



## Moraga

### Public Meetings

#### City Council

Wednesday, June 14, 7 p.m.  
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

#### Planning Commission

Monday, June 5, 7 p.m.  
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

#### Design Review

Monday, June 12, 7 p.m.  
Council Chambers and Community Meeting Room, 335 Rheem Blvd.

#### School Board Meetings

**Moraga School District**  
Thursday, June 6, 7 p.m.  
Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Library  
1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga  
www.moraga.k12.ca.us  
See also AUHSD meeting page A2

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

#### Town of Moraga:

www.moraga.ca.us  
Phone: (925) 888-7022

#### Chamber of Commerce:

www.moragachamber.org

#### Moraga Citizens' Network:

www.moragacitizensnetwork.org

## Moraga Police Report



### May 3 to 13

#### Alarms:

May 4 Location n/a  
May 6 Location n/a  
May 8 800 block Camino Ricardo  
May 11 1000 block Country Club Dr.  
May 11 Location n/a  
May 11 300 block of Donald Dr.  
May 12 Locations n/a (twice)  
May 13 Location n/a  
May 14 Locations n/a (twice)

#### Hit & Runs

May 5 A Prius parked along St. Mary's Road.  
May 16 New Jeep parked on Rheem Blvd.

#### Firearms surrendered for destruction

May 10, May 13

#### Thefts:

May 3 2000 block Ascot Dr. \$500  
May 8 ID theft  
May 9 Unauthorized credit card transactions  
May 15 ID theft  
May 16 Lost/stolen property; California driver's license missing

#### May 8 Weapons

Police responded to Campolindo High for possible weapons and drug violations. They referred the case to juvenile probation (court).

#### May 3

Police were dispatched to Saint Mary's College to investigate a report of a hysterical student. Must be finals time. San Jose Police took the case, although it is unclear why.

#### May 4 Loud party

Officers found 20 people on Ascot Drive holding an alcohol party. The residents were warned, then cited for hosting.

#### May 5 Fraud

A resident nearly steered himself toward financial ruin when he mailed a \$60,000 check for a new car to Las Vegas. The bank tried to stop payment, but no dice; the check was already cashed and you can bet the car never arrived.

#### May 5 Vehicle tampering

A resident's truck parked along Moraga Road had its side lock and ignition damaged. Repairs estimated at \$300. No leads.

#### May 7 Warrant arrest

Officers served a \$162,000 warrant on a woman wanted for ID theft and drug related charges. She showed her California drivers' license as ID. Whether or not her license was real, she was arrested and booked into Martinez jail.

**May 8 Suspicious circumstances**  
Where's the fire? Apparently not at a closed business in Rheem Valley Center, although officers discovered an open exterior fire door. It was only 6:30 a.m., so police simply locked up and left.

#### May 9 Auto burglary

There's no silver lining for the person whose older silver Mercedes was burgled near Claeys South Hall

JIM COLHOUN PRESENTS  
59 LAMBETH SQUARE, MORAGA  
FIRST OPEN | 59LambethSquare.com | OFFERED AT \$1,450,000




Rheem Valley Manor classic four-bedroom home on beautiful Lambeth Square. Gorgeous views of St. Mary's College and ringing bells, too! New kitchen, freshly landscaped.

925.200.2795 BRE# 01029160 jim@apr.com jimcolhoun.com

EXPERT KNOWLEDGE ... EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE ... JIM COLHOUN

OPEN HOUSE  
SUNDAY,  
JUNE 4  
FROM 1-4PM



## Moraga's budget: scraping the bottom of the barrel

By Sophie Braccini

The fiscal year 2017-18 will be a stressful budget cycle for the town of Moraga, town staff members predict.

One may think of the millions for road and bridge repair that the town has to fund, but the challenge is not even there, according to the town's Administrative Services Director Amy Cunningham. Simply put, Moraga's financial trend points to a budget in the red, with general fund expenses growing faster than revenues.

The town council was asked to find extra savings and they did so by cutting several relatively small expense items such as the contributions to the senior van program and to the Moraga Chamber of Commerce, and cutting down on published meeting minutes.

Cunningham warned the council at a special budget meeting on May 17 that labor negotiations are not over yet and payroll payments represent 64 percent of town's expense. Cunningham stated that cutting positions would impact service levels and was out of the picture this year. The council did not challenge her assumption.

To explain the increased expenses the director gave the example of a 10 percent cost jump for health benefits, and a forecast of 10 percent increase for workers compensation, and explained that the 4 percent of property tax revenue or 1.5 percent sales tax revenue increases would not help.

"As we are facing a number of unique challenges, we need your input," Cunningham said, adding that the objective was to minimize the impact on the level of service residents appreciate and expect.

Moraga was funded in 1974 as a minimal service government that may have been adequate for the second half of the 20th century. It does not well equip the little suburb for 21st century requirements and expectations. The town's public work director, Edric Kwan, noted that since Proposition 13, Moraga gets the smallest percentage of property tax in the county; the Moraga-Orinda Fire District's share is four times what the town gets.

In her presentation Cunningham reminded the council that the town's asset replacement fund is completely depleted, and this year

again, some needed maintenance and asset replacement will be delayed. Not replacing computers or police cars may not impact services in the short term but can have serious consequences later on.

Line by line the council members looked at relatively small ticket items to reduce or eliminate expense in the hope to keep the budget balanced.

The Spirit Van that drives seniors to appointments was one of the first on the chopping block, as the council members noted that private contributions could replace the \$9,000 the town has historically given to that program. Council member Jeanette Fritzky asked that this item be reviewed at mid-year and adjusted if possible. The \$9,000 contribution to the chamber of commerce was also eliminated.

Council member Kymberleigh Korpus asked that the 5 percent of proposed cut to the building and ground maintenance budgetary item as well as janitorial services be increased to 20 percent, saving \$8,000 instead of \$2,000. After weighing the impact of having to ask town employees to pick up

trash and replace toilet paper, and to cut the contract with Futures Explored (a nonprofit supporting adults with disabilities), the council agreed to a 20 percent cut. It spared the Hacienda de las Flores from the budgetary slimming program.

The council decided not to touch the \$5,000 it gives to support the Sunday hours at the library, its support of the Pear and Wine Festival, nor the hiring of summer interns, but decided to cut the cost of transcribing and posting complete public meetings minutes. Only action minutes will be posted, unless the matter pertains to land use. The council felt that since the meetings are now televised and archived, government transparency is upheld. The saving is \$13,000.

Other savings include changing the way of distributing the Town Crier to save on postage and reducing the number of professional associations staff belongs to.

The total saving amounts to about \$83,000. Cunningham will present the 2017-18 budget to the council in June.

## Mayor Onoda wants to appoint Moraga's own poet laureate

By Sophie Braccini

Suddenly there is plethora of projects in Lamorinda to appoint a poet laureate.

The Lamorinda Arts Council (LAC) has proposed to appoint a laureate who would write poems for events and conduct poetry education. But Moraga Mayor Teresa Onoda wants the town to have its own laureate, as part of an exclusive partnership with Saint Mary's College.

What is a poet laureate? According to the dictionary, it is "a poet appointed to, or regarded unofficially as holding, an honorary representative position in a particular country, region, or group." Juan Felipe Herrera is the current U.S. poet laureate.

LAC's idea emerged a few years back as a way to design a program that would promote the literary arts locally. "We have a lot of initiatives to promote visual and performing arts," says LAC's president Lawrence Kohl. "Our project is to include poetry in major functions, and also to be a focal point to encourage community involvement in poetry,

popcorn poetry for kids, workshops, so poetry can become a part of the community." He adds that it is also a cool way to celebrate a local poet, as Lamorinda houses several published poets.

Onoda has a different idea. As she explained it during the Arts in Public Spaces Committee meeting on May 9, what she wants is an exclusive partnership between Moraga and Saint Mary College to appoint a poet laureate. In the mayor's vision, the laureate would not be compensated, but would be given an office at the Hacienda de las Flores for writing. At that time she was not sure if the person chosen would be a student or a professor, or what the extent of their function would be.

At the meeting Onoda made it clear that this was an important personal project of hers. She told the art committee that Jim Donahue, president of Saint Mary's College, had told her that he wanted this Moraga-Saint Mary's project to come to fruition.

A member of LAC who had come to the May 9 meeting explained that the objective was to have Moraga be part of the project. Lafayette and Orinda have already approved it and LAC has raised funds to give the laureate a stipend. LAC proposed to have Saint Mary's be a part of the review committee that would choose the laureate.

But the mayor would not hear it. For her Saint Mary's College is in Moraga, it makes the town special and should not be shared with Orinda and Lafayette, she said.

The arts council followed the mayor's lead. Just one member abstained indicating that looking into a Lamorinda partnership would make sense since there does not seem to be that many opportunities for Moraga alone to occupy a poet laureate.

The council meeting will make a final decision most likely at a June meeting. In the proposed text, the mayor could have the power to appoint the poet without a vote of the council.

Share your thoughts, insights and opinions with your community.  
Send a letter to the editor: [letters@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:letters@lamorindaweekly.com)

Jeff Snell & Lynda Snell ~ Your Real Estate Resource

### 3705 Highland Ct., Lafayette

#### For those seeking distinction...

This rare top-of-hill, serene retreat captures views & nature from 2+ acres. Attractive single story 4 bedroom plus fabulous outdoor living area with kitchen, pool & park-like yard. [www.3705HighlandCt.com](http://www.3705HighlandCt.com)  
**\$1,550,000**



### Lynda Snell & Jeff Snell

Your Real Estate Resource

(925) 683-2600 (925) 765-8700

[Lynda@lyndasnell.com](mailto:Lynda@lyndasnell.com) | [Jeff@jeffsnell.com](mailto:Jeff@jeffsnell.com)

CalBRE#00700106

CalBRE#01333422

Search MLS, Buyer and Seller tools and Coming Soon Listings @ [www.jeffsnell.com](http://www.jeffsnell.com)



Giving Dreams an Address