

NEWS

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Postmus elected Chairman of the Board of Supervisors

Vowing to make the county's economic health his top priority, First District Supervisor Bill Postmus today was unanimously elected by the Board of Supervisors to serve as Board of Supervisors Chairman for the next two years.

Second District Supervisor Paul Biane was unanimously elected Board of Supervisors Vice Chairman.

Supervisor Postmus succeeds Third District Supervisor Dennis Hansberger. Board members praised Hansberger today for his two years of leadership.

The Board of Supervisors elects a new chairman and vice chairman every two years. The chairman presides over meetings of the Board of Supervisors and works with the County Administrative Officer to set the Board's weekly agenda. The chairman also serves as the executive agent of the Board, exercising general supervision over all county officers, institutions, buildings, and property.

Chairman Postmus promised to provide innovative leadership.

"I will never accept the excuse that, 'We've always done it that way,'" Chairman Postmus said. "I will not rest until San Bernardino County is regarded as a standard to which other large urban and rural counties aspire"

Specifically, Chairman Postmus said he would work with his colleagues on the Board of Supervisors to ensure responsible growth policies in the county's updated General Plan and work with cities to address transportation issues and traffic congestion.

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However, he said the bulk of his energy would be devoted to maximizing the county's efforts to create a business-friendly environment.

Chairman Postmus said he plans to take a close look at the county's current economic development organization, its funding and its programs, and work to create an economic development strategy that will take advantage of the current economic boom.

He said that on January 11 he will ask the Board to enter into a contract with Inland Empire economist John Husing to update and expand an economic development strategy for formal adoption by the Board of Supervisors. Such a plan was initially drafted in February 2000, but was not formally adopted.

"Dr. Husing's draft plan, although never formally adopted by the Board, has been used as a basic framework for the County's current economic development program," Chairman Postmus said.

"The County has made some significant progress in the area of economic development. For example, we opened business resource centers, which assist employers with job training, recruitment assistance, site-searching assistance, help working with local cities, financing, permit assistance and other services."

But despite such progress, the County still lacks a formal economic development strategy approved by the Board as a basic decision-making tool.

"I propose to resurrect, update, finalize and ultimately adopt and implement such a strategic tool," Chairman Postmus said.