

Costa Mesa Mayor John Stephens takes oath of office

On Friday March 26, former Mayor Pro-Tem John Stephens was sworn into the office of Mayor by Second District County Supervisor and former Mayor Katrina Foley.



Stephens, who most recently served as Mayor Pro Tem and later on the Planning Commission, was directly appointed to the mayor position by the City Council at the March 16 meeting to fill Foley's seat after she was elected to the County Board of Supervisors. His first official meeting as Mayor will be at the Council's next regular meeting on April 6.

"I'm honored that the City Council appointed me to serve as Mayor," Stephens said. "We have an active, engaged Council and a talented, hard-working city staff. We have accomplished much, but there is still work to do on important issues like public health and safety, economic recovery, housing, homelessness, and the environment. Together, we will achieve great things and have a lot of fun while we're at it."

[Click here to watch a video of the swearing in.](#)

Mayor Stephens was first elected to the City Council in 2016, achieving the second highest number of votes in a field of seven candidates. He served for four years at-large until November of 2020.

“I am really excited about working with Mayor Stephens,” City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison said. “I appreciate his thoughtful manner and dedication to our community and City staff. Our residents and City Council are very fortunate to have him return in the role as Mayor as we hopefully put some difficult times behind us and forge ahead on a path of continued success.”

While on the Council, he was named Mayor Pro-Tem in 2018. As Mayor Pro Tem, he was the 2018 Chair of the Association of California Cities-Orange County Homelessness Task Force and is a member of the Orange County Library Advisory Board.

He was a Director on the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor Agency Board (“Toll Roads”). He serves as Council Liaison to the Financial Pension Advisory Committee (“FiPAC”), the Animal Services Committee, the Special Districts (Sanitation, Water, and School), and the OC Fairgrounds. He is also a founding member of the Costa Mesa Early Childhood Coalition.

Additionally, Stephens served on Council Ad Hoc Committees relating to cannabis and Fairview Developmental Center. He has served on Ad Hoc Committees for the Costa Mesa Motor Inn litigation and the City Manager recruitment. Stephens initiated the City’s Independence Day Celebration and has brought joy to families of all ages as Santa Claus at Snoopy House for the past five years.

Mayor Stephens was born in Pasadena, and raised in San Gabriel and attended San Gabriel High School. He earned his Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration and Marketing from Cal Poly Pomona, where he graduated Magna Cum Laude in 1986. He

received his law degree from the UC Davis Law School in 1989 and was named to the Order of the Coif (top 10%), Law Review and Trial Practice Honors Board.

Stephens has practiced for 32 years and in 2006, he founded his firm Stephens Friedland LLP, which was named the Veterans Legal Institute (VLI) Law Firm of the Year in 2019. It's based in Costa Mesa.

Mayor Stephens and his wife Amy live in Costa Mesa's Mesa Verde neighborhood and have four children: Tom, Nate, Carolyn and Olivia.