



Orinda Civic News

Public Meetings

City Council

Tuesday, March 4, 7 p.m.
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Planning Commission

Tuesday, March 11, 7 p.m.
Auditorium, Orinda Library,
26 Orinda Way

Citizens' Infrastructure Oversight Commission

Wednesday, March 12, 6:30 p.m.
Sarge Littlehale Community Room,
22 Orinda Way

Check online for agendas, meeting notes and announcements

City of Orinda:

www.cityoforinda.org
Phone (925) 253-4200

Chamber of Commerce:

www.orindachamber.org

The Orinda Association:

www.orindaassociation.org

School Board Meeting

Orinda Union School District

Monday, March 10, 6 p.m.

OUSD Office, Vintage Building

25 Orinda Way, Suite 200

www.orindaschools.org

See also AUHSD meeting page A2



Orinda Police Department Incident summary report, Feb. 2-8

Alarm calls: 27

Auto Burglary: Dalewood Dr

Suspicious Vehicle Stops:

- Glorietta Elementary
- El Sueno
- Spring Road
- El Camino/Camino Sobrante
- Wilder Fields (3)
- Dalewood Dr/Lombardy Ln
- El Toyonal

Suspicious Person/Circumstances:

- Camino Pablo/Miner Rd
- Knickerbocker Ln
- Orinda Theatre (2)
- Tappan Ln
- Nations
- Silver Oak Tr
- Donald Dr
- Safeway
- Northwood Ct/Northwood Dr
- La Campana Rd

Arrests:

- WB 24/Fish Ranch Rd

Warrants:

- Hall Dr
- Camino Pablo (3)

Reckless Driving:

- San Pablo Dam/Bear Creek Rds
- Camino Pablo/Manzanita Dr

Panhandling:

- Orinda Wy/Santa Maria Wy

Petty Theft:

- Greenwood Ct

Missing Juvenile:

- Westwood Ct

Vehicle Theft:

- Tappan Ln

Share your thoughts, insights and opinions with your community.

Send a letter to the editor:

letters@lamorinda
weekly.com

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The Dollars and Sense of Orinda's Financial Operations

By Laurie Snyder



Bob Thompson Photo Ohlen Alexander

“We’re an excellent sounding board,” said Bob Thompson recently when asked about one of Orinda’s most important volunteer groups – the City of Orinda’s Finance Advisory Committee. “We bring different eyes and brains and perspective to their concerns and reports, and we also look at things from a consumer point of view – from a citizen point of view.”

The longtime Orindan has been a member of the FAC since its inception. Formed Dec. 16, 2008 when the Orinda City Council modified

the city’s budget committee to tap the brainpower of financial and investment professionals living locally, the FAC is charged via Resolution 75-08 to “serve in a broader advisory capacity for all financial matters related to City operations” while advising city leaders in a manner that does not conflict with the Municipal Code. Its seven at-large voting members are Orinda residents appointed by the City Council to serve three-year terms as unpaid volunteers. At least one council member serves annually as liaison. Committee members review and recommend changes to Orinda’s proposed budget and statement of investment policy, attend budget-related meetings, and advise the City Council and staff on other financial matters as appropriate.

“It’s great to have people knowledgeable in these areas,” observed Thompson of the roles Orindans play on the city’s diverse commissions and committees. Serving on one, he said, you realize how many neighbors are giving back. He devotes about an hour and a half, once a month to the FAC, with occasional homework. “You don’t have to be expert in everything,” he said. “It’s great to have a forum to query people and say, ‘What about this? Educate me.’”

Those collective volunteer hours have produced change. When the Contra Costa County Grand Jury required cities to help county residents better understand financial operations, Orinda’s leaders asked the FAC for help. “There were some people on that committee that brought wonderful ideas forward.” Now,

the city’s website is more robust, and staff reports at council meetings contain reader-friendly budget graphics.

“What they really need is some time,” said Thompson in describing residents considering volunteering for a commission or committee. “Not an inordinate amount. Just a commitment to doing things right, a willingness to learn and collaborate, and a modest skill set and (good) attitude.”

Stanford trained, Thompson works as a portfolio manager for a privately held Bay Area investment management firm. In addition to volunteering with Orinda’s FAC, he serves as a member of the board of directors for the United Way of the Bay Area, the investment committee for the Girl Scouts of Northern California and as board vice president for the Bay Area Financial Education Foundation.

He has also served, since 2009, as the board secretary for the Cavalla Historical Society in Galveston, Texas that is dedicated to preserving the USS Cavalla, a memorial to World War II submariners.

Like another great fighter, Muhammad Ali, Thompson clearly believes that “Service to others is the rent that we pay for our room here on earth,” and hopes more and more residents will offer their talents.

The Finance Advisory Committee meets publicly in the Community Room at City Hall on the fourth Wednesday of each month, beginning at 6 p.m. To learn about volunteering, visit the City of Orinda’s website: www.cityoforinda.org.

Roads Bond Measure Headed for the Ballot?

By Laurie Snyder

Orinda is a small town with a small budget. Roughly \$10.6 million is spent annually to operate recreation programs which keep residents healthy, beautify city parks, provide police protection, conduct elections, and maintain city roads and storm drains. Its residents are generally happy as evidenced by Forbes’ declaration of Orinda as America’s second friendliest city.

There is one word, though, which produces an immediate buzzkill when uttered – roads. During the past decade, the City of Orinda has devoted roughly \$2.3 million annually to its infrastructure. But with 92.5 miles of roads to maintain and an underlying network of storm drains that were already aging when the county transferred control to Orinda upon incorporation, city leaders have been forced to channel funds to areas impacting the greatest number of people. Smaller residential roads began crumbling as storm drains failed, flooding neighborhoods, sparking legal action and forcing costly fixes that further strained city coffers.

So in July 2012, the Orinda City Council enacted a battle strategy. Known as the “10 Year Roads and Drainage Repairs Plan,” it outlines “four phases in which the City will fund, plan and manage the construction and repair of public roads and drains,” costing \$52 million when completed. Phase 1, a 0.5 percent sales tax hike approved by voters in 2012 (Measure L), is already showing promise. City officials believe it will generate close to \$1 million per year over the 10-year life of the tax.

Now, the City Council is signaling its readiness to launch phase two – asking voters to support a \$19.8 million bond which, if approved in 2014, would provide the city with an additional \$3.3 million to spend on repairs each year for six years, starting in 2015. In addition to debating whether or not to ap-

prove the revised 10-year plan Feb. 18, city leaders considered a Resolution of Public Convenience and Necessity (14-14) and Ordinance

Calling for a \$20 Million General Obligation Bond Election (14-02) – the prior approval of both being required by state law if the City

Council decides to place a bond measure on the June or November ballot.

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