcalay Business Person of the Year

By Sharon K. Sobotta

On a rainy, cold Saturday morning in downtown Lafayette, Hollie Lucas-Alcalay’s shop –Hollie’s Homegrown – is warm and cozy as a handful of new customers trickle in and check out the wine and cheese sampling menus and the freshly made products throughout the store and return customers replenish their seasoning salt supply. In

the background, Lucas-Alcalay and her colleague are making rose geranium based essential oils, herb infused honey and flavored sugar.

“I have a small herb farm in Moraga and I grow a lot of culinary and medicinal herbs and body products. Almost every day we’re making. In addition to my things, we have over 30 local ar-

tisans here with candles, jewelry, textiles, books and a rotation of featured wall artists,” Lucas-Alcalay explains while giving an overview of what her store has to offer. “You can also have tea here or come in on Friday, Saturday or Sunday for fresh focaccia bread made by an Italian Moraga family and do an olive oil or honey tasting.

We offer local chocolates, cookies and other goodies on dessert platters and cheese tastings.”

It’s perhaps her heartfelt personal backstory, paired with creativity, a desire to create special, memorable experiences for customers and a product line that meets customer needs that earned Hollie Lucas-Alcalay the title of Lafayette Business Person of the Year.

Lucas-Alcalay helped her dad, a longtime grape grower, open two tasting rooms 25 years ago and says that’s how she modeled her store, with the



Hollie Lucas-Alcalay in her store Photo Sharon K. Sobotta

idea of supporting local agriculture. She says her little corner shop offers people a little reprieve or mini-outing for those who simply don’t want to

go to Napa. Those looking to indulge in some self-care can try out Lucas-Alcalay’s handcrafted herb infused skin care products or care for sore muscles, a skin rash or even irritated skin of a pet.

“The common thread of all of this is my wholehearted belief that it’s really important that we support a local, creative economy. Without having a platform for makers and growers and crafters or a place to sell all of this, we lose it,” Lucas-Alcalay says. “I remember noticing the abundance of things being imported from non-local or intercontinental sources. The environmentalist in me couldn’t help thinking about the carbon footprint. I’m not naive to think that we’re taking over Amazon. All I’m asking is maybe every 10th purchase people consider making a purchase with us and their money can go back to the community.”

Before starting her own business in the center of downtown Lafayette, Lucas-Alcalay had a multipage resume which included working in politics on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., doing environmental, health-care advocacy and conservation work, serving as the director of communications for an environmental agency and working in her family’s wine business.

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 REVIEWS APPRECIATED

Lafayette City Council Seeks Applicants for Vacancy on the City Council

The Lafayette City Council seeks qualified applicants to fill Councilmember Teresa Gerringer’s seat. The temporary appointment will commence immediately and end November 2024. For application and additional information visit the city’s website:

www.lovelafayette.org/councilvacancy

Applicants must be a resident of the City of Lafayette and registered to vote. Applicants will be interviewed on Monday, January 29th and Wednesday January 31st (if necessary).

The application form is available on the City’s website at www.lovelafayette.org/councilvacancy.

Applications must be received by 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 25, 2024. Applicants may submit their application via e-mail at jrobbins@lovelafayette.org, mail or in-person at 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd., #210, Lafayette, CA 94549.

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