



Moraga-Orinda Fire District  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

January 15, 2025  
(APPROVED FEBRUARY 19, 2025)

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**1. OPENING CEREMONIES**

The Board of Directors convened an Open Session at 7:00 p.m. on January 15, 2025, at the Orinda Library Auditorium, 26 Orinda Way, Orinda, California 94563. This meeting was conducted in a hybrid format with in-person and remote options for public participation. Both audio and video recordings of this meeting are available at [www.mofd.org/agendas](http://www.mofd.org/agendas).

President Hasler called the meeting to order and requested an attendance roll call. Present were the following Directors and Staff (present in person unless noted with asterisks):

**Board Members:** Director Steven Danziger, Director John Jex, Director Craig Jorgens, Director Mike Roemer\*, President Greg Hasler

**Staff:** Interim Fire Chief Jeff Isaacs, Deputy Fire Chief Lucas Lambert\*, Administrative Services Director Gloriann Sasser, Finance Manager Mary Smith\*, Human Resources Manager Christine Russell, District Clerk Marcia Holbrook

**District Counsel:** Renne Public Law Group Founding Partner Jonathan Holtzman, and Of Counsel James Ross\*.

At 7:04 p.m., President Hasler paused the meeting due to technical difficulties with the Zoom audio system. At 7:22 p.m., the audio system was restored, and President Hasler reconvened the meeting.

**2. ANNOUNCEMENTS (audio 00:22:04/video 00:25:32)**

**2.1 Brief information only reports related to meetings attended by a Director at District expense (Government Code Section 53232.3(d)).** None reported.

**2.2 Questions and informational comments from Board members and Staff.** None reported.

**2.3 Communications Received.** None reported.

**2.4 Fire Chief Updates**

**a. Finance Report (audio 00:23:05/video 00:26:39)**

Finance Manager Smith reported on FY24 and FY25 strike team receivables, noting \$891 outstanding for FY24 and an estimated \$785K for FY25. These receivables do not yet account for recent strike team activities in Southern California. The Tunnel East Bay Hills Project has invoiced \$5.1M to CAL FIRE as of September 30, 2024. There are no outstanding receivables for this project. The Project has \$877K in expenses paid but not yet invoiced. Total expenses to date amount to \$6M, representing 94.8% of the Project's \$6.3M budget. Other updates included the implementation of the new MOUs, and Finance Manager Smith confirmed that W-2s and 1099s are scheduled for completion by the end of January. Lastly, the District has \$24,815,000 invested in treasury bills. The presentation is attached to these minutes (item 2.4(a)).

The Board reviewed the Tunnel East Bay Hills Project Finance Report and inquired about the overhead administrative fees and outstanding receivables. Staff confirmed that these fees were incorporated into the budget. The Board inquired about the accounting treatment of Administrative Citations. Staff clarified the citations are recorded on a cash basis and are not recorded as receivables.

**b. Human Resources (audio 00:27:00/video 00:30:44)**

HR Manager Russell provided an update on recruitment activities. A firefighter-paramedic trainee recruitment was released on January 6, 2025, and will run through February 14, 2025, to establish an eligibility list. As of this meeting, 17 applications have been received. Additionally, recruitment for a Fuels Mitigation Specialist opened on January 5, 2025, and will run through February 12, 2025, to fill one vacancy. The Fuels Mitigation Specialist

position is a limited-term, grant-funded role, with the associated grant set to expire on March 31, 2026. During the presentation, a question was raised about the possibility of filling all five firefighter-paramedic trainee vacancies. HR Manager Russell clarified that this would depend on the number of available academy slots. Additional inquiries regarding the eligibility of lateral applicants and the location of the next fire academy were also raised. HR Manager Russell confirmed that lateral applicants are eligible but noted that the fire academy details are not yet finalized. The presentation is attached to these minutes as item 6.4(b).

**c. Fire Marshal (audio 00:29:36/video 00:33:28)**

Interim Fire Chief Isaacs provided an update on December 2024 activities and the year-end report. From 2022 to 2024, there was a decline in complaints about dead trees but an increase in exterior hazard abatement cases due to targeted inspections in new areas. Inspection numbers decreased slightly from 2023 to 2024, attributed to reduced focus on evacuation routes. Chipping activities expanded significantly in 2024, with the program running for 79 days, which included contracted crews to supplement District resources. Nine E-occupancy inspections remain unresolved, with progress being made in collaboration with local school superintendents. The administrative citations for violations were reviewed, and the process of collecting unpaid fines was discussed. The Board requested a sample of the administrative citation delinquent notices and cumulative delivery and service numbers on the Home Hardening Grant program.

Director Jorgens and Interim Fire Chief Isaacs provided an update on a recent meeting with Edda Collins Coleman, President of the Orinda School Board, regarding an area outside Wagner Ranch. Director Danziger, a member of the Friends of Wagner Ranch Nature Area, requested that he be included in future discussions.

Interim Fire Chief Isaacs concluded with an overview of the inspections conducted in 2024, highlighting targeted areas based on fire pathways, juniper inspections, and large parcel compliance with fuel break requirements. Questions were raised regarding the adequacy of staffing for inspections and follow-up activities, the feasibility of using alternative vehicles to reduce costs, and the condition of the current fleet. The presentation is attached to these minutes as item 6.4(c).

**d. Tunnel East Bay Hills Fuel Break Project (audio 00:45:51/video 00:49:41)**

Interim Fire Chief Isaacs provided an update, noting that the project is near completion with approximately 200 piles remaining to be burned. Staff are completing the fourth quarter billing cycle and conducting GIS mapping. Preliminary estimates suggest the Project may exceed the original treatment goal by 100 to 200 acres. The environmental consultant will conduct post-treatment surveys to ensure compliance.

**e. Home Hardening Grant Program (audio 00:47:21/video 00:50:36)**

Since the beginning of FY25, 254 residents have applied for the grant, and 212 orders have been shipped to homeowners with total expenditures \$212,738. Questions were raised regarding the use of vent mesh screens and the preference for custom-sized rolls versus small circular pieces. Staff reported increased demand for circular vent pieces and large mesh sheets, particularly for areas such as decks and void spaces.

The Board requested a future agenda item to include additional statistics on the Home Hardening Program usage since its inception. The Board also suggested increasing program visibility by utilizing sandwich boards with promotional messages at key locations to raise awareness within neighborhoods.

**f. Operations (audio 00:50:40/video 00:54:22)**

Deputy Fire Chief Lambert provided the update. On December 23, 2024, MOFD responded to multiple incidents, including vehicle accidents on Highway 24, a head-on collision on Moraga Way, and a vehicle fire encountered by Medic 45 on the Alameda County side of the Caldecott Tunnel. Crews responded to a second-alarm residential structure fire in the

Las Palomas neighborhood of Orinda. No injuries were reported, and the fire remains under investigation. Deputy Chief Lambert reported that MOFD crews are currently deployed to Southern California. The update concluded with Deputy Chief Lambert acknowledging the transition to Interim Fire Chief Jeff Isaacs. No questions were raised. The presentation is attached to these minutes (item 6.4(f)).

**Fire Chief Update (audio 00:57:39/video 01:01:22)**

Interim Fire Chief Isaacs provided an overview of his priorities and projects for 2025. Key initiatives include aligning staff expectations through meetings with Deputy Chief Lambert, Battalion Chiefs, and Shift Captains, completing the Station 45 remodel with input from the Ad Hoc Committee and Architect, and advancing the implementation of single-role positions. Interim Fire Chief Isaacs highlighted upcoming tasks, such as addressing Zone Zero discussions, finalizing the Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps, and updating the fire code in collaboration with local councils. He noted that potential updates to the WUI code and fuel break completion remain critical priorities, alongside exploring new grant opportunities.

Interim Fire Chief Isaacs emphasized the need to address capacity challenges in the administration building and plans for a website overhaul to improve public education and information dissemination. A consultant has been engaged to review the website and suggest improvements, including optimizing social media outreach. Public education, personnel training, and streamlining the fire prevention inspection process are also key priorities. Updates to the permitting software and addressing loopholes in the modification process are underway to enhance operational efficiency. The presentation is attached to these minutes (item 6.4).

The Board recommended exploring renting local office space for administrative functions instead of rebuilding Station 41.

**g. Upcoming Calendar and Events - (next 30 days)**

District Clerk Holbrook provided an overview of the upcoming calendar and events, including fire station visits and school education sessions at Glorietta and Del Rey Elementary Schools.

No public comments were received for the announcements.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT – ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA (audio 1:06:50/video 01:10:12)**

District Clerk Holbrook reported that four written public comments were received from Ashley Coates, Anna Rief, Ari Rief, and Nick Waranoff. These comments were forwarded to the directors and posted on the District's website under the public comment section at [www.mofd.org/agendas](http://www.mofd.org/agendas). Copies of the comments are also attached to these minutes. No other public comments were received.

**4. CONSENT AGENDA (audio 1:07:58/video 01:11:34)**

- 4.1 Meeting Minutes - December 18, 2024 (special)
- 4.2 Meeting Minutes - December 18, 2024 (regular)
- 4.3 Monthly Incident Report - December 2024
- 4.4 Monthly Check/Voucher Register - December 2024
- 4.5 2025 Listing of Board Assignments
- 4.6 Authorize Membership in Public Risk Innovation, Solutions, and Management Joint Powers Authority for Dental Insurance; Approve Resolution 25-01 Authorizing the Fire Chief to Execute a Joint Powers Agreement Establishing Insurance Programs and a Memorandum of Understanding for a Dental Insurance Program and Delegating Certain Authority to Administrative Services Director or Human Resources Manager to Act on Behalf of the District in Connection with Such Programs.

No public comments were received for items on the Consent Calendar.

**Director Jorgens requested to pull item 4.6 from the consent agenda.** The Board approved the remaining consent agenda items

**Motion by Director Jorgens and seconded by Director Danziger to approve Consent Agenda items 4.1-4.5. The motion carried a 5-0 roll call vote (Ayes: Danziger, Jex, Jorgens, Roemer, and Hasler; Noes: None; Absent: None; Abstain: None).**

**4.6 Authorize Membership in Public Risk Innovation, Solutions, and Management Joint Powers Authority for Dental Insurance; Approve Resolution 25-01 Authorizing the Fire Chief to Execute a Joint Powers Agreement Establishing Insurance Programs and a Memorandum of Understanding for a Dental Insurance Program and Delegating Certain Authority to Administrative Services Director or Human Resources Manager to Act on Behalf of the District in Connection with Such Programs. audio 1:08:28:/video 01:12:15)**

The Board discussed dental insurance options. Questions were raised about exploring additional alternatives before providing authorization. ASD Sasser provided a detailed overview of the evaluation process, which included reviewing multiple dental plan options through a licensed broker, comparing costs and benefits across providers, and consulting with Local 1230 representatives. The proposed Delta Dental plan was identified as the preferred option by Local 1230, offering enhanced benefits at a 5.7% lower cost than the District's current individual contract. Other less expensive plans, such as Ameritas, were reviewed but not selected due to preferences expressed by Local 1230. It was clarified that the District's cost for dental insurance is capped under the MOU with Local 1230, with employees covering any additional cost for their preferred plan. After discussion, a motion to approve the proposed Delta Dental plan was made and seconded. No objections were raised, and the motion was approved.

**Motion by Director Danziger and seconded by Director Jorgens to approve Consent Agenda item 4.6. The motion carried a 5-0 roll call vote (Ayes: Danziger, Jex, Jorgens, Roemer, and Hasler; Noes: None; Absent: None; Abstain: None).**

**5. REGULAR AGENDA**

**5.1 Fire Prevention and Emergency Medical Services User Fee Study; Proposed Fire Prevention and Emergency Medical Services User Fees; Proposed Fire Prevention Cost Recovery Policy (audio 01:16:11/video 01:19:53)**

Administrative Services Director Sasser reported that a fee study was conducted by Matrix Consulting Group to review and update the District fee schedule. Courtney Ramos, Senior Vice President of Matrix Consulting Group, presented an overview of the study, highlighting the objectives, methodology, and findings. Key findings revealed a 72% cost recovery rate for fire prevention services, resulting in a \$78,000 subsidy, and a 34% cost recovery rate for EMS services, primarily limited by capped reimbursements such as Medicare and Medicaid, which created a \$4 million subsidy. The presentation is attached to these minutes (item 5.1).

The Board engaged in a detailed discussion, raising questions about fee allocation, cost recovery strategies, and the treatment of specific fees for schools, fireworks permit, and property transfer inspections. On school fees, the Board debated whether public schools should be exempt, considering the circular nature of taxpayer funding. The Board agreed to maintain the fees and discussed allowing fee waiver requests for specific circumstances. Regarding inspections for Fourth of July fireworks, the Board supported continuing to charge the Town of Moraga inspection fees to cover costs associated with mandatory safety checks. For property transfers, staff proposed revising the inspection process to include in-person visits for documenting violations, with a single fee covering both the initial and follow-up inspections. The Board supported implementing a tiered fee structure, charging additional fees for each subsequent inspection if compliance is not achieved during the initial visit.

The Board reached a consensus to implement the updated fees at full cost recovery across all services. The Board recommended annual fee adjustments be tied to salary increases instead of the Consumer Price Index to better reflect actual costs. A suggestion was made to rename the fire prevention fee schedule to fire code enforcement.

ASD Sasser then presented a draft Cost Recovery Policy outlined in the consultant's report. Director Jorgens stated that he had submitted several edits directly to Interim Fire Chief Isaacs. The Board agreed to review additional edits individually and provide feedback to Staff. Staff was directed by the Board to prepare a revised fee schedule reflecting 100% cost recovery and to return it for public review and board consideration. Additionally, the Cost Recovery Policy will be revised based on board feedback, with the policy requiring only one review for adoption. The fee schedule will undergo two readings, with the first scheduled for the February 2025 meeting.

No public comments were received on item 5.1.

**5.2 Discuss Options for the Community Wildfire Risk Reduction Zone Zero Measures (audio 2:01:34/video 02:05:24)**

Interim Fire Chief Isaacs reported on Zone Zero implementation and sought direction on how to proceed, emphasizing that no ordinance was being presented at the meeting. The staff report outlined several options as a starting point for discussion.

The Board discussed the complexity of Zone Zero requirements and emphasized the need for extensive public education and public workshops before taking further action. Suggestions included focusing initial efforts on new construction, and delaying broader implementation until the public is better informed of the changes in requirements. Additional discussion included linking Zone Zero compliance with Home Hardening measures and giving property owners the choice to either comply with Zone Zero requirements or undertake specified Home Hardening upgrades. The discussion concluded with talking about conducting educational outreach in the coming weeks, maybe before the next board meeting, to discuss lessons learned from recent fires in Southern California, particularly regarding ember cast and its role in structure loss and integrating these findings into the public education campaign.

Interim Fire Chief Isaacs proposed that he return with a draft ordinance addressing requirements for new construction and property transfers. The proposed ordinance would also include an exemption from the five-foot requirements for property owners who choose to meet specific home-hardening criteria. It was noted that these measures, while enhancing safety, would not meet insurance company requirements.

Public comment was received from Chase Sun, Orinda resident (audio 02:20:55/video 02:24:37). Second Public comment was received from Chase Sun, Orinda resident (audio 02:31:32 /video 02:35:28).

District Clerk Holbrook acknowledged two written public comments received from Janet Dobbs and Jim Ross, and the 98 responses submitted through the MOFD Community Engagement Form. The 98 comments submitted via the online form were included in the meeting packet. Copies of Janet Dobbs and Jim Ross comments are attached to these minutes. All public comments are also available on the District's website under the public comment section at: [www.mofd.org/agendas](http://www.mofd.org/agendas).

Interim Fire Chief Isaacs acknowledged direction from the Board to proceed with drafting an ordinance for further discussion and refinement. The draft ordinance will outline home-hardening requirements, including roofs, vents, gutter guards, and restrictions on wood-shake shingles. The draft ordinance will include mandatory enforcement of a five-foot non-combustible zone for new construction and potentially for property transfers, with provisions for a variance if specific home-hardening criteria are met. Additional instruction included more public education, including community meetings to ensure residents are informed and engaged in the process.

The Board suggested coordinating with the Town of Moraga who is planning to hold meetings in February 2025 and potentially hosting a community workshop sponsored by the District. This workshop would aim to provide concrete information, including a draft ordinance, and prioritize actionable steps for home hardening. The board also emphasized the need for guidance on prioritizing home-hardening measures to effectively mitigate fire risks, and requested staff to identify the most impactful actions that homeowners can take, ranging from basic interventions to more extensive measures to fully hardened structures. The board concluded by highlighting the importance of providing practical recommendations, supported by incentives and subsidies, such as free resources, to encourage community participation, and requested staff to provide structured guidance on prioritizing these measures to establish a practical and effective framework.

At 9:14 p.m., District Counsel Holtzman departed the meeting.

**5.3 Direct the Fire Chief to Issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Investment Advisory Services for Internal Revenue Code Section 115 Trust Plans in substantially the same format as the draft RFP attached with this agenda item or as may be otherwise modified by the Board (audio 02:40:37/[video 02:43:59](#))**

District Counsel Ross addressed the Board, providing an update on efforts to explore opportunities for increasing or maximizing returns on the District's Section 115 Trust Plans. He explained that the initial proposal involved issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit interest and ideas from potential advisors. However, subsequent discussions have introduced potential alternative approaches for the board to consider since an RFP is not required. The Board discussed different approaches for identifying potential investment advisors and recommended conducting informal inquiries with US Bank to identify other advisors and focusing on firms with experience managing trust funds and offering competitive fees. The Board agreed, with no objections to exploring firms recommended by US Bank, emphasizing the importance of advisors willing to align with the District's investment policy while ensuring compliance with the prudent investor standard. The Board instructed Staff, in collaboration with District Counsel to conduct exploratory calls and report back with findings and recommendations for further action.

No public comments were received on item 5.3.

**6. COMMITTEE REPORTS (audio 02:53:33/[video 02:57:16](#))**

**6.1 Standing Audit Committee** (Directors Jex and Hasler). -No update

**6.2 Ad Hoc Committee Joint Fire Prevention w/City of Orinda** (Directors Danziger and Jorgens) -No update

**6.3 Ad Hoc Committee Station 45 Facilities Project** (Directors Danziger and Jorgens).

Directors Jorgens and Director Danziger provided the report. A site visit to Station 45 included a walkthrough of the building and discussions with architect Alan Kawasaki. Mr. Kawasaki provided insights into legal requirements and is conducting measurements and preparing as-built plans to develop the project budget. A key consideration discussed was facilitating the implementation of single-role paramedics. Mr. Kawasaki advised against occupying the building during reconstruction, recommending temporary housing units for personnel to expedite the process and avoid delays. He emphasized prioritizing Station 41's replacement over Station 45 due to cost considerations and suggested renting a space nearby for the Administrative Office to reduce expenses.

No public comments were received for committee reports.

**7. REQUESTS FOR ITEMS ON FUTURE AGENDAS (audio 02:57:48/[video 03:01:27](#))**

Director Jorgens requested that the Standards of Cover be added as an agenda item for discussion in an upcoming meeting within the next couple of months. He also acknowledged an inquiry from Jonathan Goodwin, a Canyon resident, to the Interim Fire Chief regarding this matter.

No public comments were received for future agenda items.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

**At 9.59 p.m., Motion by Director Danziger and seconded by Director Roemer to adjourn the meeting in honor of the 39th President of the United States, Jimmy Carter, in recognition of his recent passing. The motion was amended to include a special tribute to the 24 individuals who tragically lost their lives in the recent Los Angeles fires and to acknowledge Martin Luther King Jr. Day as part of the commemoration. The motion carried a 5-0 roll call vote (Ayes: Danziger, Jex, Jorgens, Roemer, and Hasler; Noes: None; Absent: None; Abstain: None).**

/s/ Marcia Holbrook  
District Secretary/District Clerk

# Public Comments

**From:** [Nick Waranoff](#)  
**To:** [Info](#)  
**Subject:** public comment for Board meeting January 15, 2025  
**Date:** Friday, January 10, 2025 4:46:20 PM

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To the Board and Fire Chief: Please investigate and report on what lessons we can learn, in terms of matters within your jurisdiction, from the wildfire tragedies in Los Angeles. Several issues have been in the news, such as (1) lack of diesel backup power for water pumping when electricity was turned off due to fires; (2) loss of water pressure – causes and solutions including fire hydrant capacity. Here is an article from 1998 (a long time ago) regarding hydrants in Orinda. <https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Orinda-s-Problem-With-Fire-Hydrants-3010890.php> I assume that there have been upgrades and I am not sure if the color codes reflect today's capacities. These come to mind off the top of my head. Thank you in advance.

I and others are separately pursuing emergency evacuation issues with the Orinda City Council because evacuation is, as I understand it, within the City's jurisdiction. Hopefully, the Moraga Town Council will be doing likewise.

Many of us were dismayed to learn that although Orinda's new mayor, Latika Malkani, in 2021 identified "fire preparation and emergency preparedness as priority goals." <https://theorindanews.com/2021/10/19/the-orinda-association-meet-its-officers-and-board-members/> she did not include those in her priorities in her interview with The Orinda News January 2025 edition.

In Nov. 2022, after identifying those priorities, she was elected, and took her seat on the council in Dec. 2022.

In Sept 2022, the draft Environmental Impact Report came out, and identified the "significant" impact that adding housing downtown would have on emergency evacuation. That fall, the draft Safety Element was also issued. These are available on [www.PlanOrinda.com](http://www.PlanOrinda.com)

Members of the public, myself included, submitted written comments and objections, but the Council, including Ms. Malkani, rejected all of our comments and objections, and approved a Final EIR and Safety Element on January 31, 2023 – two years ago.

A lawsuit was subsequently filed. The City lost. The Court ordered the City to reconsider the approvals and mitigations. As I explain in my comments on the

Draft Partially Revised Environmental Analysis, the City's proposed mitigations, which have not changed in any meaningful way since the prior versions, are legally inadequate, because they defer action without any performance metric. See [/https://legistarweb-production.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/attachment/pdf/3035140/2024.12.10\\_Nick\\_Waranoff.pdf](https://legistarweb-production.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/attachment/pdf/3035140/2024.12.10_Nick_Waranoff.pdf)

If you look at pp. 26-29 of my comment/objection, you will see that the city has FOR YEARS proposed to study, consider, and explore numerous mitigations. Literally kicking the can down the road. Those pages include quotations and citations. What has been accomplished by the City of Orinda in the past two years regarding mitigation? No progress is apparent.

We will continue to press the Orinda City Council to TAKE ACTION to address these issues in a meaningful way. While we do so, please investigate the issues within the purview of your agency, and develop an action plan to address any problems.

Nick Waranoff  
Orinda

**VIA EMAIL**

January 11, 2025

Moraga Town Council (townclerk@moraga.ca.us); cc: info@mofd.org  
335 Rheem Boulevard, Moraga, CA 94556

**RE: 1600 School Street Building Project**

To the Members of the Moraga Town Council,

I am a Moraga resident, parent to two kids at Camino Pablo, and a local attorney with a law office on Moraga Way. I care deeply about this community and write to express concern about the 1600 School Street building project.

Moraga is already vulnerable due to inadequate infrastructure and emergency preparedness. In an evacuation, residents are limited to accessing Highway 24 via Orinda or Lafayette, creating a bottleneck that could turn catastrophic. Adding over 2,000 vehicles will only intensify these risks, particularly during emergencies. Recent wildfire tragedies, where gridlock forced residents to abandon vehicles, underscore the dangers. Our roads, already congested during routine maintenance or school hours, cannot support such a significant increase in traffic.

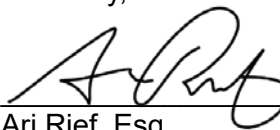
The town is also unprepared for the strain on emergency services. Only five fire stations serve Moraga and Orinda, spread too thinly to respond effectively in a large-scale emergency. With these conditions, further development without proper planning is reckless.

Although the state has mandated Moraga to build affordable housing, the current project falls short, with only 10% of units classified as affordable. Before moving forward, traffic and evacuation studies must be completed, safety impacts fully assessed, and development plans revised to prioritize affordable housing. Rushing this process endangers lives and compromises the quality of life for everyone in the community.

LA's current fires, and the predictable devastation wildfires bring each year statewide, expose a glaring truth: mismanagement and a failure to soundly prioritize public safety. The government's foremost duty is to protect its citizens and take proper precautions. How can we justify building our lives in a community only to watch it plausibly burn to the ground? Expansion and growth are inevitable, but they must be done responsibly—without endangering the people and places we hold so dear.

Thank you for considering these concerns and working to protect Moraga's residents.

Sincerely,



Ari Rief, Esq.

**From:** [Ashley Coates](#)  
**To:** [Info](#); [Ashley Coates](#)  
**Subject:** Citizens want more knowledge of evacuation process  
**Date:** Saturday, January 11, 2025 3:14:11 PM

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Hello,

Perhaps several of your personnel have been sent to battle the SoCal wildfires. Thank you for what you are doing in MOFD and larger California to keep us as safe as possible. I have just signed up for all your communications.

I know that many people are opposing the proposed 1600 School Street apartments project in Moraga because they worry that it will strain evacuations, putting lives at risk. This opposition started before the SoCal fires!

I ask you to "step up" communication within Moraga and Orinda about how wildfire evacuations will work, and to schedule another "drill". I have heard that we might be able to have two lanes of outbound traffic, which would be an improvement over one lane. But I think that is not common knowledge. I urge having a test of two outbound lanes for any future drills.

Sincerely,

Ashley Coates



**From:** [Anna F. Rief](mailto:anna.f.rief@moraga.ca.us)  
**To:** [ahevener@moraga.ca.us](mailto:ahevener@moraga.ca.us)  
**Cc:** [Info](#)  
**Subject:** Deep Concern about 1600 School St Building Project  
**Date:** Monday, January 13, 2025 11:33:01 AM

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To the members of the Moraga Town Council,

As a Moraga resident, physician, and parent, I write to you with deep concern about the 1600 School Street building project. Moraga residents already face significant challenges with our existing infrastructure. In the case of an emergency evacuation, we are limited to traveling through Orinda or Lafayette to access Highway 24 that would inevitably create a catastrophic bottleneck. Adding a potential 2,236 additional vehicles to our roads would certainly exacerbate these challenges, especially during a panic-stricken evacuation.

Recent tragedies caused by wildfires, most recently in Pacific Palisades and Pasadena where residents were forced to abandon their vehicles due to gridlock, should serve as a stark warning. Our town is ill-prepared to handle a similar situation. Current road conditions demonstrate this lack of capacity:

1. Infrastructure Strain: Routine lane closures for maintenance by PG&E or EBMUD, tree abatement, or minor traffic incidents already result in significant delays on Moraga Road and Moraga Way. Commute hours are increasingly congested, with a simple 3-5 mile trip to Highway 24 often taking up to an hour during adverse weather conditions.
2. Safety Concerns: With a middle school, two elementary schools, and a high school, our roads are already overwhelmed during school hours. Adding thousands of additional residents will only worsen the situation.
3. Emergency Response Limitations: There are only five fire stations servicing Moraga and Orinda, and they are geographically spread out. In the event of a wildfire or large-scale emergency, how can fire engines and first responders reach our community effectively?

While I understand that Moraga has been ordered by the state to build 1118 affordable housing units, the proposed developments fail to address this adequately, as only 10% of the new units are designated as affordable. In order to keep Moraga livable, we need to take the time to:

1. Study the impact of such an addition on Moraga's safety
2. Push back on this reckless requirement at the state level if, as I expect, we find that even today's population can't successfully evacuate
3. Work on development plans that address the affordable housing issue in a more targeted way.

Please help us ensure that traffic / evacuation studies are completed and considered ahead of major development, and also that developers take the time to meet the CEQA design requirements and focus on affordable housing first.

Respectfully,  
Anna Rief, M.D.  
■ Wandel Drive, Moraga

**From:** [JANET DOBBS](#)  
**To:** [Info](#)  
**Subject:** Zone Zero  
**Date:** Monday, January 13, 2025 1:17:46 PM

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Hello,

While I do appreciate the efforts to keep our homes and community fire-safe, I want to comment on one aspect of the proposed Zone Zero ordinance, that of fences. To have to remove wood fences from their attachment to our homes would be a financial hardship for many people. I am in favor of eliminating this portion of the proposed ordinance.

Thank you,  
Janet Dobbs

**From:** [Jim Ross](#)  
**To:** [Info](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 5.2 - Zone Zero comments for January 15 MOFD meeting  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 10:30:09 AM

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To: Board Members of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District

Thank You for allowing me this forum to present my personal ideas on the agenda item 5.2 pertaining to Zone Zero. I hope to be able to attend the meeting on January 15 via zoom, but wanted to be on record should that not happen.

From my past comments you are aware that I am not a supporter of Zone Zero in so far as a mandated and immediate district wide ordinance (Option 1 on the "Options to Consider" in your agenda). I have discussed my reasoning on that in prior correspondence and at the last board meeting.

Right now we are all obviously very aware of the fires in Southern California. My heart goes out to all affected. Not just for the past week, but for the tough times ahead for all of them and they will be in my thoughts, prayers and donations. I do not feel that a Zone Zero implementation would have done much, if any, good in the Los Angeles area given the nature of the wildfires and the environmental factors they were dealing with. No need to go into more details on that out of respect for those who are being impacted.

As far as Orinda/Moraga goes, just a few thoughts:

1. Your board and the Orinda City council has discussed a few times now the need for community outreach on Zone Zero. While Zone Zero has indeed generated interest, I do not believe that either board is hearing from enough residents on this. Would you at all consider a "town hall" type of meeting at the local schools? Orinda Intermediate, Joaquin Moraga, Miramonte and Campolindo? Getting those meetings publicized to the students and their parents (handouts, school websites and social media) would enable you to perhaps receive more a of representative amount of feedback on this important matter. However, the responses you are getting, and the feedback that I am hearing around town overwhelmingly indicate the opposition to Zone Zero (Option 1).
2. I do think the city and MOFD have done a reasonable job recently to begin efforts at reducing fuel sources around the cities. Resources need to be increased in that area and making that close to a first line of defense, rather than trying to put the individual home owners at the top of the wildfire defense list. Also, drive around Orinda and Moraga. It is very easy to identify a home where wildfire mitigation needs to be addressed just by looking at the amount of dead trees, bushes, etc on the property. There are some in my neighborhood. Citing these residences and requiring clean up would help immensely.
3. Along those lines, I do believe the sources of ignition on these wildfires needs to be investigated. There are reports that at least one of the Los Angeles fires could have been started with ties to a utility. There are exposed wires all over our area with many running within trees. This needs to be looked at an addressed more aggressively.

Some general thoughts on Zone Zero:

1. In the former chiefs presentation and in public comments about Zone Zero, he continuously referenced a small town in South America and purported that it is an example of Zone Zero working. That small town is in Chile and is Villa Botania. Here is what happened there:

Before the flames crept close, the community cut back vegetation, pruned foliage and cleared trash surrounding the hilltop homes. **They also brought in water to keep soil wet, and a wall and trench around the area kept the blaze from coming closer.**

I doubt we are building any walls around or bringing truckloads of water to our area any time soon.

2. Unfortunately I do believe the very unfortunate situation in Los Angeles will lead to more insurance owes for our state and our area. Insurance companies are not coming back because we mandate Zone Zero. I am hopeful that the ongoing discussions between the California Insurance

Commission and the Insurance carriers, that deal with rate reviews and increases as well as catastrophic modeling for mandatory coverage offerings, will indeed bring carriers back to our area and promote competition.

In conclusion, while I do not believe Zone Zero is a solution for Orinda and Moraga and will not offer protection from a fire storm or bring carriers back, if the discussion to be had is keeping small house fires from igniting a neighbors home, that could be had. In those cases I do believe we are talking about individual homeowners making personal choices to mitigate exposure at their residences. Not a wide reaching, broad brush approach as is being proposed now. Of the 4 Options you are listing on your agenda for Zone Zero, I support Option 4 but with the caveat that we continue to do work around the city to reduce fuel sources and to educate residents about simple fire source clean up measures around their residences. If Option 4 at some point is not an option, I could support Options 2 or 3 but would have to know more about the specifics on each.

Regards.

Jim Ross

Orinda



**Moraga-Orinda Fire District**  
Board of Directors


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*Fire Chief Update*

**GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR 2025**

<p>Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Station 45 Remodel</li> <li>— Single Role Implementation</li> <li>— Zone Zero</li> <li>— Fire Hazard Severity Zone Update</li> <li>— Fire Code Update</li> <li>— Fuel Break Completion</li> <li>— Standards of Cover</li> <li>— Fuel Reduction Burn projects</li> <li>— Admin Building/Station 41 rebuild</li> <li>— Web Site Update</li> </ul>	<p>Priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Public Education</li> <li>— Training and Education for All Personnel</li> <li>— Review of Fire Prevention Inspection Process</li> <li>— Update Modification Process</li> <li>— IT/Forms Update</li> </ul>
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**Moraga-Orinda Fire District**  
Board of Directors

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**Finance Report**  
**January 15, 2025**

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Strike Team Reimbursement - OES

- Strike Team Receivable Update:

	Actual	Estimated
	<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>2024-2025</u>
OES Strike Team Receivable	\$753,694	\$1,278,372
OES Payments Received	\$752,803	\$ 492,912
<b>Net Receivable Outstanding</b>	<b>\$ 891</b>	<b>\$ 785,460</b>

- FY24 – 1 invoice outstanding
- FY25 represents estimated Strike team activity to date

3

Tunnel East Bay Hills - Financial Update

- Tunnel East Bay Hills Financial Update:

<b>Project Budget</b>	<b>\$6,380,563</b>
Invoiced to Cal Fire through 9/30/24	\$5,172,460
Payments Received from Cal Fire	<u>\$5,172,460</u>
<b>Outstanding Receivable</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>
<b>Expenses Paid but Not yet Invoiced</b>	<b>\$ 877,093</b>
<b>Total Expenses Outstanding</b>	<b>\$ 877,093</b>

- 4Q24 Invoice will be submitted to Cal Fire by 1/31/25
- Total Expenses to date are \$6,049,553 which is 94.8% of Total Budget

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Treasury Bill Update:


- The District now has \$24,815,000 invested in Treasury Bills
- Treasury bill maturity:
  - \$2,200,000 matures 1/23/25 @ 5.031%
  - \$3,815,000 matures 2/27/25 @ 4.4442%
  - \$3,050,000 matures 4/1/25 @ 4.282%
  - \$3,050,000 matures 5/1/25 @ 4.266%
  - \$3,100,000 matures 5/29/25 @ 4.267%
  - \$9,600,000 matures 7/10/25 @ 4.198%
- Staff will project cash flows to determine amount of reinvestment available when treasury bills mature

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Other Items

- New MOU medical/dental/HSA benefit changes implemented on January 10, 2025 payroll
- New MOU salary changes will be implemented on February 10, 2025 payroll
- W-2's and 1099's will be completed in January

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**Moraga-Orinda Fire District**  
**Board of Directors**

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*Human Resources Update – January 15, 2025*

**RECRUITMENT UPDATE**

- Fire Marshal
- Firefighter/Paramedic
- Fuels Mitigation Specialist

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*Operations Update*

# MOFD Board Update January 15, 2025



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**PRESS RELEASE**  
**Moraga-Orinda Fire District**

Moraga-Orinda Fire District  
1285 Moraga Way  
Moraga, CA 94556  
Contact: 925-938-7000  
Release Date: December 23, 2024

**Moraga-Orinda Fire District Responds to Structure Fire in Orinda**

Orinda, CA – December 23, 2024 – An approximately 10'x10' fire on Monday, December 23, units from the Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD), Contra Costa Fire District, responded to a reported structure fire at 16 Lake Parkview in Orinda. Initial reports indicated there were two occupants possibly trapped inside the structure. Upon arrival, the fire engine began a rescue and rescue operation. Due to the fire conditions, administered by the MOFD, crews were forced to exit and fight the fire from the exterior. The fire was contained and extinguished at approximately 11:12 AM. MOFD crews will remain at the scene for several hours, searching for any additional hot spots. Units from Contra Costa County Fire, PUCB, and the Orinda Police Department assisted MOFD.

No injuries were reported at the time of the incident. The cause of the fire is under investigation.



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**Assigned MOFD Resources**

- Deputy Chief Lambert- Safety
- Battalion Chief Bensley – Strike Team Leader
- Captain Lacy- Safety
- Engineer Rogness- Graphic Information Specialist
- Firefighter/ Paramedic- David- Fireline Paramedic
- Engine 42- Captain Grgurevic

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**Moraga-Orinda Fire District**  
Welcomes Jeff Isaacs as New Fire Chief

Moraga-Orinda Fire District  
2100 Moraga Way  
Moraga, CA 94556  
Contact: info@MOFD.org  
Release Date: December 31, 2024

**Moraga, CA** - The Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) is proud to announce the appointment of Jeff Isaacs as Interim Fire Chief, effective December 31, 2024. With more than three decades of dedicated service in the safety and emergency management, Fire Chief Isaacs' extensive experience and leadership will guide the District into a new era of excellence and community protection.

Fire Chief Isaacs began his distinguished career in 1991 as a volunteer firefighter with the Moraga County Fire Department. He joined CAL FIRE in 1995 as a seasonal firefighter where he excelled in various roles, including Firefighter/Paramedic, Engineer/Paramedic, Fire Captain, Battalion Chief, and Assistant Chief.

Fire Chief Isaacs' outstanding performance and commitment to advancing public safety led him to become an Assistant Chief with CAL FIRE and was instrumental in establishing CAL FIRE's Land Use Planning Program. In his capacity, he was pivotal in creating CAL FIRE's Land Use Planning Program and managed significant projects in the Southern Region Office.

In September 2019, Fire Chief Isaacs joined MOFD as the Fuel Mitigation Manager, bringing his strategic insights and field expertise to the forefront of fuel prevention. His promotion to Fire Marshal in January 2022 underscored his leadership in supervising fire inspections, reviewing construction plans, enforcing fire codes, and leading public education efforts.

Beyond his professional achievements, Fire Chief Isaacs holds an Associate of Science degree in Fire Science and a Bachelor of Science in Government. He holds numerous State Fire Marshal certifications as well as many fireline qualifications. A proud veteran, Fire Chief Isaacs served in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve and Navy Reserve for 14 years, embodying the dedication and resilience that define his approach to public service.

Fire Chief Isaacs succeeds outgoing Fire Chief Dave Wismacker, who served the Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) with distinction since December 2017.

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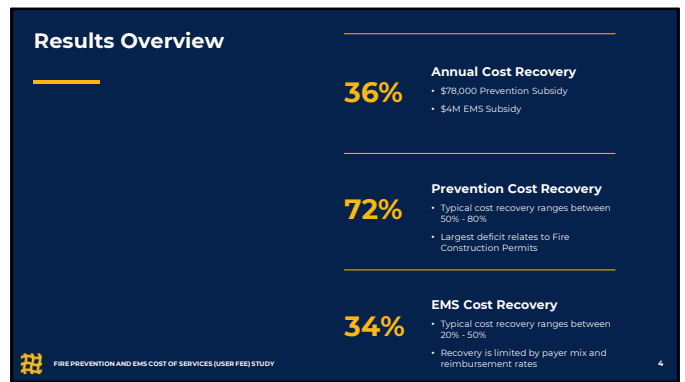
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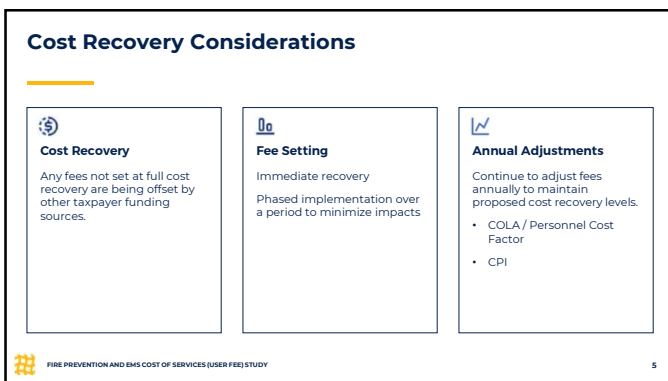
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