



SOUTHERN UTE INDIAN TRIBE

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

Melvin J. Baker, Chairman – 970.563.2320

Summer Begay, Communication Specialist– 970.563.2313

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 16, 2024

Southern Ute Indian Tribe Welcomes Baker and Olguin to Tribal Council

Southern Ute Indian Reservation – Tribal Council warmly welcomed Linda K. Baker and James “Mike” Olguin during the Inauguration Ceremony held this morning in Tribal Council Chambers. Both newly elected Council Members bring extensive experience and dedication to serving the Tribe and the Tribal Membership.

Baker brings a wealth of experience to her role on Tribal Council, having previously served one term as a Council Member. In addition to her time on the Council, she has made significant contributions to the Tribe through her work with the Southern Ute Cultural Center and Museum, where she served as Director, overseeing programs that preserved and celebrated the Tribe’s rich cultural heritage. She also played a key role in supporting the educational advancement of Tribal Members as the Higher Education Academic Advisor within the Education Department, helping to guide students in achieving their academic and career goals.

Chairman Melvin J. Baker shared optimism for the future, stating, “The knowledge and commitment that Baker and Olguin bring to this Council is invaluable. Their leadership will strengthen our efforts to honor our traditions while paving the way for continued growth and opportunity for our Tribe.”

Olguin brings over 40 years of experience and a proven track record of leadership, having previously served three terms as a Council Member. Over the course of his service, he has taken on critical leadership roles, including Acting Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Executive Officer, demonstrating his deep commitment to the Tribe’s governance and well-being. Olguin has worked alongside and under the leadership of Chairmen Leonard C. Burch, Clement Frost, and Melvin J. Baker. His years of service reflect a steadfast dedication to addressing the needs of the Tribal Membership while preserving and promoting the Tribe’s core values and traditions.

During the Inauguration Ceremony, Chairman Baker shared the announcement of selecting Treasurer Marvin Pinnecoose to serve as Vice Chairman. “Growing up on the Reservation, I witnessed the strength and resilience of our people. I am deeply humbled to serve as Vice Chairman. As Tribal Council, we have the profound duty and responsibility to uplift and support *ALL* Tribal Members as outlined in the Tribal Constitution. This will include both our youth and elders and respectively Tribal Members living on and off our Reservation. Together, we will work to ensure every decision and vote will bring strength to our Tribe,” stated Vice Chairman Pinnecoose. With the addition of Baker and Olguin, Tribal Council looks forward to advancing its mission of service and leadership.

###