



Imperial County Medal of Merit

RESOLUTION HONORING KEVIN E. KELLEY POSTHUMOUSLY FOR HIS DEDICATION AND DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE

WHEREAS, Kevin E. Kelley was a son of the Imperial Valley and displayed his love of this valley and its people with hard work and untiring commitment. Mr. Kelley started as an irrigator and rose to become the general manager of the Imperial Irrigation District, with many interesting and compatible career diversions along the way. Mr. Kelley was instrumental in resolving a fifteen (15) year lawsuit between Imperial Irrigation District and the County of Imperial, and championing a common valley voice for the Salton Sea.

WHEREAS, Mr. Kelley was born in Brawley, California to a farming family that experience the highs and lows of Imperial Valley Agriculture Business. A graduate of Brawley Union High School, Mr. Kelley pursued higher education at the University of Southern California. It was as a student at USC that Mr. Kelley found his gift for the written word and began writing stories and reflections.

WHEREAS, Mr. Kelley returned to the Imperial Valley and began working for the El Centro Chamber of Commerce, eventually becoming the Executive Director. It was during this time that El Centro experience the development of large box stores; like Costco, Walmart and HomeDepot.

WHEREAS, Mr. Kelley found another avenue for his writing talents and bought the Imperial Valley Grower Magazine with his partner George Hendrix. Mr. Kelley was the publisher and editor for the magazine and authored multiple articles under pseudonyms.

WHEREAS, Mr. Kelley sold the Imperial Valley Grower Magazine to the Imperial Valley Press and continued as the editor. Mr. Kelley also contributed to the newspaper content and produced editorials and commentaries found in the Imperial Valley Press.

WHEREAS, Mr. Kelley was hired by the Imperial Irrigation District as a contract employee for developing marketing and media content. Mr. Kelley soon after was offered and accepted the positions of Community Service Officer, then Public Information Officer, then Assistant to the General Manager.

WHEREAS, in 2010, Mr. Kelley was asked and accepted the Imperial Irrigation District General Manager position, a position he held for 8 years. During his tenure, Imperial Irrigation District became an advocate for the Salton Sea and the impacts of the Quantification Settlement Agreement; solar development on farmland; and connection of the Sunrise Power Link.

WHEREAS, Mr. Kelley retired from the Imperial Irrigation District in 2018 and became a consultant for the district. At the same time, Mr. Kelley began his next endeavor, a book about the creation of the Imperial Valley and the Imperial Irrigation District.

WHEREAS, Kevin Kelley loved music and would play the piano with local bands across the valley. Mr. Kelley's greatest love was his family, Marybeth, his wife, Kathleen, his daughter, Kevin Jr., his son, Maureen, his daughter, Kellen, his grandson.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Imperial County Board of Supervisors bestows the highest honor of our community, the Imperial County Medal of Merit, in remembrance of Mr. Kelley's dedication and leadership to Imperial Valley.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Imperial County Board of Supervisors this 6th day of April, 2021 by an affirmative roll call vote.

Michael W. Kelley, Chairman
Board of Supervisors