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Ribbon cutting at St. Perpetua's new community center – building 'community and connection'



Photo Pippa Fisher

Oakland Diocese Superintendent of Schools Kathleen Radecke (back left) poses with School Principal Karen Goodshaw, helped by a class representative from each grade before the March 7 ribbon cutting.

By Pippa Fisher

The culmination of 18 months of construction is in sight for the brand new, state-of-the-art, multimillion dollar com-

munity center tucked away on Hamlin Road at St. Perpetua Church. Although the center is still a month away from completion, a well-attended ribbon cutting cere-

mony, watched by the entire school body from transitional kindergarten to eighth grade, took place March 7, appropriately enough on the feast day of their patroness, St.

Perpetua.

"We're chomping at the bit to get in here," said Rev. John Kasper, smiling as he thanked the many donors for their financial support, the school teachers, staff and students as well as parishioners who have dealt with the frustrations of the past 18 months of construction.

"The extremely wet winter has caused a number of delays. The parking lot repaving is the last piece to be done and that won't happen for a couple more weeks at least," said Kasper. "The interior is almost completely finished. So, yes, there have been weather delays, although that is never unusual for any major construction project, especially one that extends through the winter months. I appreciate the patience and perseverance of our parish and school members and their overwhelming financial support."

St. Perpetua School Principal Karen Goodshaw spoke, reminding the eighth-grade students that they were just

in third grade when meetings first started to put the wheels in motion.

"A small group of parents and parishioners met who wanted to see the next phase of the parish master plan completed," said Goodshaw. "We met every few weeks until we were ready to begin the first phase of the capital campaign in April 2015. Through the incredible generosity, we raised enough to break ground on this project in October 2017."

Aided by class representatives from all grades providing visuals in the form of posters, Goodshaw explained some of the many ways the school will use the community center, from rainy day PE classes to the science fair and literacy night.

In fact the first major event, the school's annual fundraiser auction/dinner dance, is to be held in the Grand Hall on April 6 with the theme of "A Night in Havana."

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City moves closer to codifying procedure to fill vacancies on council

By Pippa Fisher

Following the contentious and divisive situation the city council found themselves in two months ago as they grappled with how to fill a suddenly-vacant seat on the city council mid-term, the council has now set about putting together a resolution that would codify the process for similar situations in the future.

When a seat becomes unexpectedly vacant, as happened in November with the sudden pass-

ing of City Council Member Mark Mitchell, historically the council has filled vacancies by announcing and advertising the vacancy, accepting applications and conducting interviews of all candidates, according to the staff report given by city attorney Mala Subramanian at the March 11 city council meeting.

Subramanian said that most of the nearby councils have a similar resolution in place, to interview and appoint within 60 days of a seat becoming unex-

pectedly vacant.

Since this most recent vacancy occurred within a day of the election, residents, and indeed the new council were divided on whether the replacement should be appointed following previous precedents, or whether they should take the election results into consideration and simply appoint the runner up.

Council members Teresa Gerringer and Steven Bliss and Vice Mayor Mike Anderson to-



Photo Pippa Fisher

From left: Council Member Susan Candell, Vice Mayor Mike Anderson, Mayor Cam Burks and Council Member Teresa Gerringer debate the filling of a vacant seat on the council in January this year ahead of their appointment of Steven Bliss.

gether with Mayor Cam Burks all agreed on the need to get a policy in place and to "get it done before we're in crisis mode," as Burks said.

"The residents of Lafayette elected us to make extraordinary decisions – from millions of dollars in financial commitments to community-based value policies that will impact the city for generations to come," said Burks. "This is our job and the public has certainly made it clear that they wanted a policy – as quickly as possible – to address this specific scenario, so we are not faced again with a situation where we are interpreting past 'practices' or 'traditions' in the middle of what could certainly be considered a crisis."

Burks says he agrees with the public on this. "I believe the staff's proposed resolution is fair, transparent, and, as we heard from staff research, a model that

is used consistently and functionally by multiple jurisdictions in the area and around our state."

Council Member Susan Candell did not think it appropriate for this same council to codify the process, however, saying that she considers the decision not to appoint the candidate who came third in the election as going against the electorate.

Anderson raised the issue of adding language to the resolution to specify whether or not an appointed council member would be able to run as an incumbent at the end of his or her term – something that Subramanian said would not be enforceable.

The five members agreed to continue the discussion to the March 25 meeting to give council members time to consult further with the city attorney about wording.

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	Lafayette Public Meetings	Planning Commission Monday, April 1, 7 p.m. Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.
	City Council Monday, March 25, 6:15 p.m. Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Community Hall, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.	Design Review Monday, March 25, 7 p.m. Lafayette Library & Learning Center, Arts & Science Discovery Center, 3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.
	School Board Meetings Acalanes Union High School District Wednesday, March 20, 7 p.m. AUHSD Board Room 1212 Pleasant Hill Road, Lafayette www.acalanes.k12.ca.us	Lafayette School District Tuesday, April 16, 7 p.m. Regular Board Meeting District Office Board Room 3477 School St., Lafayette www.lafsd.k12.ca.us