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New, returning supes on the job



Judge Suzanne Kingsbury, left, swears in District 1 El Dorado County Supervisor John Hidahl. Village Life photo by Jackie Penn

El Dorado County's Board of Supervisors welcomed new colleague John Hidahl as its first order of business last Tuesday.

Presiding El Dorado County Superior Court Judge Suzanne Kingsbury performed swearing-in duties for the new District 1 supervisor and then administered the oath of office to re-elected supervisors Brian Veerkamp (District 3) and Shiva Frentzen (District 2). Frentzen also took over as chair of the board for 2017.

After wishing everyone a happy new year, Frentzen laid out some of her vision and goals for the next year. She promised to run more meetings that will be "transparent and effective" and will "encourage public participation and result in better planning for agenda items."

Frentzen noted that she respects the public and their opinions, "So I will always welcome their input." She drew a line, however, saying, "I expect the same respect from the public regardless of our views or disagreements."

"I will allow meaningful and beneficial dialogue between the members of the public, board members and staff but I won't tolerate disruptive arguments," she warned.

El Dorado County's budget will be the top priority for the new term, Frentzen promised. Establishing it as a "healthy and solid, long-term budget and fulfilling our strategic plans" will be the first step toward addressing the many challenges the county faces, she said. Part of those challenges, she added, is the need to find and implement "operational efficiencies while lowering expenses and increasing the quality of service to our county residents."

Operational efficiencies has been the code term for saving money through a process of reducing costs by means of decreasing waste, duplication or other inefficiencies within the county's departments. Automating or streamlining processes such as applying for building permits, arranging inspections and the like are already in the works at the Community Development Agency. The board also approved signing an agreement with a software firm, Megabyte Systems, to develop a comprehensive support and maintenance program to manage the

county's property tax system.

Frentzen concluded her opening remarks reminding that the challenges she mentioned "require us all to come together and emphasize the common goal of making our county a better place for future generations."