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Inga Miller announces she will not run for reelection on Orinda City Council

By Sora O'Doherty



Inga Miller Photo S. O'Doherty

Having been asked by a member of the public if she planned to run for city council again, Council Member Inga Miller gave it some thought and decided that she would not run, with the intention of leaving the field clear for others interested in stepping up. She announced her decision at the conclusion of the Feb. 20 city council meeting. To her surprise, she almost immediately discovered that someone was interested in replacing her, and she is enthusiastically endorsing Cara Hoxie, whose term as president of the Orinda Union School District Board expires at the end of the year.

First elected in 2016, and serving as mayor of Orinda twice, Miller reflected upon her eight years on the council. She recalled that the 2016 election was a very charged one nationally, and it was her goal to maintain the charm and friendliness of Orinda, to preserve the city's sense of community and caring. She considers her contribution to that goal her main achievement as a city council member.

Before becoming a city council member, Miller served on the Parks and Rec Commission. Raised in Orinda, Miller attended Miramonte High School and felt a debt of gratitude to her native city. She is very proud of the work done to adopt the downtown Orinda plan, which she hopes will reverse the decline of the downtown and what she views as "tremendous retail leakage."

Her worst experience in office was the AirBnB shooting that occurred when she was serving as mayor in 2019. "Anytime there is a loss of life," Miller said, "it is devastating." She was glad that something good came from the incident, insofar as laws were changed locally and beyond after the shooting to prevent future occurrences.

Her belief that no one should die is also key to her absolute dedication to Orinda's evacuation planning. "Preparation is everything," she believes. While she is happy that Sleepy Hollow Elementary School has been prepared as a "place of last resort," she firmly believes that in most circumstances there will be sufficient warning to evacuate students from the schools. She noted that since the destructive wildfires in Australia, they have mandated places of last resort, or neighborhood safe places.

Miller had words of praise for many of Orinda's former mayors, whose ranks she will soon join. Miller recalled the many volunteer activities they have undertaken since leaving the council, adding that Orinda is a place where there is a huge willingness to volunteer.

The outgoing city council member, who will serve until the end of the year, had many good things to say about the candidacy of Hoxie, whom she is endorsing. As a lawyer, like Miller, with eight years of experience serving on the school board and dealing with the passage of a school bond, Hoxie understands infrastructure and contracts, Miller said. She has been a host family for a student from the Czech Republic and has visited the Tabor Meetings with the Orinda Tabor Sister City Foundation. She has also been involved in building bridges between the school district and the Moraga-Orinda Fire District, Miller added.

The other council member whose term expires at the end of the year is current Mayor Darlene Gee. Gee was appointed to fill the vacancy left when council member Steve Glazer was elected to the California Senate in 2015, and won election to the council in 2016 and 2020.

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