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Mayor Mike Anderson bows out

By Pippa Fisher



Mike Anderson retires after more than 20 years of service to the city, seen here with Supervisor Candace Andersen in an archived photo. Photo Pippa Fisher

control, and he said that it's not over yet.

Lafayette's most senior council member stepped down from city leadership at the council's Dec. 14 meeting, amid widespread respect, hanging up his gavel for good.

Mayor Mike Anderson is leaving the council after 16 years, including five terms as mayor. Prior to that he served on the planning commission for four years.

On a night when Anderson along with the most recent member of council, Council Member Steven Bliss (who served two years, finishing Council Member Mark Mitchell's term following Mitchell's untimely passing in November 2018), both said their goodbyes, there was much appreciation all around for the two of them from both the public and from Contra Costa County District 2 Supervisor Candace Andersen, and California State Sen. Steve Glazer.

Many spoke of Bliss' intelligence, good humor, compassion and noted appreciation for all the work he has accomplished on the legislative committee. He in turn and with characteristic modesty, likened himself to Bobby Hebb opening for the Beatles, as the conversation turned to Anderson's retirement.

"It's not easy," said Anderson. "But it's time."

He acknowledged that the council has been in the trenches on a number of tough issues, referring to challenges such as legislative issues and loss of local

He expressed confidence in the current council and gave special praise to City Manager Niroop Srivatsa and her staff. "We have a very lean operation in Lafayette and yet we are able to get everything that we need to get done, done with a reserve in our financial position."

Anderson's remarks focused largely on the community. He noted that this is an intimate community where people wave to you. "I think that going forward that will be a challenge to maintain that and that those of us here now are going to have to make sure we welcome new residents."

Members of the council thanked Anderson for his calm manner of leadership, for welcoming all, for his integrity, and for his ability to bring people together. As Lafayette resident Wei-Tai Kwok commented, for the example he sets in being able to disagree without being disagreeable and in the words of Lafayette resident Kathy Merchant, a most effective listener and facilitator.

Merchant perhaps summed up the general sentiment best when she referred to Anderson as "the ultimate diplomat."

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