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Andersen Takes Over as Chair of Board of Supervisors

By Nick Marnell



Candace Andersen is sworn in as the 2016 Board Chair by presiding Contra Costa County superior court judge Steve Austin on Jan. 5. photo provided

within the county's \$3 billion budget.

"How many public agencies can say they've positively impacted hundreds of thousands of lives while exercising the highest level of fiscal management?" said Gioia.

"Residents don't understand how county government serves them in so many ways," added Supervisor Karen Mitchoff.

Andersen often voted as the lone wolf, not only against county measures such as a health care program for adults not covered by the Affordable Care Act, but even against her own pay raise. "We've had the opportunity to agree to disagree on tough issues, but we've always found our way back to the family, to get back to doing the work of the people," said Supervisor Federal Glover, who returned to the chambers after an eight-month medical absence.

New vice chair Mary Piepho expressed tearful gratitude to her family, friends, staff and constituents as she begins her final year as District 3 Supervisor. She announced in December that she will not seek reelection after three terms in office.

Andersen, who vowed to continue to steer the county on its path of fiscal sustainability, later offered high praise to Lamorinda. "The Town of Moraga and the cities of Lafayette and Orinda are unique and special communities," she said. "I look forward to another year of us working together to help them accomplish their goals and to preserve the outstanding quality of life Lamorinda residents enjoy."

The embattled Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, criticized throughout 2015 by groups ranging from labor unions to public officials, elected District 2 Supervisor Candace Andersen as Chair at its Jan. 5 meeting. Andersen, whose district includes Lamorinda, replaces outgoing Chair John Gioia.

Supervisors delivered a pointed, if somewhat defensive, message to those who disapproved of the board's actions, including union leaders who lambasted the supervisors over their ill-fated pay raise, and directors of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District, who called the county leadership "unreliable" and "ineffectual" over its vacillation of support for proposed fire station 46.

"Critics often say that government can't play a role in improving lives. Some say it even gets in the way," said Gioia. He highlighted the passage of Laura's Law, the ambulance contract awarded to the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District and the enrollment of 200,000 residents into the county health insurance plan, all accomplished by staying

Reach the reporter at: nick@lamorindaweekly.com

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