



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER**

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: County Executive Office
Department No.: 012
For Agenda Of: December 12, 2023
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Director(s) Contact Info: Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer
Tanja Heitman, Assistant County Executive Officer

DocuSigned by:
Mona Miyasato
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SUBJECT: Appointment of the Child Support Services Department Director

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Other Concurrence:

Human Resources: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve appointment of Mette Richardson as the County of Santa Barbara Child Support Services Director, beginning January 8, 2024;
- b) Determine that the recommended actions are not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(2) because the recommended actions involve continuing administrative or maintenance activity.

Summary Text:

This item is on the agenda to approve the appointment of Mette Richardson as Santa Barbara County’s Child Support Services Department Director as of January 8, 2024, following the retirement of Director Joni Maiden, who is retiring from the position in January 2024. Ms. Richardson was selected following a statewide recruitment process. The Director of Child Support Services is responsible for directing operations pertaining to the establishment and enforcement of parentage and child support throughout Santa Barbara County. The position also participates in Board initiatives representing and leading efforts of the Department.

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Background:

Ms. Richardson has been an employee of the Department of Child Support Services since 2016 and a public servant for nearly twenty years. Her service in the County of Santa Barbara began in the Alcohol, Drug & Mental Health Services Department, now known as Behavioral Wellness, as a Fiscal Manager in 2005, followed by a variety of other roles in nearby cities, counties and the public sector, before she returned to the County in the Child Support Services department in 2016. In her time away from the County, Ms. Richardson served as the Finance Director of the City of Grass Valley, where she represented the City in labor negotiations and helped implement new payroll and human resource systems.

In her current role as Assistant Director of the Department of Child Support Services, Ms. Richardson has provided general direction and support to staff, collaborated with the Director, and helped to implement the department's strategic vision and goals. She has helped see the department through the COVID-19 pandemic, ensured the fiscal health, independence and stability of the department, and implemented cost-saving efficiencies across multiple departmental areas. From 2016 to 2022 she has increased the department's fund balance by \$570,000 by correcting accounting for deferred revenue and accounts receivable.

Ms. Richardson comes to the role with extensive knowledge of County systems and programs which will be invaluable as she helps lead the department through coming Countywide changes, such as the transition to Workday.

Ms. Richardson will relieve Director Joni Maiden upon her retirement. Director Maiden's 5 years of service as Director (and 29 years with the Child Support Services Department) were highlighted by record high departmental child support collections; increased access to services through the use of such innovations as LobbyCentral, Instant Zoom and a virtual receptionist, among others; providing a flexible working environment for employees; and collaborations with County partners in community-wide efforts such as the 2020 Census and bridging the "digital divide".

Fiscal Impacts: Budgeted: Yes

Fiscal Analysis:

There are no fiscal impacts with this action. Ms. Richardson's bi-weekly salary will be \$7,273. Ms. Richardson will receive benefits consistent with those received by other Santa Barbara County Department Heads. Costs are addressed within the department's budget.

Authored by:

Tanja Heitman, Assistant County Executive Officer.