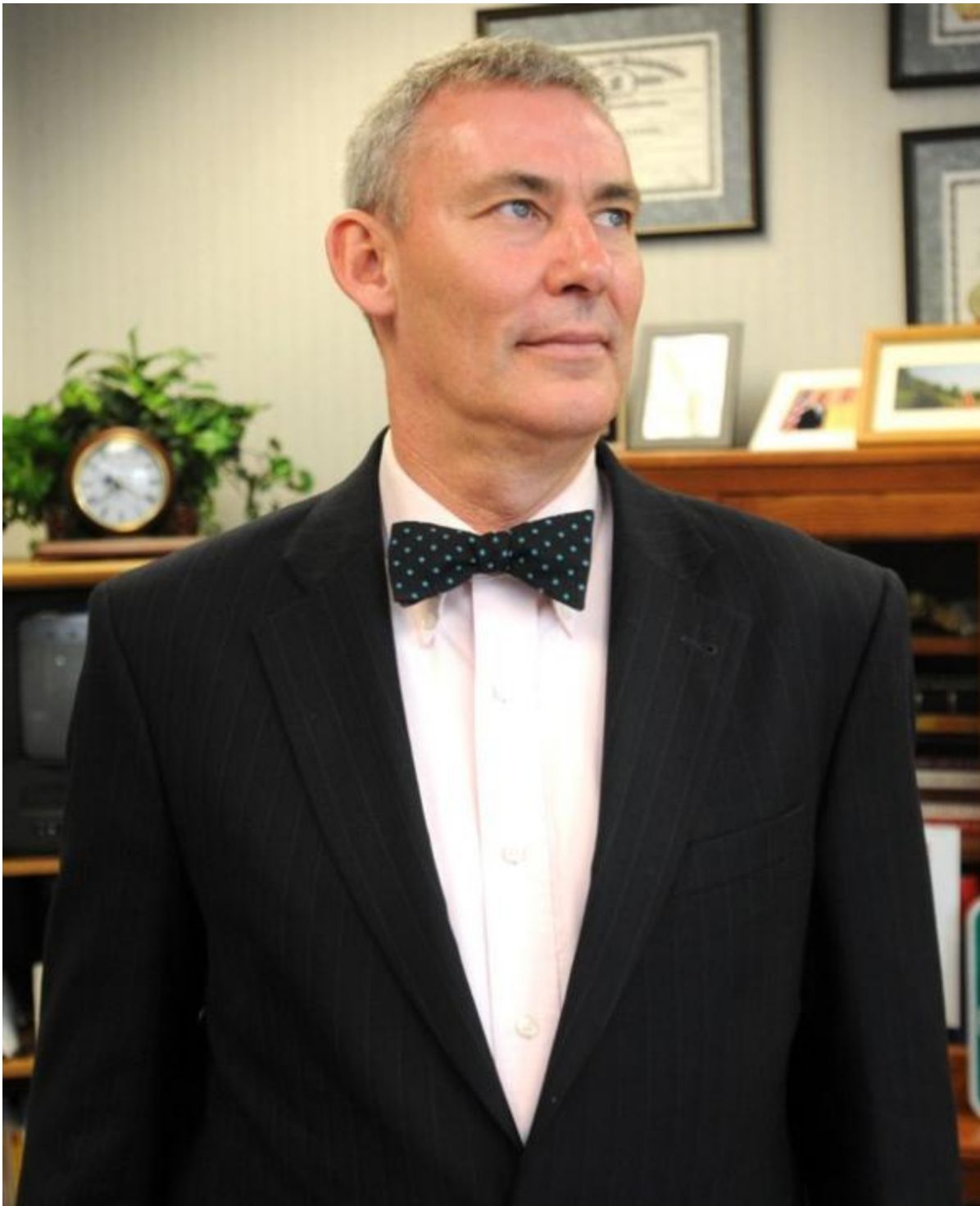




# **Madison County Circuit Clerk's Office, City of Collinsville to partner on project**

May 6 2016 4:00 PM



**COLLINSVILLE** - In an effort to streamline Madison County Circuit Court operations, the traditional court operations at Collinsville City Hall will be closed and replaced by having a full-time member of the Circuit Clerk's office at City Hall to provide access to the court system for citizens of Collinsville and the surrounding area.

Leaders of the Madison County Circuit Clerk's Office and the City of Collinsville will partner on the project, which will focus on providing effective and efficient customer service.

“Our employee will provide services including accepting payments for fines and costs, conducting record searches and other court business pursuant to Illinois State statute. The public will actually have increased access to the clerk’s office in Collinsville for all five days of the week rather than just once a week.” stated **Madison County Circuit Clerk Mark Von Nida**.

**Collinsville Mayor John Miller** called the approach “a rare opportunity for both parties to save money and provide better services to the public. This is truly a win-win.”

A considerable factor in the decision to streamline the services was the finding by an architect that the existing courtroom was a deficient space. Once the deficiency was identified both entities looked at the costs of making the space compliant. However, the estimated price tag for the project exceeded \$300,000, making it unacceptable when considering responsibilities to the public.

Given the cost Von Nida and Miller searched for better options on how to maintain services. The resulting agreement between the County and City represents two entities working together in partnership to represent the interests of their taxpayers and residents. There is no loss of revenue for either entity.

The County currently pays separate costs for internet services at city hall. This agreement provides for a consolidation of costs between the City and County. While the agreement represents a positive cash flow for the City, there will be no increase of costs for the County. The move also allows the City to use the space occupied by the court as a multi-purpose meeting room for its boards and commissions in a more accessible manner than the existing City Hall Training Room.

Mayor Miller said that the move “allows our residents to better attend meetings and participate in our democratic process in a more accessible manner.” Miller added that “The City has been in dire need for better space to conduct meeting with our boards and commissions for several years and this move allows us to truly have a unique space that can adapt to our changing needs for meeting space.” The court occupied one quarter of the space for City Hall and yet was used only one day per week.

Collinsville and the surrounding police agencies will be able to submit for filing traffic citations, misdemeanor complaints and bond receipts during regular business hours. All court proceedings currently being held at the Collinsville City Hall will be moved to the Madison County Courthouse in Edwardsville effective July 1, 2016.

The Chief Judge's office along with the Circuit Clerk, State's Attorney and Public Defender's office worked together to develop a schedule that allows for a dedicated courtroom for court cases previously being held at the Collinsville Satellite court on a day with no other dockets scheduled.

Mark Von Nida, Clerk of the Circuit Court said "Our goal is to make this transition as convenient as possible for the citizens who use the court system. It was important that we avoid crowding Collinsville residents into a courtroom with other area dockets. I'm pleased that the Chief Judge's office was able to accomplish our goal."

The move is truly a collaborative effort between two separate units of local government with the goal of providing better service at a better value to its residents and customers. In a time where it is difficult to find common ground it was found mutually through the dedication and perseverance of the staff of both the Madison County Circuit Clerk's office and the City of Collinsville.

For more information please contact the following:

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