

The gavel goes to Oliveira, but Clapp was in opposition

By Nick Baptista

The Valley Springs News / January 11, 2017

It was not as contentious as last year, but the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors selected a chairperson Tuesday morning amid some controversy.

The board's first order of business was to select the 2017 chairperson and District 4 Supervisor Dennis Mills made a motion for District 3 Supervisor Michael Oliveira to assume the leadership role. District 2 Supervisor Jack Garamendi seconded the motion.

Oliveira is the only supervisor who was on the board this time a year ago. He is in the middle of his four-year term.

Bonnie Newman of Double Springs called last year's selection of then-District 1 Supervisor Cliff Edson to a second consecutive term as chair "a subversion of the traditional" appointment process. She wanted to see the board pass the chairmanship position from district to district.

George Fry of San Andreas said he was in favor of seeing Garamendi get the appointment since last year's District 2 supervisor, Chris Wright, was passed over. At the least, Fry said Garamendi should be appointed the vice chair.

District 3 resident Alice Montgomery said she was proud of what Oliveira has done on the board and he deserved the post.

Before the board voted on the motion, District 5 Supervisor Clyde Clapp said he was against the appointment of Oliveira and one of the four new members on the board should be considered for the position.

District 1 Supervisor Gary Tofanelli said he understood Clapp's point, but called this "a unique situation" and he would support Oliveira because he has been on the board the past two years. Tofanelli added he would also make a motion for Garamendi to be the vice chair.

The vote was 4-1 with Clapp opposed.

Clapp seconded Tofanelli's motion to appoint Garamendi as vice chair and that vote was unanimous.

Last year's appointment process lasted nearly 90 minutes, while this year's was done within 20.

The chair receives a higher salary. The salary for the chair is \$70,928 annually, while the rest of the supervisors make \$56,305.60 a year.