

August 20, 1991

REPORT TO THE HONORABLE  
MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
STAFF APPOINTMENTS

Dramatically changing elements of City government require bold organizational changes in management of the City Attorney's office in order to keep pace. Beginning today, an exciting process of change is underway.

To head up the team which is charged with managing long term change in office organization, equipment and procedures, I am pleased to announce the appointment of Chief Deputy City Attorney John M. Kaheny to the position of Assistant City Attorney. Mr. Kaheny assumes the most important supervisory job in the office, reporting directly to me, with the remainder of the management and professional team reporting to him.

The position of Senior Chief Deputy City Attorney, an opening created by the retirement of Jack Katz, will be filled by Deputy City Attorney Janis Sammartino. Ms. Sammartino will report directly to Mr. Kaheny and have a vital role in the restructuring of the office.

A new Chief Deputy City Attorney, filling Mr. Kaheny's present position, will be Deputy City Attorney Kenneth K.Y. So. Mr. So, currently a civil litigator in the office, will assume the duties of a Chief Deputy in the Advisory Divisions.

Assistant City Attorney Curtis M. Fitzpatrick, at his request, will return to his previous role as head of the office's special projects activities. In that capacity he has performed distinguished service leading task forces specially formed to handle unique situations involving the City's legal affairs. Notably, it was his effort as head of the special task force on the Southern California Edison - San Diego Gas & Electric merger that was most instrumental in the City's successful resistance to the merger.

Mr. Kaheny has 17 years of distinguished service on the City Attorney's staff. His area of greatest expertise lies in personnel, civil service and labor law, having served for eight years as staff counsel to the San Diego Civil Service Commission and the Personnel Department. He has also been a criminal prosecutor, a civil litigator and a police legal advisor for my office. He is a graduate of Mount St. Mary's College in Maryland and the University of California, Hastings College of the Law.

Ms. Sammartino's principal area of professional specialization is land use law, growth management and redevelopment. A Deputy City Attorney for 15 years, she was the principal member of my staff assigned to the creation, implementation and successful litigation of the Facility

Benefit Assessment program and was the main City legal advisor in the planning and construction of the Horton Plaza Retail Center downtown. Ms. Sammartino earned her undergraduate degree, magna cum laude, from Occidental College, where she was elected to membership in Phi Beta Kappa. She received her law degree from the University of Notre Dame.

Mr. So, a Deputy City Attorney for 14 years, has 11 years of experience as a general civil litigator, ably handling cases of various types in which the City has been a party. He also has served as a criminal prosecutor, both with my office and as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in Flint, Michigan. He graduated from Harvard College and The University of California, Hastings College of the Law.

Mr. Kaheny, Ms. Sammartino and Mr. So all have been active in matters outside our office. Mr. Kaheny is a colonel in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. Recently, he served in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait as Civil Affairs Officer of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force and as Commanding Officer of the 3d Civil Affairs Group during Operation Desert Storm. He is a veteran of 18 months service in Vietnam in 1967 and 1968, where he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with combat "V." He was National President of the Marine Corps Reserve Officers Association in 1990-91.

Locally, Mr. Kaheny is a vice president of the Kensington Social and Athletic Club and has served as director of its Memorial Day Parade since 1982. He has been the moderator of a Boy Scout Law Explorer Post, a member of the Board of Advisors of the San Diego Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program and a lay advocate for the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Diego. He is an active member of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. Mr. Kaheny lives with his wife, two daughters and a son in Kensington.

Ms. Sammartino has served as chair of the Public Lawyers Committee of the San Diego County Bar Association and as president of the Board of Advisors to the UCSD Medical Center. She is an active member of the Lawyers Club of San Diego. She lives in Solana Beach with her two sons.

Mr. So has served as a judge pro tempore and arbitrator for the San Diego County Superior Court. He has been on the faculty of the National Institute of Trial Advocacy and is a member of the Board of Directors of The Copley Family YMCA. Mr. So also lives in Kensington with his wife and son.

The three appointees will assume their new duties immediately. Payroll changes and other reorganizational steps will be taken in due course.

Respectfully submitted,  
JOHN W. WITT  
City Attorney

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