



Why a Sacramento County supervisor election matters

BY JEFF VONKAENEL / jeffv@newsreview.com

Elections are important. And some are more important than others. For example: The March 2020 primary for Sacramento County supervisor in District 3, a seat now held by Republican Susan Peters, who recently announced that after 16 years on the board, she is not running for reelection.

There are five county supervisors: two progressives in Phil Serna and Patrick Kennedy, two conservatives in Peters and Sue Frost and the moderate Don Nottoli. Getting three votes on any issue is difficult and exhausting. And developing bold and innovative solutions to our county's housing, environmental and transportation problems is nearly impossible.

As a result, the county is often in gridlock.

While the mayor of Sacramento has the best bully pulpit for presenting a community vision, the five county supervisors actually preside over a much larger budget. The Sacramento city budget is about \$1.2 billion, providing public safety and utility services to 500,000 city residents. The county not only provides some similar services for the 500,000 residents living in the unincorporated area, it also provides health services for the whole county. The county budget is \$4.4 billion. So while Sacramento's mayor has the microphone, the often forgotten Board of Supervisors has the power and the money.

This is why the District 3 race is so important. If Peters could be replaced by a progressive candidate, then political gridlock could be ended. Historically, defeating an incumbent supervisor who can easily raise campaign donations has been very difficult. In the 2016 election, Peters won with 74% of the vote.

But over the last 16 years, District 3 has steadily become a Democratic district. At latest count, Democrats have 64,015 registered voters while Republicans have only 46,311 and 37,694 are not registered with any party.

In 2016, Democrat Hillary Clinton won the district by nearly 18,000 votes.

While there are numerous candidates considering running for this seat, including Matthew Ceccato, district director for U.S. Rep. Ami Bera, the race seems to be a two-person contest between conservative Rich Desmond and liberal Gregg Fishman.

Peters has thrown her support behind Desmond, a California Highway Patrol officer and attorney who has also been endorsed by the Sacramento County Deputy Sheriffs' Association, the California Association of Highway Patrolmen and numerous current and former Republican office holders including Jim Nielsen, Doug Ose and Roger Niello. The Sacramento Republican establishment is behind Desmond.

On the other side, the Sacramento Democratic establishment is lining up behind SMUD board member Gregg Fishman, who has also received endorsements from the Democratic Party of Sacramento County, the Sacramento Central Labor Council and numerous current and former Democratic officeholders including Mayor Darrell Steinberg, Serna, Don Saylor and Roger Dickinson. The entire SMUD board also supports his campaign.

Fishman is a solid guy. Fishman wants to improve city and county cooperation towards solving our area's homeless problem. He wants to streamline the county's development process to make it easier to create more housing. He wants to allow the county to take advantage of marijuana tax revenues. His experience on the SMUD board, his seven-year tenure at the California State Association of Counties and his work as a journalist have given him a solid understanding of county government.

Fishman would make an excellent supervisor. And his vote would allow us to start getting things done at the county. □

Jeff vonKaenel is the president, CEO and majority owner of the News & Review.

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE LIVING MODERN

On view July 20 – October 20, 2019

The only West Coast venue to offer a new look at this iconic artist through her art, fashion, and style.

LEAD SPONSOR Wayne and Rachelle Prim

MAJOR SPONSORS Nancy and Harvey Fennell | Dickson Realty
The Jacquie Foundation

NEVADA MUSEUM OF ART

Donald W. Reynolds Center for the Visual Arts | E. L. Wiegand Gallery
160 West Liberty Street in downtown Reno, Nevada | nevadaart.org

Georgia O'Keeffe: Living Modern is organized by the Brooklyn Museum and curated by Wanda M. Corn, Robert and Ruth Halperin Professor Emerita in Art History, Stanford University and made possible by the National Endowment of the Arts. IMAGE: Alfred Stieglitz (American, 1864–1946). Georgia O'Keeffe, circa 1920–22. Gelatin silver print, 4½ x 3½ in. (11.4 x 9 cm). Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, Gift of The Georgia O'Keeffe Foundation, 2003.01.006.