



County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors



SUPERVISOR AGUSTIN OLVERA

Term: 1855 - 1857
District: Not applicable
Date of Birth: Unknown
Death: Unknown

Agustin Olvera served as county supervisor for two terms. He assumed office in 1855 and was re-elected in 1856. Olvera was replaced by James B. Winston mid-way through his second term.

Olvera was a “juez de paz” (justice of the peace) who arrived in California in 1834 as part of a larger contingent of Mexican colonists sent from Mexico to settle the secularized mission Land of Alta. Olvera held various offices in the Mexican administration. He helped to bridge the gap between the governance of California by Mexico and the United States.

By 1841 he was commissioner for the secularized mission of San Juan Capistrano, where he also served as judge. In 1845 he came to Los Angeles and fought against the Americans in the Mexican-American War. In January 1847, Olvera played a role in the surrender treaty that ended fighting in California. In February 1848, a treaty was signed ending the war and giving the United States undisputed control of California.

In 1849 U.S. Military Governor Riley appointed Olvera to be a judge. Olvera was subsequently elected the first county judge of the newly formed County of Los Angeles in 1850. He relied upon a bilingual sheriff to translate the proceedings from Spanish because Olvera did not speak English when he first took the bench.

Along with his legal duties, Olvera was also responsible, with his two associate justices, for administering County business until the establishment of the Board of Supervisors two years later. He later became a county supervisor and a presidential elector.

Olvera is credited with being an eminent figure in the early history of Los Angeles. In 1877 the Los Angeles City Council changed the name of Wine Street to Olvera Street in his honor. He had held the first County trials in his home near the historic Olvera Street marketplace and plaza.

Source: Los Angeles: Epic of a City; Olmstead-Bartholomew-Cheney Report; Wikipedia.