



Moraga-Orinda Fire Protection District

BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES PUBLIC BUDGET WORKSHOP

April 29, 2020
(Approved May 20, 2020)

1. The Board of Directors convened a Teleconference Open Session at 6:04 p.m. on April 29, 2020, via the Zoom application, <https://zoom.us/j/98405174866>, webinar id: 984 0517 4866 and/or by Phone 669-900-6833. Pursuant to Executive Order N-29-20, Teleconferencing Restrictions of the Brown Act have been suspended. MOFD is closely following the latest Public Health Order from the Contra Costa Health Services issued on March 17, 2020. At this time, all formal public meetings will continue remotely.

President Danziger called the meeting to order and requested an attendance roll call. Present were the following Directors and Staff:

President Danziger	Director Jorgens	Christine Russell, HR Benefits Manager
Director Baitx	Dave Winnacker, Fire Chief	Jonathan Holtzman, District Counsel
Director Donner	Gloriann Sasser, Admin Services Director	Marcia Holbrook, District Clerk
Director Jex	Jeff Isaacs, Fire Marshal	

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT (audio 3:35)**

President Danziger opened Public Comment. Public comment remained open for a minimum of 1 minute to allow for potential digital processing delays to ensure that the public had sufficient time and opportunity to send in questions or comments via the Zoom Chat or by the designated email at MOFD.org or by the Raise Hand function via the Zoom App.

Melanie Light, Chair of the Orinda Firewise Council, read a written public statement and presented a signed petition requesting the Orinda City Council and MOFD make wildfire a priority in their budgets. See attached public comment for the full written statement and petition.

Barry Horn, Orinda resident, a participant on the Orindawoods Firewise Committee and Orinda Firewise Council, expressed that MOFD has an opportunity with the Orinda residents to reduce the overall fire risk in Orinda. The residents of Orinda have expressed the need for help and the expertise of the MOFD.

Nick Waranoff, Orinda resident, complimented and thanked the District, Fire Chief, Fire Marshal, Board of Directors, Firefighters, and Staff for the tremendous efforts that have been made in the last few years. MOFD has educated the community by making presentations, raising awareness on how to reduce fire load, and make our community safer. Mr. Waranoff commented that MOFD might need to step up its enforcement on private property if that is where the remaining fuel load resides. Mr. Waranoff continued with a second comment that he would like further explanation of the MOFD pension liability and clarity on understanding the bottom line.

President Danziger closed Public Comment.

3. **REGULAR AGENDA (audio 16:33)**

- 3.1. **Long-Range Financial Forecast April 2020**

Chief Winnacker provided the report. Chief Winnacker reviewed the District's policy, which directs the Long Range Financial Forecast (LRFF) to be updated every year in March, which leads to the yearly Public Budget Workshop held in April. The LRFF has been delayed due to an error in the outputs from the GovInvest software used to make projections using the Board's directed assumptions about future revenue growth and performance of various funds having to do with the hiring of both a Firefighter and Fuels Mitigation Specialist. Pending resolution and additional analysis to be performed by GovInvest, an abbreviated LRFF was presented for FY2021 and FY2022.

Fire Chief Winnacker continued to explain that the forward-looking 2-year period is an accurate snapshot of MOFD's financial health. Fire Chief Winnacker recommended that the Board work off the limited period shown on the LRFF, particularly given the volatility and uncertainty of both the markets and the economy.

Administrative Services Director Gloriann Sasser reviewed the assumptions used for the forward-looking 2-Year Forecast. ASD Sasser added that a conservative approach was used in budgeting.

General Fund Revenues

Property tax – The District's property tax consultant, HdL Coren and Cone, has provided a property tax projection for FY2021, which reflects the growth of 4.6%. Staff confirmed with HdL that the projection for FY2021 is still valid because the projection is based on the lien date of January 1, 2020, prior to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The impact of the recession and sales occurring in the 2020 calendar year will impact the District's property tax revenue beginning in FY2022. Summer is historically the residential moving season. How the Moraga and Orinda residential property sales are affected by COVID-19 during the summer of 2020 will impact the District's property tax revenue beginning in FY2022. A forecast of 2% property tax revenue growth has been used for FY2022. Starting in FY2021, General Fund property tax revenue increases due to the final pension obligation bond payment in the Debt Service Fund. The pension obligation bonds were issued in 2005 for a 17-year period. In recent years the payments to service this debt were \$3.8M. This payment will decrease to \$1.7M in FY2023 and \$0M in FY2024 as the debt is paid off.

Ambulance fees – Ambulance transports are projected to decrease by 50% in April 2020 compared to April 2019 and April 2018. Ambulance revenue is conservatively projected to decrease from \$1.8M to \$526K in FY2021 and remain at this lower level in FY2022.

Charges for services – This revenue is generated from plan review and inspection fees. Residential development and remodels may decrease due to the recession. Revenue is conservatively projected to decrease from \$400K to \$74K.

Other revenue federal grants – The final year of the District's SAFER grant, which paid for a percentage of salaries and benefits for four firefighter paramedic positions for three years, began in February 2020. The final year pays for 35% of the costs (the first two years paid for 75% of the costs.) The District is not eligible to apply for another SAFER grant on this year's cycle but will be eligible to apply in 2021.

General Fund Expenditures:

- Regular salaries – Per the Safety MOU: July 1, 2020, +3%, then +3% in FY2022.
- Overtime – Per the Safety MOU: July 1, 2020, +3%, then +3% in FY2022
- Benefits – Capped per the MOUs (no increases), +3% beginning in FY2022
- Retiree health insurance – Capped per the MOUs (no increases)
- Operating expenses – Projected to increase 3% throughout based on CPI.
- CCCERA employer payment – Projections are provided by Segal, CCCERA's actuary. The projections were provided prior to COVID-19. CCCERA employer contribution rates will begin to reflect 2020 investment returns in FY2023.
 - 2020/21 Actual rates set by the CCCERA board of directors
 - 2021/22 +3.56%
- OPEB funding – The Forecast includes OPEB contributions based on actuarial calculations used in the GASB 75 OPEB Valuation Report as of June 30, 2019, which were calculated using a discount rate of 6.25% and 18-year closed amortization period.
 - 2020/21 \$475,482
 - 2021/22 \$525,697
- Pension rate stabilization – The Forecast includes pension rate stabilization trust contributions as follows based on GovInvest software calculations using a discount rate of 6.25% and actual CCCERA investment earnings of 14.6% in 2019:
 - 2020/21 \$1,562,792
 - 2021/22 \$1,414,845

Capital Projects Fund:

The Long Range Financial Forecast - Capital Expenditures have been updated. The Forecast includes the following:

- 2020/21 \$1,000,000 to begin the Station 41/Administration rebuild project
\$500,000 to complete architectural drawings for Station 45 remodel

- 2021/22 \$776,000 for Station 41/Administration rebuild project
\$500,000 for Station 45 remodel

Long-Range Financial Forecast Results

In the absence of reductions or other Board direction to curtail expenditures, the Forecast projects deficits in both the General Fund and Capital Projects Fund with expenditures exceeding revenue as follows:

General Fund Deficits

- 2020/21 \$2,309,715
- 2021/22 \$778,774

Capital Projects Fund Deficits

- 2020/21 \$1,349,148
- 2021/22 \$1,383,541

ASD Gloriann Sasser concluded the report and requested Board direction. President Danziger opened the discussion to the Directors.

Director Jorgens asked Fire Chief Winnacker to share on-screen the CCCERA analysis spreadsheet (attachment A). Director Jorgens reviewed the graph and stated that based on the 2007/2008 crash, property taxes stayed at normal levels for the first year, but went flat for five years after. Director Jorgens commented that if MOFD assumes revenue will go up three to five percent a year in projections, the revenue will end up with a large deficit based on history when a negative event, such as the market crash happens. Director Jorgens continued to review the graph and explained when CCCERA has a good or bad year, it does not show up all at once and the impact is spread out over a few years. If CCCERA does not charge enough of a fee to keep the balance or if they do not earn the anticipated rate of return on those assets, it creates a problem. Director Jorgens explained further that obligations are predictable and contractually committed. The returns on the assets are unpredictable. If the two percent growth budgeted in the next year does not come in on property taxes, the deficit will be \$1.3 million. If the economy experiences the 2008 crash, it could mean MOFD runs out of reserves in three years.

Director Jex described his five-year analysis and reviewed salaries, benefits, operating expenses, and analyzed the percentage changes, and the pension obligation. Director Jex's analysis showed that in three out of the last four years, the increases to be 9.4 percent, 9.1 percent, and 9.6 percent, which reflected the same as what Director Jorgens discussed. At the end of last year, the unfunded pension liability recorded was 10 million, which gets factored in over the next few years. The unfunded pension liability that will happen next year will be substantially larger. Director Jex stated that pension obligations are not going up the three percent assumed on some other items but going up dramatically higher. Director Jex stated that because of the uncertainty of the unfunded pension liability and the obligation, MOFD could wipe out in one year everything that we put into the pension stabilization fund.

President Danziger agreed with the analysis' presented by both Directors and asked ASD Sasser if MOFD was obligated to make the payments on the pension obligation bonds or if there was an option to extend the payments. ASD Sasser answered that MOFD is obligated to make the payments. ASD Sasser explained that there is a prepayment penalty with no option to refinance or restructure those bonds.

Director Jex asked if the reduction in ambulance revenue was anticipated to trend low for the rest of the year. Fire Chief Winnacker confirmed and stated that MOFD anticipates seeing a continued downturn in demand for EMS.

Director Jex asked if MOFD had options with regards to increasing or changing the billing activity, billing policy, or recovery policy to have a higher recovery rate on those services. Fire Chief Winnacker replied that three options are available for increasing ambulance revenue: 1) Increase rates. Rates currently match the San Ramon Valley Fire District and the alliance with the Contra Costa County fire department. Increased rates would go beyond the regional norm; 2) Add additional fees for Institutional users. An added

facility fee for those Institutions would be to the facility, not to the patient; 3) Change District policy and bill residents for the balance of what is not covered by insurance.

President Danziger asked if ConFire charges the full rate to all transports. Fire Chief Winnacker confirmed.

Director Jorgens commented that MOFD should charge actual costs because the demand has gone down, and not very many of the costs can go down with that demand.

Fire Chief Winnacker responded that MOFD has the ability to raise rates with Board action, and the Board could direct changing policy as far as seeking either partial or full reimbursement for anything beyond what the insurance provides.

Director Jex replied that the Board needs to evaluate the ambulance delivery activities and to recover that amount of money with a cost structure change.

Director Jorgens agreed and added that the Board also needs to consider delaying the capital expenditures on buildings to get the Budget closer to the revenue forecast for the second year.

Director Danziger inquired about the Station 41 Administration capital project budget. Fire Chief Winnacker answered that the project involves relocating and building on unbuilt land. The 2011 strategic facility plan called for the project; however, given the volatility and uncertainty of the path ahead, it does not seem the time to embark on major capital projects. Pending Board direction, the project would be deferred.

Director Jex commented that the LRFF budget reflects a dramatic reduction in the general fund balance. The Board needs to look at deferral of projects to prevent a 2008 situation.

Director Donner asked for clarification on the date when the pension bond would be paid off. Fire Chief Winnacker answered fully paid off on June 30, 2023, and partially paid off the year before.

President Danziger opened the public comment.

Barry Horn, Orinda resident, Pulmonologist Critical Care Specialist in Oakland and Berkeley, commented that ambulance service would eventually go up. People have delayed care for now, but will eventually become more critically ill and need service. Based on Infectious Disease Specialists around the country and Virologist universal assessment, it is expected that the coronavirus issues will subside over the summer, but come back next fall. Ambulance Service issues will probably be back to where they are now.

Sue Wecht, Orinda resident, Firewise captain, requested that the Board consider budgeting for fire prevention education and fuels mitigation. Neighbors have done a great job of cleaning up, but there is still more work to be done, and there are some residents in her area that because of hardship reasons cannot afford to cut down a number of trees that are close to dead.

There were no additional requests to address the Board. President Danziger closed Public Comment.

Director Jorgens recommended that additional data is needed from GovInvest to include long-term property tax forecast scenario where the data mirrors what happened back in 2008, in order to understand the long-range implications of the situation.

President Danziger stated that the Finance Committee shall follow-up on the additional GovInvest data and convene a meeting if needed and bring the LRFF back to the Board. In addition to the LRFF, a review of the Ambulance Services and alternatives to the fee structure will be considered.

Director Jex suggested looking at the fee structure for Cal Fire in Lafayette since they are divergent and have a higher recovery rate.

No further discussion from the Board.

3.2. Fiscal Impacts of COVID-19 on the FY 2020 and 2021 Annual Operating Budgets (audio 62:10)

Chief Winnacker provided the report. On March 13, 2020, the World Health Organization formally declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. The economic ramifications were sudden and significant. In a matter of weeks, unemployment soared in California and Nationwide with more than five million new claims per week with 22 million total claims in four week period. The stock market has been extremely volatile, and many Bay Area businesses have closed in response to shelter in place orders and decreased consumer activity. March 2020 has been labeled as the beginning of a recession; this marks the end of the longest economic expansion in United States history.

Chief Winnacker reviewed the fiscal impacts of COVID-19 on the District's finances. At the Mid-Year Budget Review in February 2020, the Staff projected an FY2020 General Fund surplus of \$875K. Property tax revenue will continue to meet the Budget in FY2020. The District's property tax consultant, HdL Coren and Cone, has provided a property tax projection for FY2021, which reflects the growth of 4.6%. Staff confirmed with HdL that the projection for FY2021 is still valid because the projection is based on the lien date of January 1, 2020, prior to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The impact of the recession and sales occurring in the 2020 calendar year will impact the District's property tax revenue beginning in FY2022.

Ambulance services revenue is projected to decrease and not meet the Budget in FY2020. The number of ambulance transports in March and April 2020 have significantly decreased as the community follows shelter in place guidelines and seeks alternate care due to concerns about infection transmission in hospitals. As of April 20, MOFD has transported 52 times with a projected monthly total of 78 transports. This is 50% of April 2018 and April 2019 transports. Countywide emergency department volume has been at 50% of seasonal norms for the last month. This decline is projected to continue through at least June 2020 and will likely result in ambulance revenue not meeting the Budget. In April 2020, the District received \$22,930 of federal stimulus money provided to ambulance services providers in the CARES Act.

The District's plan review, permit, and inspection fees are projected to decrease and not meet the Budget due to a reduction in construction activity. The District's investment earnings are also projected to decrease.

Salaries and benefits expenditures for FY2020 have not changed due to COVID-19 and are projected to meet the Budget. The District is working with GovInvest and CCCERA to better understand the impact of market volatility on future employer retirement contribution rates. For comparison, from 2008 to 2015, CCCERA rates increased from 32% to 80%.

The District projects additional operating expenses in FY2020 due to COVID-19 supply costs of \$50,000. The District is seeking reimbursement for this and other costs via the state-wide emergency declaration. The Government Finance Officers' Association recommends that local governments maintain budget flexibility by budgeting revenues conservatively low and budgeting expenditures conservatively high. Based on this recommendation, Staff conservatively projects District General Fund revenue will meet expenditures for FY2020 with a small surplus. The most significant fiscal impacts due to COVID-19 will likely occur beginning in FY2022 when property tax revenue will reflect 2020 real estate sales activity and FY2023 as CCCERA employer contribution rates will begin to reflect 2020. At this time, there is much uncertainty throughout the state, country, and world. It is unknown how long the shelter-in-place will last, how the sheltering restrictions will be eased, nor how long the recession will last.

The District has the following reserve funds:

- General Fund unassigned \$7.8M
- Capital Projects Fund assigned \$4.4M
- North Orinda Emergency Fuel Break assigned \$410K
- General Fund restricted for pension benefits \$2.6M
- Restricted for OPEB benefits \$1.7M

The District's pension obligation bonds will be paid-in-full on July 1, 2022, which increases General Fund property tax revenue beginning in FY2022 (\$2M - \$3.8M per year.)

FY2021 Budget Development There are several approaches that can be taken to the FY2021 budget development, including:

1. Status quo – continue all programs and plans.
2. Moderate spending decrease – reduce some General Fund spending, review Capital Projects Fund spending.
3. Aggressive spending decrease – freeze hiring, eliminate non-mandatory spending and activities including fuels mitigation, non-mandatory fire prevention activities, emergency preparedness/CERT, non-mandatory training, exercise equipment, capital projects, etc.

Staff requested Board direction regarding District spending and development of the FY2021 Annual Operating Budget.

President Danziger recommended the moderate spending decrease approach and make the adjustments as necessary.

Director Jorgens recommended cutting capital projects to reduce the impact on day to day operations, as opposed to cutting any fire prevention budget.

Director Jex recommended waiting for the Long-Range Financial Forecast which will provide clarity in analyzing the number of options in terms of budgeting. Director Jex opposed any changes to District priorities for FY2020 and FY2021. Director Jex asked if MOFD is required to drain the cash from the Capital fund when borrowing under the teeter plan from the County. ASD Sasser confirmed.

President Danziger opened the public comment.

Mark McCullah, Local 1230 Union Representative, sent Written Comment stating that Firefighters would like to ask the Board about the asset allocation of our pension stability trust and our OPEB trust. Our understanding is that these funds were specifically designed to combat volatility in the stock market and offset fluctuations in CCCERA assumption rates to ensure we could make the payments. Local 1230 wants to make sure the taxpayer money used to fund these accounts did not lose monies invested and are not invested in the exact fluctuations they are supposed to protect us against.

Director Jorgens responded that the CCCERA portfolio is a moderate risk portfolio. The purpose of the fund is to make up for CCCERA not charging rates that are high enough to fund the obligations. MOFD sets aside reserve funds for market volatility.

President Danziger asked about the available funds when the pension obligation bonds are paid off in 2023. Director Jorgens explained MOFD currently subtracts the funds spent on the pension obligation bonds from the revenue. Back in 2005, MOFD had a \$28M unfunded liability with CCCERA. Instead of making payments, MOFD issued bonds to the public and paid off the CCCERA liability and had to pay the public back instead of paying CCCERA. CCCERA assumes it will earn 7 percent per year. The MOFD Board decided that 6.25 percent rate of return was achievable. The process is to take the difference in those two numbers when determining the obligations. MOFD takes the difference and puts it into our pension trust fund.

Vince Wells, President of Firefighters Local1230, commented that the reason the unfunded liability went up again was that CCCERA decided to depool funds and reassign 24 million in obligations to all 17 agencies, adding the unfunded liability.

Director Jorgens responded that according to CCCERA and County records, MOFD received credit for the \$28M after the breakup. Director Jorgens requested that ASD Sasser share that data and show what the obligation was in 2005 and how it has grown over the years.

There were no additional public comment requests to address the Board. President Danziger closed Public Comment.

President Danziger asked the Directors for consensus on holding back the capital projects funds. Directors Jorgen, Baitx, Donner, and President Danziger verbally agreed to consensus.

Director Jex stated that the capital projects funds should be to defer (versus stop) projects. Director Jex expressed that it would be imprudent not to recognize what the issues are, what the options are, and as to when we may choose to take action. Director Jex expressed that Station 41 cannot go another five years without repair and stated that information and procedures could occur with monitoring without incurring much expense.

Director Donner expressed that he does not want to see any cuts in programs. Director Donner recommends that the Board wait for the additional LRFF data and operate month by month for the next 60 days.

Fire Chief Winnacker summarized the direction provided by the Board. Staff will review expenditures and develop a recommendation to the Board on the impacts of deferring items specific to capital expenditures and how long those projects can be deferred. Staff will bring back updates either as part of next year's process in out years as we know more about the uncertainty that lies ahead.

No further discussion from the Board.

3.3. Public Budget Workshop (audio 91:29)

Fire Chief Winnacker provided the report. The purpose of the public workshop is to provide an opportunity for the Board and the public to discuss discretionary programs and discretionary spending priorities for FY2021. Based on Board direction during the public workshop, the Budget will be developed and returned for public input and board review at the Board meeting in May. Chief Winnacker summarized that MOFD has mandatory and non-mandatory (discretionary) expenditures. However, some of these represent a continuation of effort in areas such as pension and OPEB trust contributions, fuels mitigation program, emergency preparedness/CERT, fire chief contingency, and training. These expenditures are:

1. Pension rate stabilization trust contribution \$1,562,792
 2. Salaries and benefits - Fuels Mitigation staff \$481,000
 3. OPEB trust contribution \$475,482
 4. Emergency Preparedness/CERT \$157,123
 5. Fuels mitigation operating expenses \$100,000
 6. Fire chief contingency \$100,000
 7. Discretionary training \$35,000
 8. GIS mapping \$26,300
 9. Fire station furniture \$16,500
 10. Hiring freeze - recruit academy \$15,000
 11. Exercise equipment \$10,200
 12. Other \$45,518
- Total discretionary \$3,024,915**

Staff is seeking public input and the Board's direction regarding discretionary expenditure budget for FY2021 for the General Fund and Capital Projects Fund.

President Danziger asked if Lafayette contributes to the Lamorinda CERT program. Fire Chief Winnacker confirmed that the City of Lafayette contributes to the maintenance of the CERT program.

Director Jorgens commented that the Board has already achieved 95% of a balanced budget by deferring capital expenditures.

President Danziger agreed and directed Staff to review discretionary expenditures to determine areas that can reduce expenses without reducing programs such as the fuels mitigation program or fire prevention programs, and the scheduled recruit academy.

Director Jex commented that the fuels mitigation program needs to be communicated as to what services MOFD will provide and what is the homeowner's responsibility. If MOFD has to hire a contractor to remove a tree, the only option would be to take a property lien. If MOFD had to provide that service, it would dramatically change the Budget. The current program is outlined very well and working in our community.

President Danziger agreed that MOFD should not be going onto private property.

President Danziger opened the public comment.

Written public comment statements were read into record by Staff. Written public comments are attached to these minutes.

Number	Name
1	Carolyn Knoll
2	Virginia Thompson
3	Ken Light
4	Edward and Friderike Quinnan
5	Rick and Beth Bilotti
6	Virginia Stewart-Carton
7	Kathleen Bain and Andy Norrell
8	Ann Vivell
9	Michael W Brown
10	Joan Roebuck
11	Susan Lum
12	Brenda Pech-Bitton
13	Melanie Light (statement read item #2)
14	Joan Lucas
15	Michael Franks & Sharon Abdilla
16	Hatti L. Hamlin
17	Sue and Ron Wecht
18	Dan Detzner
19	Dennis Fay
20	Rachel Duclos
21	Tish Gleason

Melanie Light, Orinda resident, expressed appreciation and is looking forward to a collaborative relationship with MOFD and the City of Orinda. Ms. Light expressed the need for a hands-on fuels mitigation program and reminded the Board that this is taxpayer money. Ms. Light emphasized that the Firewise community is looking for a collaborative, creative, and positive relationship.

Dan Detzner, Orinda resident, and member of the Orinda Via Farallon-La Cuesta Firewise Neighborhood, as well as on the steering committee for the Firewise Council, expressed additional help from MOFD to hire more chippers and to provide more services. Mr. Detzner stated that he would like to see more funds budgeted towards fuel mitigation and not more suppression. Mr. Detzner added that the Firewise communities are eager and energized to increase fire prevention and mitigation.

Charles Porges, Orinda resident, stated that he sent a letter to the City of Orinda Council, encouraging the removal of the underbrush and large trees that remain in the area. Mr. Porges requested the letter become part of the MOFD records. See attached public comments for full letter.

Darlene Gee, City of Orinda Mayor, thanked Chief Winnacker and Directors Danziger and Jorgens for working together with the City of Orinda. Mayor Gee reaffirmed all the comments received and stated that the City of Orinda has also received a large number of comments from the public and emphasized that fire prevention is the community's top priority. Mayor Gee added that the City of Orinda looks forward to developing a better partnership and collaboration with MOFD.

Ken Light, Orinda resident, and Firewise community member expressed that he would like to see a realignment of the MOFD budget to support more fuel reduction and looks forward to collaborating with the City of Orinda and MOFD.

Richard Nelson, Orinda resident, suggested that MOFD should be working with the City of Orinda and with the Infrastructure Oversight Commission to ensure that our roads are adequate to get all of our citizens out of Orinda should a wildfire happen. Mr. Nelson added that MOFD needs to reallocate resources to give more priority to fire prevention.

Dennis Fay, Councilman for the City of Orinda, stated that he is looking forward to working with MOFD fire prevention and on the joint Committee between the City of Orinda and MOFD.

There were no additional requests to address the Board. President Danziger closed Public Comment.

President Danziger thanked the community for their input. President Danziger commented that MOFD aggressively performs outreach, education, and enforcement on fire prevention. The Chipper Program has expanded with new full-time Staff and full-time Fuels Mitigation Specialists. All chipper requests are fulfilled to date. MOFD has a process for receiving hazard complaints with an on-line hazard complaint form. Last year, MOFD received over a hundred complaints.

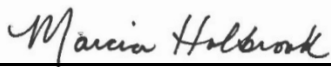
President Danziger added that it is important for all of us who live in this community to do what we can on our own property and set examples for our neighbors. MOFD has over 13,000 parcels in the District. MOFD does not have the resources to go on private property and cut trees and perform vegetation mitigation. Postcards have been issued to every property owner of their requirements, and owners have until June 15 to comply.

Director Jorgens stated that he understood that the community would like MOFD to increase communication and more hand-holding to show people what needs to be done for fire prevention. Director Jorgens elaborated that having a committee to develop ways that the government entities can facilitate getting more community involvement and more done by the whole community will help.

No further discussion by the Board.

4. ADJOURNMENT (AUDIO 154:30)

At 8:39 p.m., Director Jorgens motion and seconded by Director Jex to adjourn the meeting. Said motion carried 5-0 roll call vote (Ayes: Baitx, Jex, Jorgens, Donner, and Danziger; Noes: None; Absent: None).



Marcia Holbrook, District Secretary/Clerk

April 29, 2020

To the Moraga Orinda Fire Department,

There has been a sea change in public opinion about the threat of wildfire. The recent survey conducted by the City of Orinda to assess the appetite for a sales tax increase found that wildfire prevention is a high-ranking priority – 86% found it to be Extremely Important or Very Important; more important than repairing and repaving the roads.

Thus far, the onus of resolving a half century of unmonitored vegetation growth has been on the home owners. We accept our responsibility. We have been organizing into Firewise groups, of which there are about 18 now, and further organizing into an all-Orinda network, the Orinda Firewise Council which currently represents 13 Firewise groups and over 650 households.

BUT, there are limits as to what we can do on our own. We cannot force people to do fuel reduction work. Some are in denial about the actual degree of potential destruction; some are too busy; and others may have financial hardships. Our expertise and reach are limited.

Insurance companies now look at whole neighborhoods to assess risk. While there is a moratorium on the cancellation of home insurance now, that will end in October. In 2018 there was an increase of non-renewals of over 10% in San Diego, for example, and many policies were renewed at double or triple the previous rate. There have been a significant number of homeowners in Orinda who have had their insurance cancelled prior to the moratorium.

We ask the Moraga Orinda Fire Department to accept your responsibility toward us. We have charged you to protect us and you need to be thinking about us as humans facing an existential threat that you can prevent. You have a fiduciary and moral responsibility to use your expertise to make Orinda safer from the threat of wildfire. Your staff know exactly what needs to be done and how to do it. While the economy ebbs and flows, the threat of a major wildfire looms ever larger. We can discuss creative ways to maximize a reduced budget but we cannot stop the fact that people will die if we have an uncontrollable wildfire. We must take action now, in this third year of a mega-drought.

If Orinda were to have a major fire and suffer damage, not only will those lots be uninsurable but word will get out that MOFD did nothing to protect its citizens and, in fact, chose not to help its citizens by denying us our own money to reduce excess fuel. Not only would the sheer destruction affect the real estate here, but it would also breed disdain and lack of trust toward our city government and the fire department. This would make Orinda and Moraga a far less desirable place to live, property taxes would diminish and your budget and your staff would suffer. By helping the residents, you will be insuring your own well-being as an organization.

We, the Orinda Firewise Council present you with a petition our community sent out into Orinda at large. Over 375 people responded that they want the city council and MOFD to make wildfire a priority in your budgets. The Firewise Council want the City of Orinda and the MOFD

to budget significant monies to wildfire prevention. For MOFD, this would include reducing the fuel, removing dangerous and dead trees, and hardening the city and residents' property.

We will be watching and waiting. We will be voting and the Orinda Firewise Council will be endorsing board members who want to do the right thing.

Accept your responsibility to do all you can to make this town safer from a wildfire. Please do the right thing.

Melanie Light
Chair, Orinda Firewise Council

To the Orinda City Council and the MOFD Board:

As an Orinda voter, I want the Orinda City Council and the Moraga Orinda Fire District to prioritize fire prevention and make Orinda Firewise. Therefore, I want both organizations to budget significant tax dollars to pay to remove excess fuel from our community while keeping it beautiful.

In the recent Orinda survey, wildfire prevention was residents' highest priority with 86% saying it was EXTREMELY or VERY Important.

No.	Name	Contact	Address
1	Melanie	Light	
2	Ken	Light	
3	Dan	Detzner	
4	Carolyn	Knoll	
5	Kathleen	Kerr-Schoche	
6	Russell	Barretta	
7	Gina	Barretta	
8	Monica	Brun	
9	Seeley	Roebuck	
10	Lisa	Jorgens	
11	Lisa	Dyson	
12	Donald	Moresi	
13	Katherine	Bernstein	
14	Karen	Poggetto	
15	Susan	Supran	
16	carlynn	otis	
17	bob	weiss	
18	Carol	Pachl	
19	Rachel	Duclos	
20	Tim	Woodbury	
21	Pia	Loeper	
22	Roger	Pettey	
23	Helen	Kenfield	
24	Rob	Formanek	
25	Noelle	Spittler	
26	Patricia	Gleason	
27	Ken	Light	
28	Garen	Ingleby	
29	Susan	Hamilton	
30	Martin	Spittler	
31	Nancy	Dupuis	
32	Katie	White	

33	Patrick	White
34	Robert	Marshall
34	Mary	Marshall
35	Nick	Waranoff
36	Doreen	Rau
37	Anthony	Rau
38	Rachelle	Halpern
39	Michael	Franks
40	Sharon	Abdilla
41	Susan	Mellers
42	Bill	Cosden
43	Sue	Wecht
44	Joan	Daoro
45	Moyra	Oconnell
46	Declan	Oconnell
47	CZ	Czerner
48	Melissa	Roeder
49	Charles	Porges
50	James	Mellers
51	maggie	boscoe
52	Allan	Horn
53	Kaitlin	Lehocky
54	RoseAnne	Critchfield
55	Pam	VandeKamp
56	Sallie	Nelson
57	janet	schwartz
58	Allan	Resnick
59	janice	Lera-Chan
60	john	radke
61	Tom	Trowbridge
62	Tom	Czerner
63	Barbara	Resnick
64	kathleen	finch
65	Robert	Finch
66	Thomas	Burch
67	Deborah	Tellis
68	Lori	Crowley
69	Karen	Evans
70	Lily	Chae
71	Vivian	Lwin
72	Nicole	Kutchai
73	Cynthia	Alexander
74	Lauren	Davis
75	Bonnie	Kaster
76	Mark	Cameron

77	Debra	Lewis
78	Elizabeth	Colantoni
79	Mary	Gilles
80	Sarah	Siegel
81	lawrence	siegel
82	Joan	White
83	Richard	Ishikawa
84	Susan	Aglietti
85	Karl	Paulsen
86	Margaret	Sawyer
88	Nathalie	Musson
89	Delinda	Trowbridge
90	Aida	DeWitt
91	Gabriel	DeWitt
92	Ricky	Lwin
93	Tom	Nelson
94	Virginia	Stewart Cart
95	Edmond	Carton
96	Kenand	Fenelus
97	Joan	Lucas
98	Anne	Lesko
99	Alice	Li
100	Lucy	Talbot
101	Shannon	Gaffney
102	brooke	dougherty
103	Alexander	Walterspiel
104	joseph	DeGirolamo
105	Eileen	Unruh
106	Edward	Pike
107	Howard	Weiser
108	Bailey	Lee, MD
109	Lisa	Rudolph
110	craig	jorgens
111	Susan	Lum
112	Melanie	Waters
113	Kristine	Anthony
114	Anita	Hughes
115	Tracy	Lee
116	susan	bradrick
117	Chris	Anderson
118	M	Wee
119	Flora	Jew
120	Tina	Locke
121	Nancy	Debenham
122	Beatrice	Haase

123	Cheryl	Wingo
124	John	Wingo
125	kay	dubnoff
126	JOHN	KOTOWSKI
127	Jane	Kotowski
128	Dixie	Anderson
129	Warren	Seto
130	Elle	Ure
131	Sara	Lee
132	Carol	Chung
133	Joan	Roebuck
134	Linda	Friedman
135	Al	Talbot
136	Barry	Horn
137	Edward	Quinnan
137	Maria	Quinnan
138	Debbie	Schantz
139	Eric	Waldschmidt
140	Kathy	Fernbacher
141	Joe	Towbis
142	Shirley	Towbis
143	Jodi	Kaelle
144	Carole	Wolfman
145	John	Kaelle
146	Jillian	Esopa
147	Heather	Grenning
149	William	Ricks
150	Brenda	Pech-Bitton
151	nina	ricks
152	Hope	Bauer
153	Jerry	Gu
154	Elaine	Meyers
155	Kristen	Dalton
156	Mansour	Saki
157	Carol	Benninghove
158	Joan	Smith
159	SUZANNE	HUTCHINSO
160	Dale	Cole
161	Robert	Cole
162	Dede	Ramsey
163	michael	gordon
164	Scott	Zeller
165	Prashanth	Ajjampur
166	Christopher	Seeger
167	BEVERLY	CHICKERING

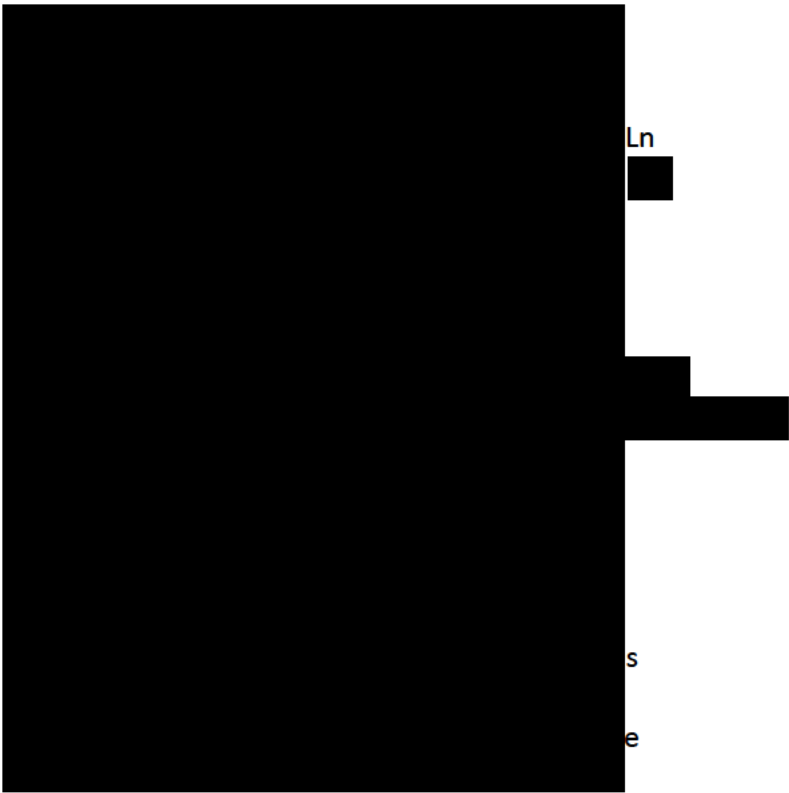
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171	Sandra	McGonigle	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
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178	Sandi	Johnson	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
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193	Mike	Scheck	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
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201	Lamont	Paxton	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
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203	Charlie	Brown	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
204	Ian	Baird	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
205	Bob	Knickerbocke	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
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216	Sandra	Barnett
217	Kathy	Sylvester
218	Connie	Horn
219	Myong	Khym
220	Rhonda	Zakskorn
221	Susan	Anacker
222	James	Aitchison
223	Madelyn	Mallory
224	Robert	Hay
225	Cheri	Van Buren
226	Keith	Van Buren
227	Betsy	Ream
228	Cheryl	Nevaras
229	Angela	Ochoa
230	Peter	Rich
231	Susan	Ashby
232	Christine	Higgins
233	Carol	Alvord
234	Lisa	Daggs
235	Lynn	Kalmar
236	Maria	Solit
237	Barbara	Breslau
238	Tim	Potter
239	Carolyn	Beasley
240	Michael	Cunningham
241	Susan	Banker
242	Daniel	Bitton
243	Dianne	Harb
244	Katherine	Dunmire
245	John	Sertich
246	Susan	Radke
247	Jane	Allen
248	Virginia	Rudd
249	Maggie	Reeves
250	Michael	Mayer
251	Shellie	Kirby
252	Elizabeth	Bilotti
253	Richard	Bilotti
254	Tamara	Bohlig
256	adam	reeves
257	Amy	Spurlock
258	David	Spurlock
259	Marty	Lewis
260	Jonathan	Meyers

262	William	Kalway
263	Cynthia	Leslie-Bole
264	Dawn	Boyer
265	Erik	Swanson
266	Richard	Marchick
267	Patricia	Aitchison
268	gloria	marchick
269	Mary	Lowery
270	Rashmi	Dixit
271	Cindy	Kumar
272	Gloria	Schiller
273	Elsie	Euing
274	Suzanne	Murillo
275	Jo Ann	McKee
276	holly	eliot
277	Hao	Li
278	Keli	Xu
279	george	Marquis
280	Patricia	Young
281	Susie	Ross
282	REBECCA	MOLTYANER
283	Barbara	Gertz
284	Patti	Kogan
285	Jill	Herrero
286	Christine	Goldstein
287	Jennifer	Wolf
288	John	McGonigle
289	Andrew	Norrell
290	Adrienne	Kohler
291	Mike	Chinn
292	Herb	Ure
293	Aliza	Metzner
294	Bob	Singsank
295	Kathleen	Bain
296	Dale	Herrero
297	Maria	Rescalvo
298	Lynne	Alper
299	JANET	MAIORANA
300	Bob	Goldstein
301	Joanne	Milne
302	Jeanie	Hocking
303	Barry	Williams
304	Melissa	Arciaga
305	Patricia	Paulson
306	Virginia	Thompson

307	Maggie	Barber
308	Maureen	Brown
309	Silvi	Otsmaa
310	Nicole	Collins
311	Elizabeth	Hindman
312	Eileen	Fitz-Faulkner
313	Elisabeth	Jewel
314	Julie	Fehrstrom
315	Joi	Shustack
316	Grey	Johnson
317	Carol	Morehouse
318	Valerie	Colber
319	Vince	Dell ' Aquila
320	cathy	stein
322	Jenny	Bowen
323	Dana	Ream
324	Elizabeth	Boyle
325	Arlene	White
326	Kyle	Faulkner
327	Chris	Fehrstrom
328	Susan	Southwick
328	Tim	Southwick
329	Sheila	Verna
330	Barbara	Novogradac
331	Jane	Foster
332	Hung	Chang
333	Barbara	Weikert
334	Rob	Weikert
335	Steve	Cohn
336	Wendy	McCullom
338	Susan	Cunningham
339	Joyce	Arnon
340	steve	stahle
341	Mari	Tischenko
342	Carol	DiRaimondo
343	Anna	Duncan
344	vera	duplan
345	Stephen	Arnon
347	Steven	Rosenzweig
348	Michelle	Lehman
351	Sandy	Pearce
352	Kevin	PEARCE
353	Linda	Trapp
354	Kerri	Peyovich
355	Joan	Kiekhaefer

356 John Armstrong
357 Stephen Lalli
358 Kimberly Lalli
359 Rita Korsunsky
360 Todd Dods
361 Ariele Taylor
362 John McManus
363 Michael Blume
364 Margaret Beck
365 Lewis Vaught
366 Lance Cowles
367 Matthew Rogers
368 Judy Sherwood
369 Constantine Koloboff
370 Kirk Johnson
371 Valerie Benkman
372 marjory Graue
373 Gerald Loeper
374 Shane Brun
375 Annette Moresi



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From: [Mark McCullah](#)
To: [Info](#)
Subject: Item 3.2
Date: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 6:17:48 PM

On behalf of the firefighters of mofd, I would like to ask the board, perhaps specifically Director Jorgens about the asset allocation of our pension stability trust and our opeb trust.

Our understanding is These funds were specifically designed to combat volatility in the stock market and offset fluctuations in ccera assumption rates to ensure we could make the payments.

We just want to make sure the taxpayer money used to fund these accounts did not lose monies invested and are not invested in the exact fluctuations they are supposed to protect us against.

Thank you,

Mark McCullah

Mofd local 1230 rep

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Carolyn Knoll](#)
To: [Info](#)
Subject: Orinda Fire Prevention
Date: Sunday, April 26, 2020 11:32:55 AM

Dear MOFD Board,

The fire department receives \$17million in funding each year from the property taxes paid by Orinda citizens.

The MOFD budget should have an amount of its budget committed to wildfire prevention every year, whether the budget is effected by economic factors or not because making Orinda safe from fire is the fire department's job and their first priority.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Knoll

"Human salvation lies in the hands of the creatively maladjusted." - Martin Luther King, Jr.

"All social issues are temporary and brief. Go deep." - Howard W. Thurman

From: [VIRGINIA J. THOMPSON](#)
To: [Info](#)
Subject: Fire Prevention
Date: Sunday, April 26, 2020 12:26:56 PM

Dear Orinda City Council,

Given that we are in the third year of a Super Drought, it is incumbent on us to harden Orinda against the possibility of a wildfire. The citizens have overwhelmingly prioritized Fire Prevention over any other priority and the City Council must respond by allocating funding to reduce fuel on its own property first and foremost as well as funding other appropriate city-wide fire prevention actions.

Sincerely,

Virginia Thompson

From: [Ken LIGHT](#)
To: [Info](#)
Subject: Community needs must come first!
Date: Sunday, April 26, 2020 12:51:26 PM

Dear MOFD Board,

I am baffled that the fire department receives \$17million in funding each year from the property taxes paid by Orinda citizens and little if any is spent on fire prevention. As a member of one of the 18 newly created firewise neighborhoods,I urge the board to be more responsive to our neighborhoods.

The MOFD budget should have an amount of its budget committed to wildfire prevention every year, whether the budget is affected by economic factors or not because making Orinda safe from fire is the fire department's job and their first priority. The MOFD board should be accountable to the residents of Orinda like myself and my taxes need to be directed to community wildfire prevention.

Purchase more chippers and staff to work in our neighborhoods. Create a mailer that goes to each home, like Marin has done about what plants are right in our neighborhoods. Set aside funds to pay for removal of pine and eucalyptus trees. Create grants to the firewise groups so they can hire workers to assist people who are older or can not pay for brush and tree mitigation.

There are many things you must do now. I like my neighbors will be attending and watching the board and we hope that you take our grass root effort seriously. We are!

Sincerely,

Ken



From: [friderike kraske quinnan](#)
To: [Info](#)
Subject: Orinda fire prevention / public comment - not on the agenda
Date: Sunday, April 26, 2020 1:20:50 PM

Dear MOFD Board,

The fire department receives \$17million in funding each year from the property taxes paid by Orinda citizens. We deserve to have the fire department use their expertise to reduce the excess fuel in and around Orinda that makes us so vulnerable to a wildfire. The MOFD budget should have an amount of its budget committed to wildfire prevention every year, whether the budget is affected by economic factors or not because making Orinda safe from fire is the fire department's job and their first priority.

Sincerely,

Edward and Friderike Quinnan



From: [Beth Bilotti](#)
To: [Info](#)
Subject: Public Comment -Agenda Item 3.3 Public Budget Workshop
Date: Sunday, April 26, 2020 5:16:04 PM

Dear MOFD Board,

The fire department receives \$17million in funding each year from the property taxes paid by Orinda citizens. We deserve to have the fire department use their expertise to reduce the excess fuel in and around Orinda that makes us so vulnerable to a wildfire. The MOFD budget should have an amount of its budget committed to wildfire prevention every year, whether the budget is affected by economic factors or not because making Orinda safe from fire is the fire department's job and their first priority.

Sincerely,
Rick and Beth Bilotti

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Sent from my iPad

From: [Virginia Carton](#)
To: [Info](#)
Subject: Funds for Wildfire Prevention in the Orinda and Moraga municipalities
Date: Monday, April 27, 2020 3:52:22 AM

Dear MOFD board,

I am writing to you because I am a homeowner in Orinda and deeply concerned about the dangerous tinderbox our region is. I hope that my email gets to you before you next meet...and that my concerns will be joined to the similar concerns of so many other residents in this area who might have taken a moment to express them to you all as well.

From what I understand the Fire Department receives approximately \$17 million in funding annually from Orinda property taxes alone; for this we ask that the Fire Department use their capabilities/expertise in radically reducing the undergrowth, dead wood etc which would contribute fatally to any upcoming wildfire we might have...we are NOT IMMUNE to the fates suffered by so many other Californians these last years...by not preparing diligently and intelligently and REGULARLY we are inviting a disaster of tragic dimensions....we are an extremely vulnerable community and the overgrown neglect of countless years must be seriously rectified.

It is only appropriate that the MOFD budget have a serious monetary allotment EVERY YEAR, earmarked for work on preventing wildfire ...this is a top priority! Being prepared in every way should be a crucial commitment of the MOFD. Funds must be committed to wildfire prevention cleanup...regardless of other budgetary concerns..this seems to be obvious!! MOFD exists to prevent, as well as fight fires and attend to other emergencies.

Thank you for your attention,

Virginia Stewart-Carton

From: [Kathleen Bain](#)
To: [Info](#)
Subject: Item 3.3 Public Budget Workshop
Date: Monday, April 27, 2020 10:59:59 AM

Dear MOFD Board,

We are residents of Orinda who are involved with our neighborhood Fire Wise committee. Like so many people in Orinda we are concerned about our town's vulnerability to the devastation of wild fire, we are doing our part along with the increasing numbers of neighbors all over Orinda to create fire wise readiness and we are grateful to and trust in Chief Winnacker and his excellent committed staff.

The public safety threat from wildfires has increased dramatically in recent years. We would like to see the MOFD Board elevate the priority of wild fire prevention in the budget process.

Thank you,

Kathleen Bain and Andy Norrell

From: [Ann Vivell](#)
To: [Info](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Public Comment: Item 3.3 Public Budget Workshop
Date: Monday, April 27, 2020 11:59:24 AM

Public Comment-Not on Agenda
Item 3-3 Public Budget Workshop

Dear MOFD Board,

The fire department receives \$17million in funding each year from the property taxes paid by Orinda citizens.

We deserve to have the fire department use their expertise to reduce the excess fuel in and around Orinda that makes us so vulnerable to a wildfire. The MOFD budget should have an amount of its budget committed to wildfire prevention every year, whether the budget is affected by economic factors or not because making Orinda safe from fire is the fire department's job and their first priority.

We look to you to make changes before there is a disaster in our area.

Sincerely,

Ann Vivell

From: [Michael Brown](#)
To: [Info](#)
Subject: Public Comment – Agenda Item # 3.3 Public Budget Workshop
Date: Monday, April 27, 2020 12:16:31 PM

Dear MOFD Board,

The fire department receives \$17million in funding each year from the property taxes paid by Orinda citizens. We deserve to have the fire department use their expertise to reduce the excess fuel in and around Orinda that makes us so vulnerable to a wildfire. The current expansion of fuels mitigation personnel and the tree chipper program are great initiatives, but more can be done. I strongly urge MOFD to allocate additional taxpayer funding to fuel mitigation. The ‘best’ fire is the one you don’t have to fight because it was prevented from happening before it started.

Sincerely,

Michael W Brown

From: [Joan Roebuck](#)
To: [Info](#)
Subject: Public Comment -
Date: Monday, April 27, 2020 12:17:21 PM

It should be the very most important issue on everyone's priority list.

As I walk the area around the OCC lake I see some volunteers clearing long standing brush and trees near their homes however 5/6 of the area surrounding the lake is still very very impacted by dense foliage, dead trees etc. This is true of much of Orinda STILL. It has been several months since the horrific fire season of 2019 and clearance should be achieved throughout Orinda, Moraga by the June 15 deadline given to residential property. Downtown planning can WAIT as can all other issues. The fire season and the ongoing health complications this year need to be major.

Joan Roebuck
Resident
Orinda Downs

From: [Susan Lum](#)
To: [Info](#)
Subject: Public Comment – Agenda Item 3.3
Date: Monday, April 27, 2020 12:36:41 PM

Dear MOFD Board,

The fire department receives \$17million in funding each year from the property taxes paid by Orinda citizens. We deserve to have the fire department use their expertise to reduce the excess fuel in and around Orinda that makes us so vulnerable to a wildfire. The MOFD budget should have an amount of its budget committed to wildfire prevention every year, whether the budget is affected by economic factors or not because making Orinda safe from fire is the fire department's job and their first priority.

Sincerely,
Susan Lum

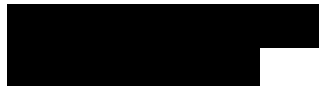
From: [Brenda Pech-Bitton](#)
To: [Info](#)
Cc: [Daniel Bitton](#)
Subject: Public Comment – Not on the Agenda
Date: Monday, April 27, 2020 1:03:27 PM

Dear MOFD Board,

The fire department receives \$17million in funding each year from the property taxes paid by Orinda citizens. We deserve to have the fire department use their expertise to reduce the excess fuel in and around Orinda that makes us so vulnerable to a wildfire. The MOFD budget should have an amount of its budget committed to wildfire prevention every year, whether the budget is affected by economic factors or not because making Orinda safe from fire is the fire department's job and their first priority.

Sincerely,

Brenda Pech-Bitton



Sent from my iPhone

From: [Joan Lucas](#)
To: [Info](#)
Subject: Public Comment – Not on the Agenda
Date: Monday, April 27, 2020 4:28:40 PM

Dear MOFD Board,

The fire department receives \$17million in funding each year from the property taxes paid by Orinda citizens. We deserve to have the fire department use their expertise to reduce the excess fuel in and around Orinda that makes us so vulnerable to a wildfire. The MOFD budget should have an amount of its budget committed to wildfire prevention every year, whether the budget is affected by economic factors or not because making Orinda safe from fire is the fire department's job and their first priority.

Sincerely,
Joan Lucas

From: [Michael Franks](#)
To: [Info](#)
Cc: [Sharon Abdilla](#)
Subject: Public Comment – Agenda Item #3.3. Public Budget Workshop
Date: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 2:03:25 PM

re: Public Budget Workshop Special Board Meeting, 4/29/20, 6PM, Agenda Item #3.3.
Public Budget Workshop

Dear MOFD Board,

We wanted to voice our support that the Fire Department Board make **the mitigation of wildfires a funding priority**, including reducing excess fire fuel.

With respect to the competing option of hiring two additional firefighters (agenda item 4.1, *Increased Suppression Staffing*, Special Board Meeting, 4/29/20), we'd like to see a detailed analysis of how each would reduce the wildfire risk to Orinda, as well as other related impacts.

Thank you.

Michael Franks
Sharon Abdilla



"The purpose of the public workshop is to obtain direction from the Board regarding how to allocate the \$3.0M of discretionary expenditures and the use of General Fund reserves in FY2021."

From: [Hatti Hamlin](#)
To: [Info](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Spend money on fuels reduction
Date: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 2:08:08 PM

Dear MOFD Board--

As an active participant in my local East Dalewood fire committee, I am seeing firsthand the importance of more hands-on help from MOFD in mitigation of Orinda's residential fire risk. We have elderly neighbors whose properties desperately need tree trimming, brush removal and so on, but they don't understand what is required-- and often aren't capable of handling the logistics. We have neighbors who don't understand whether it really is necessary to remove the prized ornamental that stands up against their chimney and/or roof, and are loathe to do anything without clear, concise guidelines. And we have large lots owned by absentee owners who won't do anything without a clear and official mandate and explanation.

In short, we need MOFD boots on the ground to help us mount an effective fuel reduction program-- an effort that will pay far greater dividends than hiring firefighters who will only be needed during the Armageddon, when it will already be too late for them to make a meaningful difference.

If you've really got money, spend it on amping the fuels reduction program, not additional firefighters, please!

Hatti L. Hamlin

Orinda, CA

From: [susan wecht](#)
To: [Info](#)
Cc: [Craig Jorgens](#)
Subject: Public Comment - Not on the Agenda
Date: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 4:53:25 PM

We are Orinda homeowners writing in regard to the MOFD Budget Workshop item 3.3

We support maintaining the status quo of 17 suppressing members with 2 vacation relief positions per shift rather than hiring additional staff.

We favor this option because we believe MOFD should be spending more money on education and wildfire prevention by fuels mitigation. Also, medical calls for service are down approximately 50% for the months of April and May. This may be a trend that continues as we follow orders to stay at home and public health officials tell us COVID19 is not going away soon.

These are uncertain times but we do know the threat of wildfire to our area is real. It seems prudent not to wait but to do the most we can to reduce this threat.

Thank you,

Sue and Ron Wecht

From: [Dan Detzner](#)
To: [Info](#)
Cc: [Melanie Light](#)
Subject: Public Comment: Budget Item 3.3 Public Budget Workshop
Date: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 8:55:07 AM

Dear MOFD Board Members:

As an active member in the Orinda Via Farallon-La Cuesta Firewise Neighborhood and a member of the steering committee for the Firewise Council, I want to add my name to those who favor fire mitigation over fire suppression.

We don't seem to need more firefighters right now but rather more community, city council, and MOFD cooperation and teamwork. We have learned the hard way through the CV-19 pandemic how important planning and preparation are to mitigate a disaster before it happens. The disaster is looming and it is up all of us, but particularly, the MOFD Board, to step up with significant budget dollars to focus on mitigation throughout the Orinda and Moraga communities.

It's a very big job and we have learned in the Firewise organizational effort that it will take a full court press to make it happen. MOFD has more dollars than any other entity in this arena and it is critical that all of you step up and focus on the mitigation efforts needed to leverage other resources to help with the mitigation.

The Firewise groups are composed of several hundred active, informed, and dedicated members who are paying close attention to these matters. We expect you to do what is right.

Dan Detzner


From: [Dennis Fay](#)
To: [Info](#)
Subject: Public Budget Workshop, 4/29/20, Public Comment - Agenda Item 3.3
Date: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 3:32:17 PM

To the MOFD Board:

This is a very difficult time for our citizens. Covid-19 is taking lives and creating economic chaos. Local government, including special districts like MOFD, will likely see sharp declines in revenue, at least in the short term and perhaps longer if the virus resurges later in the year. Carefully considered choices for the use of scarce revenues is therefore even more important now than before.

While the Covid-19 crisis is consuming our minds now, by fall we will also be confronted with the potential for wildfires. MOFD has shown great leadership by securing State funds for the north Orinda fuel break and executing the work to create the fuel break. This enviable track record needs to be continued elsewhere in the district.

I urge the Board to place a very high priority on wildfire prevention in your upcoming budget deliberations, with whatever discretionary funds you may have available. In his memo to you under Item 3.1, the Chief indicates that in the absence of budget reductions to curtail expenditures, deficits will occur in the coming year. Again, this emphasizes the importance of employing whatever funds are available for the highest priorities. I believe wildfire prevention is such a high priority that it must take precedence over other new expenditures.

Best,
Dennis Fay, Orinda

From: [Rachel Duclos](#)
To: [Info; Melanie Light and the Orinda Firewise Council](#)
Subject: Fwd: Fuel Abatement and Firewise Practices in the City of Orinda
Date: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 3:42:14 PM

Dear MOFD Board,

Ahead of tonight's two meetings (the Public Budget meeting and the Special Meeting per section 4.1), I am forwarding a letter I recently sent to the Orinda City Council.

Please enter the letter below **and** this email into the public record/minutes for **both** of tonight's meetings.

Many of us here in Orinda are deeply concerned about fire risk - specifically, fuel abatement. We feel strongly that both the City and the MOFD need to focus considerable time, effort, and money to fuel abatement beginning now, this year, Spring and Summer 2020. Time, effort, and money need to be directed to fuel abatement - without letting up - until a new safe baseline has been achieved in Orinda. Then the task becomes maintenance.

Specifically, here are a few things I want and think are essential:

Total and unwavering support of Chief Whittacker.

I have no reason to think this isn't the case already, and he's been a remarkable force for progress in town. But I am calling this out specifically so that there is no holding back on what he thinks is necessary to get us to a new safe baseline. There's no place for outdated views on what's possible. Everyone needs to be on board that we are living in a new normal that requires new thinking. We are so lucky to have Chief Whittacker.

New ways of working with the Orinda City Council

We will need interagency cooperation and coordination.

We need new rules, enforcement, support, and ideas. Piecemeal tepid efforts will get us nowhere.

Mayor Gee is proposing a joint subcommittee on fire risk between the City of Orinda and the MOFD. This is a good start. She is proposing that the joint subcommittee meet once a quarter. I would like to see the subcommittee convened this Spring 2020, and meet **monthly** through the fire season. This committee needs to think expansively, plan, move quickly and be action-oriented. Meeting monthly is the appropriate degree of urgency and accountability. I'd like to see it meet more often, to be honest. The meetings need to be open to the public.

A hiring freeze with the money allocated to fuel abatement instead

Orinda pays \$17M in taxes to the MOFD. Please do not spend \$1.4M on the hiring of new firefighters this year, or any year until we have arrived at a new baseline of fuel abatement, firewise rules, enforcement and support. Two firefighters won't make a dent in the event of a wildfire in Orinda, but spending \$1.4M on fuel abatement (along with community education, support, and enforcement efforts) is a game changer.

Thank you for taking care of our community as we adjust to our new normal.

Sincerely,

Rachel Duclos
 Bear Ridge, Sleepy Hollow
 Member, Orinda Firewise Council

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Rachel Duclos** <[REDACTED]>
 Date: Tue, Apr 21, 2020 at 1:02 PM
 Subject: Fuel Abatement and Firewise Practices in the City of Orinda
 To: <dgee@cityoforinda.org>, <imiller@cityoforinda.org>, <aworth@cityoforinda.org>, <dfay@cityoforinda.org>, <nkosla@cityoforinda.org>
 Cc: <smith@cityoforinda.org>, Melanie Light and the Orinda Firewise Council <[REDACTED]>, Rachel Duclos <[REDACTED]>

Dear Orinda City Council,

Please enter this email into the public record for Thursday's meeting.

I am writing to express several opinions about fuel abatement and firewise practices in the City of Orinda. I am also writing to express my wholehearted support of the work of the Orinda Firewise Council, chaired by Melanie Light.

Specifically, I want to see:

The City of Orinda reallocate money from the capital improvement budget to fire safety. Maintaining our streets is of course high priority, but fuel abatement in Orinda is orders of magnitude more important given the devastating new normal of wildfire risk. It is not hyperbole to say that if Orinda doesn't get on board - quickly - with adequate money and action regarding fuel abatement, lives will be lost and a large number of us will lose our homes. The City needs to get on this quickly and emphatically, and stay on it until we reach a baseline of fire safety, and then into the future for maintenance.

The City of Orinda set an example by getting all public property and easements in the City up to firewise standards, this Spring and Summer 2020. I don't understand why this hasn't happened already. I also want to see the firewise plans, efforts, and results of the City widely publicized on a weekly or monthly basis - this needs to be kept front-of-mind.

A thorough carrot and stick approach to local commercial and residential property. I want to see the City compel - with stiff fines that are collected swiftly - local property owners who refuse to comply. It is not acceptable to not participate in this community effort. Fines should be based on a thorough audit of the City by City staff - not reliant on neighbors reporting neighbors (although there needs to be an effective avenue for reporting dangerous conditions).

Potential carrots could be hiring highly competent and community minded staffers (for a year or two) who assist residents in scheduling and managing the work on their properties. I have done this on my property, and it can be overwhelming. Some of our older residents could

probably use logistical support if they haven't cleared their properties in many years, or even decades.

Other carrots could be neighborhood clearing parties planned and supported by the City, and City firewire celebrations.

Even better, why not resolve that Orinda fully embrace cutting edge knowledge, technique, and process in terms of city planning and community involvement to create a "new normal" firewire community? Why not be the stellar best practices example?

Collaborative and concrete support of MOFD

I want to see the City vocalize support for the rules that MOFD and Chief Whittaker have proposed - such as removing landscaping that is too close to our homes. In addition, I want to see the City levy fines to show support for these rules.

Equally important, aesthetics matter.

A bad outcome would be firewise fuel abatement, but a city full of hacked at trees, stumps, and logs lying everywhere. I want to see rules and guidelines supporting thorough work, stumps buried below grade, and use of certified arborists where appropriate. Let's keep Orinda beautiful.

Thank you for a careful reading, and for your leadership on fire safety.

Sincerely,

Rachel Duclos
Sleepy Hollow
Bear Ridge

From: [Tish Gleason](#)
To: [Info](#)
Subject: Meeting right now
Date: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 6:08:08 PM

Please budget for wildfire prevention.

Thanks

Sent from my iPad

From: [CHARLES PORGES](#)
To: [Info](#)
Subject: Fwd: Poll results on Fire prevention - for distribution to Councilmembers and Fire Chief.
Date: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 8:48:09 PM

Please make this part of the record for today's regular meeting.
Without in any way diminishing all the other services.

Begin forwarded message:

From: CHARLES PORGES <[REDACTED]>
Date: April 18, 2020 at 2:06:08 PM PDT
To: Sheri Smith <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Poll results on Fire prevention - for distribution to Councilmembers and Fire Chief.

Councilmembers,
From the poll results it is clear that fire prevention is the highest priority to Orinda residents.

The bulk of the vegetation that the Fire Chief would like to have removed is not on city owned land. My idea is to try to do a bulk tree removal with a tree company, or using fire department resources, paid for by the city, county, state, federal government and/or the fire department.

First, in order to clear all eucalyptus and pines. This could be phase one. The Fire Chief has singled out eucalyptus and pines. Does he have or can he obtain the locations of all of these within the city boundaries? (He has a drone.) Many of these are large and may be too expensive for the residents to remove. A letter to the property owner asking for permission (or demanding?) to remove it would not be too expensive. A contract to remove hundreds of trees will surely result in a bulk rate much cheaper than the individual residents would be charged. Possibly more so while we are in quarantine. There need not be physical contact between the residents and the tree staff.

Then deal with overly dense Oaks (or others). Possibly phase two. There are areas of "jungles" in Orinda where predominantly what I call scrub oaks have grown very densely. These can be seen on a satellite view. I suspect the Chief can identify the areas of greatest concern to him too. From a residents perspective one obstacle is the prohibition against removing larger oaks in the city regulations. I would suggest a change to the rules that allows the removal of any large oak that is within say 15 feet of another large oak. The other obstacle is cost. If the city in cooperation with the Chief were to thin out all "jungles" and the residents were informed I suspect that in most cases the residents would cooperate willingly.

On PGE land where dense vegetation still exists the Chief could work (with more intensity with citizen and council support) with PGE.

So, in summary, there really are four components: locate the hazards, engage the residents, make it free or almost free, and get it done cheaply in bulk. If it is desirable to do it before this fire season, several tree companies may be necessary. How cheaply this could be done remains to be determined.

It seems to me that MOFD has a vested interest in getting this done and should be willing to commit dollars and manpower to this effort. It is once again mostly about who pays. The residents already understand the fire hazard and want it dealt with.

These concepts could be the basis for projects that may also be funded by the county, state or federal government. Let's get them "shovel ready" to be prepared for any potential financial assistance.

God bless Fire Chief Winnacker.
Thank you,
Charles Porges