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## McCormick Appointed Orinda's Next Mayor

By Andrea A. Firth



Sue Severson receives recognition for her work over the past year as mayor from the newly appointed Mayor Tom McCormick Photo by A. Firth The Orinda Library Auditorium was packed for the City Council meeting on Tuesday, December 1, during which Tom McCormick was unanimously appointed Mayor of the City. McCormick takes over for Sue Severson who served as Mayor for the past year. Council Member Victoria Smith was named Vice Mayor for 2010; she previously served as Mayor in 2008.

At the start of the meeting, Orinda's many City Commissioners and volunteers were recognized and thanked by the Council and City staff for their many hours of service and the significant expertise and energy they bring to the City.

Following tradition, the Council members recognized the many accomplishments of Severson's mayoral tenure by taking turns reading through a resolution listing both serious and light-hearted achievements. Severson's 2009 Year of Action included the initiation of a Community Service/Clean-Up Day that drew over 300 volunteers, the implementation of new development guidelines for residential projects, and the adoption of a Bike, Trail Walkway Master Plan for the City. Her delicious baked goods, boundless energy, and ability to work with limited sleep were also acknowledged. While it was a difficult year financially for the City of Orinda, which like many municipalities experienced a significant drop in revenue, Severson espoused fiscal prudence and led the Council in the difficult task of cutting over \$500,000 from the General Fund. Staff furlough

days were instituted, but no layoffs were necessary. Because budget constraints cut funds to community activities like the July 4th celebration, Severson worked with the Council to establish activities to raise private dollars to meet these needs. The first event, the Kids' Triathlon held in November, raised over \$9,000 for the City, and a celebrity golf tournament is planned for July. "Sue's time as Mayor is highlighted by the grace she brings as a presiding official," stated Council Member Steve Glazer. "She brings warmth, patience, understanding, and empathy to her work on the Council," he added. Vice Mayor Smith acknowledged Severson's work with the youth of Orinda along with her tenacity, hard work, and attention to detail. Council Member Amy Worth described

Severson as a woman of action and commended her personal commitment to the needs and concerns of every citizen. The new Mayor McCormick echoed his fellow Council members sentiments, noting that Severson had served as a good role model as

mayor.



The Orinda Intermediate School Choir performed a medley of holiday songs at the Mayor's reception Photo A. Firth

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