

Prenzler sends letter concerning conflict of interest within county's purchasing process

by Press release
March 14 2016 12:30 PM



EDWARDSVILLE – Madison County Treasurer Kurt Prenzler sent a letter to the county ethics advisor asking for an opinion concerning a conflict of interest within the county's purchasing process.

County Purchasing Director Barry Harris is also the treasurer of the county board chairman's political committee. The purchasing director has the discretion to award millions of dollars per year of county contracts to vendors.

"I don't believe the county chairman should be accepting donations from county vendors," Prenzler said. "The county chairman has accepted about \$100,000 in political donations from county vendors, which passes through the hands of his campaign treasurer. That same campaign treasurer is the county purchasing director. That is just wrong."

Former Madison County Judge Dean Sweet was appointed the new county ethics advisor at the March county board meeting, replacing Leo Konzen.

In February Prenzler mailed a letter to Konzen asking for an opinion on the same issue.

A few days later Konzen informed Prenzler that he had retired from the position on December 16. His retirement was not publically announced.

"What we see here is not allowed within purchasing departments at the federal or state levels," Prenzler said.

Prenzler, who is running for County Board chairman, promises not to take donations from county vendors.