



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AVEK Directors Take Oath; Elect Board President, Shelley Sorsabal, VP, Keith Dyas

L.A. County Supervisor Kathryn Barger Administers Oath to Four Board Members; First Woman Elected as Board President

Palmdale, CA – January 8, 2019 – Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency (AVEK) opened its first public meeting of 2019 on Tuesday night with Los Angeles County 5th District Supervisor Kathryn Barger swearing-in Division 1 Director Shelley Sorsabal; Division 2 Director Keith Dyas; Division 3 Director Frank S. Donato; and Division 5 Director Robert A. Parris.

Shortly after taking their oath, Sorsabal, Dyas, Donato and Parris joined their Board colleagues – Division 4 Director Justin G. Lane, Division 6 Director Marlon Barnes and Division 7 Director Gary Van Dam – in naming the 2019 Officers. In a unanimous vote, the seven-member Board elected Director Shelley Sorsabal as President and Director Keith Dyas as Vice President for this upcoming term, making Sorsabal the first-ever woman to serve as Board President in AVEK's 60-year history.

Sorsabal, a Palmdale resident and Board Vice President for the past 2 years, first won her Division seat in the November 2014 election. From the moment she joined the Board, she took off running with numerous committee assignments including the Finance and Budget; Personnel and Legal committees among others. She served as a Palmdale City Councilwoman in the 1990s. As a local businesswoman she runs a small vineyard and has prior experience for 30 years in real estate sales. Despite her busy schedule, she contributes time as a volunteer for various community-based projects.

"I am honored to be chosen to serve as President of the Board," said Sorsabal. "Together with my fellow Directors, we are dedicated in advancing strategies that preserve the world's most precious resource, upholding the Agency's legacy of innovation to sustain a safe, reliable, affordable water supply for generations to come."

Outgoing President, Keith Dyas, a Rosamond resident and Board President for the past eight years, served as a Director since 1991, making him the second longest-tenured Board member currently seated. In addition to AVEK, Dyas served on the Eastern Kern County Resource Conservation District Board; the Rosamond Town Council; and the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. His AVEK committees include Finance and Budget; Water Projects; and the Antelope Valley State Water Contractors Association, among others. As an environmental and civil engineer, he previously worked at Edwards Air Force Base for 28 years and continues his expertise in the field of engineering.

Frank Donato, a Leona Valley resident, served on the Board since 1987, giving him status as the longest-tenured Director currently seated. He brings to the Board a steady background of

community engagement. Former Los Angeles County 5th District Supervisor, Michael D. Antonovich, appointed him to the Antelope Valley Planning Council in 1980. Former California Gov. Pete Wilson appointed him to the Antelope Valley Fair Board for a period that ran from 1997-2001. The late Pres. Ronald Reagan named him in the Who's Who of American Businessmen in 1990. His AVEK committees include Finance and Budget; the Capital Improvement Program; and Water Bank Resources among others. In the business world he amassed more than 31 years as an expert in the title insurance industry. He is also co-owner of a local winery.

Robert Parris, a Lancaster resident and Antelope Valley native, was originally appointed to the Board in March 2014 to fill a vacancy when long-time Director Andy Rutledge retired. Parris won his bid for the Division 5 seat in the November election that same year. A champion of community involvement, he was appointed to the Antelope Valley 50th Agricultural District Board in 1994 by then Gov. Pete Wilson. At AVEK he sits on the Personnel; Planning; and Legal committees, among others. He serves as Chairman of the Antelope Valley Watermaster Board as well as Chairman of the Antelope Valley State Water Contractors Association Board. He plays an active role in helping organize the annual Antelope Valley Fair and Alfalfa Festival. Currently an attorney who specializes in mediation cases, Parris devoted many years to a law enforcement career – first with the California Highway Patrol from 1978 to 1993, and then in the Los Angeles Sheriff's Reserve Program as a deputy until 2015.

ABOUT AVEK

3rd largest State Water Contractor in California - AVEK received its state charter in 1959 as a regional water agency. In 1962 Directors signed a contract with the state to secure deliveries of imported supplies meant to supplement local groundwater. AVEK has an annual entitlement of 144,844 acre-feet, the third largest in the State of California. Optimizing water resources and developing groundwater storage enables AVEK to maintain a reliable, sustainable and affordable water supply. More than 20 municipal users plus Edwards Air Force Base, Plant 42 and U.S. Borax are served by AVEK in a territory spanning 2300 square miles and traversing portions of Los Angeles, Kern and Ventura counties. The Agency plays a vital role in supporting future regional economic development and national defense programs.

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