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Two County Department Heads Announce Retirement Plans

(Santa Ana, CA) — Two longtime County executives who began their government careers in the same year at the same department will retire in February: John Wayne Airport Director Alan Murphy and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors Susan Novak.

Alan Murphy began his career with the County in 1983 as an Accountant I in the Auditor-Controller's office. He became an Executive Assistant to Supervisor Thomas F. Riley in 1985, and moved to John Wayne Airport (JWA) as the Chief of Special Projects in 1986. He was named Director of JWA in 2000. During his tenure at the Airport, Murphy was directly involved in the management and oversight of multiple projects and initiatives, including: construction and operation of one of the first in-line baggage screening systems in the country (as a result of 9/11); the 2003 and 2014 extensions of the Settlement Agreement (and associated environmental reviews); construction of the Thomas F. Riley Terminal (Terminals A and B – opening in 1990 – and Terminal C – opening in 2011), including Orange County's first US Customs and Border Protection Federal Inspection Services area; and growth from roughly 4 million annual passengers in 1986 to a high of 9.9 million annual passengers in 2007.

"Orange County residents and visitors have greatly benefitted from Alan's competence and innovation, and he's been steady at the helm during important times that required great leadership," Board of Supervisors Chairman Todd Spitzer said. "We are going to miss Alan's expertise and stature with the community."

Susan Novak joined the County in 1983 as an Accountant Auditor I in the Auditor-Controller's office. She held staff analyst and management positions in the County's former Administrative Office and Social Services Agency before being named Chief Deputy of the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in 1997 and Clerk of the Board in 2012. As Clerk of the Board, Novak improved public access to current agenda records by providing them in a format compatible with tablet devices; implemented new assessment appeal processes for more efficient hearing scheduling and a reduction of the annual backlog; and enabled online access to five years of historical agenda records.

"Assuring greater access to Board meetings, agendas and staff reports has been a passion of Susan's," Spitzer said. "The public and the Board have so much to thank her for. We truly appreciate all of her hard work and dedication."

The Clerk of the Board is selected by and reports to the Board of Supervisors. Human Resource Services is currently accepting online applications for the position. The Director of John Wayne Airport is selected by the Board and reports to the County Executive Officer.

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