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Public Works inspector honored for service to Orinda residents

By Sora O'Doherty



Tod Fierner Photo Sora O'Doherty

Public Works Inspector Tod Fierner was honored for his dedication to the residents of Orinda by the City Council on Oct. 16. Homeowner Lee Munroe of Easton Court had written to City Manager Steve Salomon praising Fierner for interceding on his behalf with Pacific Gas and Electric Company regarding a dangerous tree on his property. The large tree could fall at any time, and could cause a lot of damage to nearby electrical wires, but PG&E said that they could not help with the expense of removing the tree as it was on Munroe's property. Munroe contacted the city, and Fierner went out and inspected the tree, agreeing that it could cause major damage and expense if it fell. Fierner contacted PG&E, and, through his diligent intervention, made the company realize that the expense of removing the tree would be far less than repairing the damage it might cause if it fell.

Director of Public Works Larry Theis introduced Fierner, speaking about how he goes out of the way, beyond the normal, to serve the people of Orinda, and how much he enjoyed working with him. "Tod puts on the most miles in the city," Theis said, "going from site to site every day." The first face many residents meet when they contact the city, Fierner responds very quickly, Theis added, "sometimes more quickly than expected: 'I'll be there in 10 minutes!'"

"I don't do my job to get honors," Fierner said. "I love the city of Orinda. When I wake up in the morning, its not like I'm going to work. I like to hit the ground running. I get to talk to all kinds of people. What I try to do 99 percent of the time is to meet people in person. Sometimes they love me, and sometimes they hate me, but nine times out of 10 they walk away satisfied" after a face-to-face meeting.

Council member Dean Orr praised Fierner as "the coolest, calmest, most collected individual," who deals with whatever disaster befalls the city, such as the Miner Road sinkhole. Mayor Amy Worth added that she and Fierner were the first people on the scene when that sinkhole occurred in January 2017. Council member Eve Phillips noted that Fierner "gets to work at all the worst times" and Vice Mayor Inga Miller praised his work on the problems encountered on Orchard Road during the East Bay Municipal Utility District pipe repairs in the summer of 2017.

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