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Town Manager Moves On

By Sophie Braccini



Jill Keimach Photo Andy Scheck

“You can’t hold a good person back,” said Moraga mayor Mike Metcalf when expressing his regrets that Town Man-

ager Jill Keimach was leaving her position. Keimach was offered the job of city manager for the city of Alameda.

“Jill had a real knack and a unique talent to respond respectfully to the public concerns while revealing all of the facts related to any issue,” said Roger Wykle, who worked with Keimach when he was mayor in 2015. “In my view, she offered sound advice to the council on a litany of issues and was always on point. She will indeed be missed and we wish her well in her new endeavors with the city of Alameda.” Keimach says her last day in the Moraga office will be Jan. 28. The council chose Chief of Police Bob Priebe to serve as interim town manager; he will start on Feb. 1.

Keimach says she was ready for a new challenge, but speaking from the heart, she expresses her sadness at leaving behind the many friends she has made in the community and within her staff, as well as a job that

made every day a pleasure.

It was just last November that a surprise celebration was organized by the community to honor the fifth anniversary of the Moraga town manager. According to the International City/County Management Association the average tenure of managers has been growing over the years and was averaging 6.9 years in 2000. “When I took the position, I thought that I would stay for two or three years,” says Keimach. “I didn’t think that there would be so many topics of interest.” But Moraga’s calm and bucolic feel was deceiving, and Keimach quickly understood that there were many stimulating issues to tackle.

The first one was the dog park dispute that ignited heated community debate; then the matter of the newly paved Moraga Road that started to peal. “I realized that this was going to be very interesting,” she says.

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Moraga Center Specific Plan Implementation Open House on Jan. 25

Residents are invited to an open house from 6 to 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 25, at the Council Chambers, 335 Rheem Boulevard, to review a draft “Vision Concept” for the Moraga Center Specific Plan area. The open house will be followed at 7 p.m. by a special joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Design Review Board to consider and discuss the Vision Concept. “The Vision Concept is a key step in the process to develop implementing zoning regulations for the 2010 Moraga Center Specific Plan,” says Ellen Clark, planning director for the town of Moraga. “(It will) provide clear and well-defined standards guiding building design and types; building envelopes (such as height, setbacks); public and private open space; and circulation system improvements within the Specific Plan area.” For more information, contact Holly Pearson, senior planner, or Ellen Clark, planning director at (925) 888-7041 or visit www.moraga.ca.us. – S. Braccini

New Art in Public Spaces Committee Needs Volunteers

By Sophie Braccini

The newly approved Moraga Art in Public Spaces Committee has openings for three residents. “The Art in Public Places committee will decide the kind of art we want on display in Moraga,” says Council member Teresa Onoda, who was the force behind the approval of the new art policy. “It will inform residents and visitors alike about the way this community sees itself and the way it wants to be seen by others. Are we

playful or serious? Bold or refined? Progressive or traditional?”

At the end of 2015, the council approved a town policy that will allow artists to submit pieces of art to be displayed in public places for at least a year, similar to what the city of Orinda is doing with pieces of all shapes and forms that adorn its downtown. Onoda will be sitting on the new committee with one park and

recreation commission member, one design review board member, one Moraga park foundation member, and three Moraga community members.

“This committee is just one element of a larger effort to support and leverage the enormous pool of artistic talent we have in Lamorinda,” adds Onoda.

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