

Gov. Brown appoints Pedroza to Board of Supervisors



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Napa City Councilman Alfredo Pedroza will switch his role on the local political scene and join the Napa County Board of Supervisors.

Gov. Jerry Brown announced Monday he has appointed Pedroza to the 4th District supervisor's seat through 2016. Pedroza will replace Bill Dodd, who vacated his Board of Supervisors seat on Dec. 1 to become a member of the state Assembly.

Pedroza, who had been considered a frontrunner for the appointment, said he is appreciative of Brown's support. He also appreciates the organizations and constituents who wrote letters on his behalf and all four of his colleagues on the City Council who supported the appointment, he said.

"That comes with significant responsibility, to make sure I'm advocating for and representing the entire needs of diverse District 4," he said.

The 4th District includes the northeast section of the city of Napa and extends east past southern Lake Berreyssa to the mountains separating Napa and Solano counties.

Pedroza is to take the oath at 4 p.m. Saturday at the Napa River Inn, along with Supervisors Brad Wagenknecht and Diane Dillon, who won new terms in the June election. Then he can

participate in next Tuesdays' board meeting, when supervisors will discuss who among them will represent the board on various committees and organizations.

Pedroza has had a quick political rise. The 27-year-old Napa native and assistant vice president at the local Mechanics Bank was elected to the Napa City Council in 2012 at age 25.

Among the issues facing the Board of Supervisors is the development of wineries and hillside vineyards. Supervisors have heard from people who think the county is on the right track, but also increasingly from those who see too much traffic and tourism in agricultural areas.

Pedroza said he will approach such issues with the thought of what Napa County will be like in 30 years. He intends to raise a family here, and is thinking about what the county will be like for future generations.

"One thing I'm excited to bring to the county is a different perspective in terms of what is going to be the next Napa," Pedroza said. "I'm looking at it through the eyes of sustainability."

Yet he doesn't go to the board talking about a long list of particular items he intends to push.

"At first, I'm going to work really hard to listen to the residents and the issues they have," Pedroza said. "As a supervisor, I'm not going in with an agenda. I'm going to work hard and I'm going to work hard for the district and to listen to the concerns and issues of the constituents of District 4."

Napa County Board of Supervisors Chairman Mark Luce welcomed Pedroza's appointment.

"I was happy to have written a letter for Alfredo," he said. "I just think he's a really sharp young man, pretty level-headed, has the ability to weigh these decisions and, of course, has a lot of energy."

The board has important issues to face, ranging from whether the county has permitted more than enough wineries to earthquake recovery to building a new jail to managing the budget, Luce said.

Mayor Jill Techel said she has mixed emotions about Pedroza's appointment because he's made positive contributions to the City Council. He was a valued link to the Hispanic community, she said.

"He's done a great job, which makes him a good candidate for moving up," she said.

The city and county have worked well together over the past two years. Having Pedroza on the Board of Supervisors will solidify the relationship, she said.

"People who have been on City Council, we like to see them move up to the Board of Supervisors, because they understand some of the challenges we face," Techel said.

One of the issues the city and county have worked together on recently is the proposed Napa Pipe development that is to bring hundreds of homes and a Costco to the area.

Once Pedroza joins the Board of Supervisors, the City Council will consider how to fill his term on the council, which has nearly two more years to run. Techel said the council can call for an election or make an appointment.

Dodd supported Pedroza for his 2012 City Council run and wrote a letter of recommendation for his supervisor seat bid.

"Clearly, with the population one-third Latino in Napa County, I think it was important that our elected officials start reflecting the makeup of our overall community," Dodd said.

Pedroza is a Latino leader who represents everybody, he said. "Not only that, he's a really good guy as well."

County supervisors earn \$86,943 annually, plus benefits.