



NEWS RELEASE

Board of Supervisors

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Board selects Leonard X. Hernandez as Chief Executive Officer



County Chief Operating Officer Leonard X. Hernandez, who began his career with San Bernardino County 20 years ago as a County Library public service employee, on Tuesday was appointed by the Board of Supervisors to serve as the county's next Chief Executive Officer effective Oct. 10.

"I am humbled by the confidence the Board of Supervisors has placed in me and grateful for the opportunity to lead this great County organization, which has been my professional home for so many years," Hernandez said.

"Under the leadership and guidance of the Board of Supervisors, the County team has built a culture of innovation, efficiency, and public service," Hernandez said. "My overarching goal is to expand and nurture that culture within each of our worksites, within every service we provide, and within every County employee."

"We are excited to welcome Leonard Hernandez as San Bernardino County's new CEO," said Board of Supervisors Chairman Curt Hagman. "COVID-19 has presented many unique challenges within our community, and Leonard's extensive experience within the County and his integral role on the executive leadership team have strongly positioned him to lead the County during this unique time. I look forward to working with him in solving these challenges and know that his talents, leadership, and dedication to seeing the County thrive will serve him well as CEO."

Hernandez will succeed Gary McBride, who has served as CEO for nearly three years and will remain with the County as Strategic Projects Director under a contract extension approved by the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday.

"I have known Leonard since 2006, when he was the manager of the Fontana Branch Library," said Board of Supervisors Vice Chair Josie Gonzales. "Throughout the years, I have watched him grow as a leader and I have seen his commitment to serving the community. As a Supervisor for the past 16 years, I know that there is no decision more important than the selection of the CEO. I have full confidence in Leonard and I have no doubt that he will help guide our County to new heights in the years to come."

"Leonard first impressed me with his leadership and problem-solving skills when he was placed in charge of the Lewis Library in Fontana while I was on the City Council," Supervisor Janice Rutherford said. "Since then, he's continued to demonstrate his leadership abilities, commitment to excellence in public service, and his dedication to ethics, and I look forward to working with him to address the challenges facing our county."

"I appreciate Leonard's willingness to accept the role of CEO and continue the leadership that has been established," said Supervisor Robert Lovingood. "His experience and knowledge of the County is foundational to our ongoing success and I look forward to working with him in this capacity. As a County, we have faced unprecedented challenges and I am confident that these proactive leadership transitions prepare us well for what is ahead. I want to thank Gary for his leadership and continued commitment to help the County strategically navigate the complexities that this health crisis has brought."

"I look forward to working with Leonard to implement the vision of our Board of Supervisors," said Supervisor Dawn Rowe. "He is a hard-working leader with a keen understanding of the inner-workings of our county government. I'm confident that he will continue the great progress made by his predecessor, Gary McBride."

After launching his career in San Bernardino County, Hernandez gained experience and honed his management skills at the City of Riverside as the Director of Libraries before returning to San Bernardino County in 2010 as County Librarian.

In 2014, while still serving as County Librarian, Hernandez served as interim Museum Director. In 2015, Hernandez was promoted to the position of Deputy Executive Officer over the Community Services Group, which includes the County Library and Museum systems, Registrar of Voters, Regional Parks, County Airports, and Agriculture/Weights and Measures.

In 2016 Hernandez became the Interim County Chief Operating Officer and then in 2017, Hernandez was officially appointed to the position of County Chief Operating Officer. In that role, Hernandez has coordinated the County's multi-departmental response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under the leadership of the Board of Supervisors the County's COVID Task Force has led the State in its response to the pandemic and service to the public.

Hernandez, a resident of San Bernardino County, has a bachelor's degree in history from California State University Fullerton and a master's degree in library and information science from Clarion University of Pennsylvania.