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## MOFD board votes to maintain equal Moraga/Orinda six cent Fire Flow Tax rate

By Vera Kochan

Currently the Fire Flow Tax in both Moraga and Orinda zones are assessed at \$0.06 per fire flow unit. That rate was originally capped in Moraga's FFT zone, which also includes portions of Orinda and unincorporated Contra Costa County. The Moraga-Orinda Fire District's July 21 board meeting agenda included an item involving the possibility of raising Moraga's FFT.

MOFD Chief Dave Winnacker briefly addressed the board with a staff report that mentioned various reasons why the FFT rate for Moraga should remain at \$0.06, most notably that it would be too difficult to untangle and keep separate accounting documentation regarding Moraga and Orinda for transparency purposes.

There were no questions or comments from the board members after Winnacker's presentation.

During the Public Comment portion of the meeting, it was noted that former MOFD board member Dick Olsen provided an in-depth historical overview of the FFT to the board several hours before the evening's meeting. Additionally, Moraga Mayor Mike McCluer read a rate hike opposition letter crafted by the town council during its July 14 meeting (see details in Lamorinda Weekly's July 21 issue).

Former MOFD board president and Moraga mayor, Frank Sperling stated, "Directors, please do your homework. Please remember that questions and comments you make in the public view are taken very seriously and oftentimes with the public filling in the blanks with a negative scenario. Whether those statements revolve around merging into the ConFire organization, or gee, I wonder why we don't increase the Fire Flow Tax rate in Moraga. You can see the ramifications of such statements." Sperling stressed the importance of board members asking questions of staff before meetings in order to ensure that they come to the table with a complete knowledge of the topic at hand.

Another former Moraga mayor, Dave Trotter, complimented Winnacker's informative staff report and added, "This issue keeps coming back. I think it's time to put a stake in the heart of this particular subject." He also reminded the MOFD board members that "three out of the five of you depend on one form or another for votes from Moraga residents to have your seats, and understand that we're watching; we're paying very close attention. I would ask you to consider that in the actions that you're being asked to take tonight and to approve what Chief Winnacker has proposed as the right path forward for the Moraga-Orinda Fire District."

Without any debate, the board voted unanimously for the continuation of the \$0.06 FFT rate in both the Moraga and Orinda service zones.

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