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Moraga town council undergoes mid-term mayor, vice mayor reorganization

By Vera Kochan

Without a lot of fanfare and an almost blink-and-you-missed-it reorganization process, Renata Sos and Steve Woehleke switched positions during the end of the May 25 council meeting. Their new titles, until December 2022, are: Mayor Steve Woehleke and Vice Mayor Renata Sos.

During the Dec. 8, 2021 town council meeting, Sos was elected as mayor and Council Member Sona Makker was elected as vice mayor through procedures established in the Town of Moraga Town Council Protocols which state, "In years when no members of the Town Council are to be elected, the Town Council shall consider the election of the Mayor and a Vice Mayor for one (1) year terms at the first regular meeting in December. An election of a Councilmember to fill a vacancy as Mayor or Vice Mayor occurring mid-term shall be for the remaining portion of the one-year term for that office."

At issue was the fact that Sos was voted in as mayor, due to the bypassing of Moraga's "tradition" of progressing the vice mayor position (which Woehleke was in possession of) to the mayor position. Sensing a certain amount of discord with the outcome, Sos called a special meeting of the town council on Jan. 5 during which she explained, "I felt that recent events warranted having this council get together to address thoughtfully, but in short order, an issue that appears to be driving a deep wedge in our community."

Sos also noted that Woehleke had approached her regarding a possible alternative to the outcome and maybe a solution to the disharmony. His scenario would allow for Sos to serve as mayor for the first half of 2022, with himself continuing as vice mayor; then mid-year the roles would reverse with Woehleke as mayor and Sos as vice mayor.

Having reached the agreed upon reorganization date, Sos figuratively (via Zoom) handed over the gavel to Woehleke. "I want to thank Steve for his partnership and collaboration during these last few months," she stated. "I want you to know, Steve, that I stand ready to support you in your new role just as you have supported me."

"These last five months have actually been a great pleasure for me, because Renata really has gone out of her way to include me in decisions, and it's really worked out, I think, very very well," Woehleke said. "I want you all to know that I have no intention of reshuffling assignments or anything of that nature. Let's just continue to move forward."

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