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## Lamorinda Fire News Briefs

By Nick Marnell

### MOFD Board Meeting

The fire prevention division of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District provides a wide range of services, both to district residents and businesses as well as to other public agencies. Examples include fire and life safety inspections, fire hazard abatement and the issuance of operational permits. Fees for these services have not been raised since 2005 and some do not reflect the true cost of providing the services.

Under the direction of fire marshal Kathy Leonard the staff conducted a fee analysis and presented an updated itemization to the board at the Aug. 21 district meeting. The revised fee schedule, which will take effect with a new fire code in January, should produce an additional \$50,000 in annual revenue, said Leonard.

The board unanimously approved the implementation of the new fee schedule.

Three directors - John Wyro, Kathy Famulener and Fred Weil - attended the Aug. 20 Lafayette town hall meeting (see article this page) and shared their observations. Most of the board discussion focused on the possibility of the county proposing a ballot issue for a parcel tax to benefit the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District, which has cut back services in the past year because of a revenue shortfall. Weil maintained that a parcel tax would never pass unless the supervisors showed - through an independent study like the Fitch report - how serious the financial conditions are in the fire district.

Director Alex Evans cautioned the board to not harshly judge ConFire's situation. "Someday, we may have to make similar decisions," he said.

### SAFER Grant for ConFire?

Chief Daryl Louder provided a burst of potentially good financial news regarding the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District.

At the Aug. 12 Advisory Fire Commission Meeting, Louder said that the district will apply for a SAFER grant (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. If the \$10 million grant is awarded, the funds will be used to staff 27 firefighter positions, restore services to two closed fire stations and possibly avert the shutdown of another station in January.

SAFER grants are awarded to fire agencies that have experienced - or may experience - service reductions. The Moraga-Orinda Fire District was awarded a SAFER grant of \$1.1 million in July.

### New ConFire Chief

The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors announced the selection of Jeff Carman, assistant fire chief of the Roseville Fire Department, to succeed Daryl Louder as chief of the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District. At the Lafayette town hall meeting, Carman said that he will start Oct. 21.

Carman is a graduate of Cal State Long Beach, with a Bachelor of Arts in public administration; he began his fire service career with the Roseville Fire Department in September 1984. In addition to his supervision of the operations division, he has overseen the department's hazmat program and special operations programs.

"Jeff comes with strong leadership, management and fire operations experience," said Supervisor Candace Andersen, who was impressed by Carman's insight into dealing collaboratively with district stakeholders. "He recognizes that Contra Costa Fire needs to look at different, innovative ways of providing our fire and emergency medical services in order for us to remain a sustainable agency," she said.

Roseville, a Placer County city of over 100,000 residents, is approximately 20 miles northeast of Sacramento.

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