



City Council Reg. Meeting:
 Tuesday, Oct. 1, 7 p.m.
 Orinda Library Auditorium
Planning Commission
 Tuesday, Oct. 22, 7 p.m.
 Orinda Library Auditorium
Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission
 Wednesday, Oct. 9, 6:30 p.m.
 Sarge Littlehale Community Room, 22 Orinda Way

City of Orinda:
 www.cityoforinda.org
 Phone (925) 253-4200
Chamber of Commerce:
 www.orindachamber.org
The Orinda Association:
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SOLD 6 Del Mar, Orinda 4BR 4BA 3,452±SF 0.51±AC \$2,895,000	SOLD 112 Ravenhill Road, Orinda 2BR 2.5BA 2,060±SF \$1,555,000	SOLD 11 Valley View Road, Orinda 3BR 3BA 2,463±SF 1±AC \$2,495,000

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COMPASS

Orinda residents have a choice of three candidates for two council spots

By Sora O'Doherty



Candace Evans



Cara Hoxie

Photos provided



Mayor Darlene Gee

There are three candidates running for two positions on the Orinda City Council. The general election date is Tuesday, Nov. 5. Contra Costa County elections will start mailing vote-by-mail ballots to registered voters starting Oct. 7.

Mayor Darlene Gee is running for another four year term on the council, which would be her third full term. Gee was appointed to the council to fill a vacancy when Steve Glazer was elected to the California State Senate in 2015. The other two candidates are Cara Hoxie, who is ending her tenure on the Orinda Union School District Board, and Candace Evans, currently Legislative Recorder for the City of Oakland.

The League of Women Voters Diablo Valley and the Orinda Association will host a candidates forum on Oct. 7 at the Library Auditorium from 6 to 7 p.m. The format will include brief candidate statements followed by questions.

The city council candidates responded to written questions from The Lamorinda Weekly on their qualifications and goals.

Evans stressed her dedication to diversity, saying, "I aim to develop a long-term plan for our community that promotes sustainable economic growth. As an LGBTQ woman of color, I am a true representation of inclusion for Orinda and the future of Orinda for all families, espe-

cially our elders and youth."

Gee stressed her institutional knowledge, saying, "My experience is especially helpful to Orinda given that in 2025 we will have a new city manager, a new police chief, a new fire chief, and a relatively new planning director. If re-elected, I will be the most tenured member of the city council and I want to use that experience to reduce the learning curve for the new staff and help ensure that our city priorities remain on track."

Hoxie emphasized her involvement in the Orinda community, saying of her her goals that she wants "to bring my understanding of our community and my problem-solving skills to address some of the difficult issues facing Orinda such as housing, downtown revitalization, emergency evacuation, fire safety, fire insurance coverage, and walkability."

In terms of professional background, Gee is a registered civil engineer, Hoxie an attorney, and Evans is a business owner who has held numerous positions on non-profit organizations including Meals on Wheels and The Advisory Council on Aging.

While both Gee and Hoxie are long-term Orinda residents whose children went through Orinda schools, Evans was raised in Greenville, South Carolina, which she describes as a small town like Orinda that has

changed tremendously. According to VIE magazine, Greenville "has risen like a phoenix and emerged as one of the hottest and fastest growing small cities in America."

The candidates shared their goals for Orinda. Gee lists wildfire prevention, sustainable infrastructure, downtown revitalization and Plan Orinda, in addition to maintaining fiscal responsibility and supporting new city leadership staff.

Hoxie emphasizes Orinda traffic issues, which she has experienced first hand serving on the Lamorinda School Bus Transportation Authority and getting her own children to school. She is particularly concerned about the PG&E power poles, and suggests that "we need to collaborate with Moraga to meet with PG&E to underground the utilities along Moraga Way," noting that if a single pole fell down during an evacuation, it would block thousands of people from leaving. Hoxie would also like to see Orinda become more walkable, and would like more charging stations for electric vehicles.

Evans puts housing first on her list of priorities, and emphasizes the need for more affordable housing in the 6th cycle housing element. She stresses the need to educate every homeowner about community wildfire preparedness, and to focus on evacuation planning.

Evans believes that she "would bring a realistic perspective to moving Orinda forward. I embody the definition of equality that Orinda needs today. I have continually proven my ability to stand for equality throughout my personal and professional life. My priorities for Orinda mirror what every honest council member stands for: standing up for our youth, supporting every Orinda family, advocating for elderly grants and funds, pushing forward incentive for Orinda businesses, and ensuring every Orinda resident is heard."

Hoxie relies on her service to Orinda, saying, "I have served my community for the past eight years on the Orinda

Union School District Board of Trustees, and it is extremely important to me to continue giving back to the place I have called home my entire life."

Gee points to her extensive career in transportation and infrastructure "that gives me great insight into public works and infrastructure issues. I also have an MBA from UC Berkeley and over 30 years of professional managerial experience in the private sector with responsibility for hundreds of employees and major financial objectives. Professionally, I have a great deal of expertise which I have been able to bring to issues and needs at the city."

In addition, Gee is a member of the Board of Directors of the Bay Area Council and co-chair of the regional transportation committee. She is an alternate commissioner for Contra Costa Transportation Authority, and past president of the Women's Transportation Seminar, the Bay Area Chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers, and the Orinda Junior Women's Club. Prior to joining the city council, Gee served for over five years on Orinda's Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission, including serving as chair.

Hoxie graduated from Cornell with a law degree and practices corporate transactional law in San Francisco. She also served on the Board of Directors of a large non-profit organization now called Choice in Aging. Before being elected to the school board, she served as president of the Educational Foundation of Orinda (now ONE Orinda) for three years. She is also a volunteer driver with Seniors Around Town.

Evans, who has lived in Orinda for over six years, holds a BA in creative directing and associates in holistic science. She is the Legislative Recorder for the City of Oakland. Evans says that she previously worked as the Head Creative Director for Sony, Paramount, and Festival Properties, and served as a Campaign Manager for CA State Senate District 35, among other responsibilities. She is also a member of the Soil and Health Forum. While on the Advisory Council on Aging she served as the Orinda representative, the treasurer, and the chair of planning.

Questions for the League of Women Voters forum may be submitted in advance by email to voter.services@lwvdc.org.

Candidate statements can be found on the City of Orinda's website, www.cityoforinda.org/383/Election-Information

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