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Election forums offer opportunity to question candidates

By Jennifer Wake

In an effort to introduce local candidates for the upcoming election to the Lamorinda community, several Candidate Forums are planned in October, sponsored by the League of Women's Voters of Diablo Valley, the Moraga Citizens Network and the Lafayette Homeowners Council. None of the three organizations endorse or oppose any candidates.

At press time only three of the six candidates for the Lafayette School District governing board - Rob Sturm, Katy Foreman and Dave Smith - had confirmed their participation in the Lafayette Homeowners Council and League of Women Voter forums, and only five of the seven Acalanes Union High School District governing board candidates had replied to outreach from forum organizers regarding their involvement.

Lafayette School District board candidate Neils Larsen in a Sept. 23 social media post announced that he was stopping his campaign, citing politically charged attacks on social media and an ugly and destructive process. "I'm just a Dad who wanted to help my community and provide another perspective on how to improve our public schools," Larsen wrote. Ballots have been printed and so it is too late to formally withdraw from the election, but anyone elected who doesn't wish to serve, doesn't have to take the seat. Any open seats following the Nov. 8 election would be filled by appointment. "We appreciate everybody who runs for these positions, and all the time these folks put into these positions, without pay," said Lafayette Homeowners Council president Bill Bucher. "That's how Lafayette runs ... with volunteers."

The following forums are scheduled to begin Oct. 3 with several others scheduled through Oct. 20:

League of Women Voters Diablo Valley forums

Oct. 3 - Lafayette School Board, 7 p.m., Stanley Middle School Multi-purpose Room, 3455 School St., Lafayette

Oct. 6 - Orinda City Council, 6 p.m., Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda

Oct. 12 - Acalanes Union High School Board, 7 p.m., Del Valle Education Center, Room 401, 1963 Tice Valley Blvd, Walnut Creek

Oct. 13 - Moraga-Orinda Fire District, Districts 3 and 4, 6 to 7 p.m., Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda

Oct. 13 - Orinda Unified School District Board, 7:30 to 8:30 p.m., Orinda Library, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda.

The format will include brief candidate statements followed by questions. Questions may be submitted in advance by email to voter.services@lwvdv.org.

Lafayette Homeowners Council Candidates Nights on Zoom

Oct. 13 at 6:30 p.m. - Brief presentation by recently reappointed City Council members Teresa Gerringer, Susan Candell and Wei-Tai Kwok, followed by questions and answers.

Oct. 13 at 7 p.m. - Candidates for the Lafayette School District School Board will have introductions, comments and then a Q&A session open to all participants.

Oct. 20 at 7 p.m. - Candidates for the Acalanes Union High School District will have introductions, comments and then a Q&A session open to all participants.

Participants can log onto Zoom via Lafayette Homeowners Council website:

lafayettehomeownerscouncil.org. A Zoom link will be added on the website approximately one week before

events. On the evening of the event, double click on the link to join the online forum. In an effort to introduce local candidates for the upcoming election to the Lamorinda community, several Candidate Forums are planned in October, sponsored by the League of Women's Voters of Diablo Valley, the Moraga Citizens Network and the Lafayette Homeowners Council.

Moraga Citizens Network candidate forums

Oct. 3 - Meet and hear from the candidates running for Moraga Town Council, Moraga School District governing board, and Moraga-Orinda Fire District governing board (Districts 1 and 3) at the Soda Center at Saint Mary's College and via Live Streaming (Note: A link will be available at <https://moragacitizensnetwork.org/events/candidates-night/> a few days before Oct. 3).

Tentative Schedule: 6:30 p.m. - Moraga Town Council candidates; 7:15 p.m. - Moraga School District board candidates 8:15 p.m. - MOFD (Districts 1 and 3) board candidates.

To submit questions and candidates, email your questions or topic of interest to MCN94556@gmail.com; In the subject line, state which set of candidates you are directing your questions to: Town Council (TC), Moraga School District (MSD) or MOFD (fire district), if you have questions for multiple roles, please send separate emails; Submit questions by 5 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 28.

Reach the reporter at: jennifer@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

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