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## Evans Brings FAIR Perspective to MOFD Board

*By Nick Marnell*

Drawing attention to a massive binder filled with Moraga Orinda Fire District charts, data and reports, Alex Evans said, "I've done (data analysis) all of my life. But I do not understand what is in there."

Evans, one of two newly appointed members of the MOFD Board of Directors, has been involved with the public for most of his adult life. His MBA from the University of Michigan is in Public Policy. He founded EMC Research in 1989, a company specializing in market and opinion research, and has served in the past as a member of the Richmond City Council and Orinda's Citizens for Infrastructure Oversight Committee. Evans was also a founding member of FAIR (Fire And Infrastructure Renewal), a group of Orinda citizens who believe that MOFD is not being equitably funded by both Orinda and Moraga, and wonder if efficiencies can be found that might somehow free up Orinda property tax dollars to fix roads and infrastructure.

"It is unacceptable that some of the people in Orinda think that they are overpaying for their services," Evans stated. When asked if he is one of those people, he responded, "Fire service is typically 15 percent of a municipality's budget. The amount of Orinda property taxes allocated to MOFD is equal to the budget of the City of Orinda."

Evans made it clear that he joined the MOFD board because he wants the entity to thrive, to continue to be supported by the public, and to emerge financially sound. "I want the MOFD to be sustainable, and to exist into perpetuity," he said.

Nothing appears to be off the table, though. Evans indicated that if it is confirmed that the firefighting costs borne by Orinda are too high relative to other agencies, if Orinda is paying more than it should for its fire service, and if it's shown that Orinda could provide its own service more cheaply, the dissolution of the MOFD could happen. "But that is not my goal," he said.

He believes the most immediate pressing issue facing MOFD is the labor situation. "The labor contract is our number one priority," he explained.

Evans is a complex man, dealing with complex issues. He appears ready to take on all the challenges, and ready to challenge all assumptions. Having spent his career churning data, it will be interesting to see what recommendations he comes up with after he parses all of the data that is in that binder. "It's going to take time," he said.

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