

NEWS

Jan. 9, 2024

For Immediate Release

Board of Supervisors Picks New President, Vice President

Redwood City – Taking a cue from a character in the movie “Black Panther,” District Four County Supervisor Warren Slocum picked up the gavel as the 2024 president of the Board of Supervisors to set a vision of evaluation and change, asserting, “Just because something works doesn’t mean that it cannot be improved.”

At the same meeting, the Board also selected District 5 Supervisor David Canepa as vice president and thanked outgoing President Dave Pine of District 1 for his leadership during 2023.

The presidency is Slocum’s third since assuming office in 2013 and his last due to term limits. His district includes the cities of Redwood City and East Palo Alto and the areas within the city of Menlo Park east of El Camino Real and including Belle Haven and the unincorporated community of North Fair Oaks.

During his remarks, Slocum noted that the county of 10 years ago is quite different than that of today.

“The reality is that we are more diverse, more people are struggling to provide for their families, food insecurity is prevalent and we are still recovering from a global pandemic,” he said. “Our public life has become at times more confrontational, our dialogue sharper and our challenges far more complex.”

In response, Slocum said change is inevitable and required. He questioned the County’s organizational structure, including the need for 26 separate departments. He called for amplifying public voices and strengthening the County’s equity work including passing an ordinance codifying the County’s commitment to it and “recalibrating” the Office of Equity and Social Justice. He said the County must invest in data collection for better goal setting and decision making, and in technology including artificial intelligence.

Slocum said former Supervisor Don Horsley, who died in November, taught him that the Board presidency is more about setting a tone and vision than creating a task list.

In February 2023, the Board of Supervisors was tasked at a retreat to collectively craft a headline for three years in the future summing up its work. Slocum, closing out his remarks, said the chosen aspirational quote says it all: “San Mateo County leads the nation’s best practices in the areas of homeless, equity and affordable housing.”

As Slocum looked to the future, Pine took time to reflect on his past year as president and the work the Board tackled in 2023.

“After welcoming two new supervisors, we began calendar year 2023 with unprecedented storms and flooding, followed quickly by the tragic deadly shooting in Half Moon Bay,” Pine said. “While these events set a somber tone for the year, and exposed some previously not well-known inequities, they also presented an opportunity for this County to do what we do best: pull our resources together, with neighbor helping neighbor, to provide needed services to the most vulnerable among us.”

Pine ticked off many of the County’s 2023 achievements: increasing the minimum wage, creating an Office of Labor Standards Enforcement, establishing a program to remove lead paint, holding study sessions on the fentanyl and opioid epidemic and the mobile mental health emergency response models, launching the Gun Violence Prevention Program, allocating almost \$30 million for affordable housing, forming the Farm Labor Housing Taskforce, buying two hotels for permanent supportive housing, revamping the process by which some Measure K sales tax funds are awarded and initiating the Independent Civilian Oversight Commission on the Sheriff.

Pine’s colleagues took turns lauding him for his time as president during such a busy year.

“Your steady hand made a big difference,” Slocum said.

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