

# More Changes at MOFD

By Nick Marnell

When director Steve Anderson said last fall that, "By next year, there will be a new auditor," he was not just blowing off steam.

At the Jan. 15 Moraga-Orinda Fire District board meeting, the selection of JJACPA, Inc. as the new district auditor will be recommended by Gloriann Sasser, the district's administrative services director. The Dublin firm specializes in governmental accounting and it submitted a bid of \$30,690 to audit the district's financial statements for a 3-year period, at least 40 percent lower than figures submitted by three competitors. The low bid did cause Sasser concern, but she said that JJACPA president Joe Arch assured her that his company has senior level staff who know exactly what

they are doing, and that his bid was based on a true determination of the costs that he expected to incur. MOFD budgeted more than \$14,000 for its audit expense this fiscal year.

The district tore into its auditing firm, Cropper Accountancy Corp., at a November meeting for failing to recognize \$2 million in cash that should have been allocated to a special restricted fund.

Sasser confirmed that JJACPA has no personal or business connection with any member of the MOFD staff or board of directors.

The district will also elect new officers at the Jan. 15 meeting. Director John Wyro will have served as MOFD president for only seven months. He took over the leading role

from Frank Sperling, who moved out of the district in May. And unless MOFD moves away from historical precedent, the new president for 2014 will be board vice president Alex Evans, assuming that he wants the job.

Evans plans to attend the meeting via conference call from Hawaii.



**Moraga-Orinda Fire District Board of Directors Meetings**

**Next meetings:**  
**Wednesday, Jan. 15**  
**check website for updates**  
 (Go to [www.mofd.org](http://www.mofd.org) as the meeting date approaches for location and more information)

## Civic News Moraga

### The Moraga Park Connection

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The commissioners' concern was that people would leave their cars near the skate park and cross the busy arterial in an unsafe or traffic-disrupting manner. But town staff had a different vision regarding that connection.

"This community had seven years to look at the vision of the Moraga Center Specific Plan that included three pedestrian bridges," said Keimach. "(The bridge would) connect (the new park) to the Lafayette-Moraga Trail, that itself links to regional parks in the area. (We want to) create a walking community." She added that removing the bridge would create a public safety issue, making it more secluded and less accessible to law enforcement and medical services. "Look at the big picture," she urged. "You are making a big decision tonight."

Staff also discussed the financial aspects of the bridge construction. "It

would be more expensive for the town to build one bridge in the future than to have the developer build two bridges at the same time," said Planning Director Shawna Brekke-Read; the second bridge she referenced would serve as a connection within the park.

The commissioners started shifting their positions regarding the bridge, understanding the need for pedestrian connectivity but struggling with supporting the construction of a new crosswalk on Moraga Road. "We are going to become downtown Lafayette with all the crossings that we have," said Planning Commissioner Stacia Levenfeld. "(This would have a) significant impact on the scenic corridor and semi-rural feel." Other commissioners, concerned with the impact on the riparian corridor and the protection of pedestrian safety, proposed to build the bridge as

far south as possible leading not to Moraga Road but to a trail that would reach the protected intersection of Saint Mary's Road and Moraga Road.

"We want to have access to this parcel from the regional trails, with a focus on the safety of pedestrian access rather than a crosswalk," summarized Levenfeld.

The location of the new Laguna Creek bridge will be as far south as possible to minimize environmental impacts. Prior to opening the bridge for public use, a safe pedestrian crossing will be established to maximize pedestrian safety and connectivity from the Laguna Creek bridge to regional trails. Even though a new crosswalk on Moraga Road was not ruled out the idea did not gain much momentum with the commission, which will approve the final location of the crossing.

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You're Invited

# Learn About Gallbladder Disease Treatment Options

**WHEN:** Wednesday, January 22  
6:30 - 8 p.m.

**WHERE:** Claremont Hotel  
Sonoma Room  
41 Tunnel Road  
Berkeley, CA 94705

**Have you been diagnosed with gallbladder disease?**

Come to an informative presentation by surgeon Steven Stanten, MD, to find out about Alta Bates Summit's new treatment options for gallbladder disease as well as options for heartburn that doesn't respond to medication.

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