

Several appointments made at Wednesday's Madison County Board meeting

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - Several appointments were made by the **Madison County Board** at its Wednesday, Dec. 22 meeting.

Former District 15 representative **Chris Slusser (R)** appointed by **Madison County Board Chairperson Kurt Prenzler** to fill the position of **Madison County Treasurer**. Slusser will replace **Interim Madison County Treasurer Candace Gilstrap**, who resigned after temporarily filling the position after Prenzler was elected as board chairperson and could no longer serve as treasurer. Slusser served on the Madison County Board from 2008-2012 and was reelected in the Nov. 2016 race. Slusser also served as the head of the Madison County Republican Party, a position from which he resigned after taking an interest in serving as Madison County Treasurer.

"I was interested in becoming treasurer since before Kurt was elected to the position back in 2012," Slusser said following his appointment. "I was a little too green back then."

The appointment was a bit of a surprise to Slusser, who was not expecting it when he ran for reelection this year. He said he would have had no way of determining how the county elections would go, stating he was just as surprised by Prenzler's win as he would have been if former **Madison County Board Chairperson Alan Dunstan (D)** retained the position. Slusser said he was humbled by his appointment and excited to start the new job. He said he has been learning a bit about the office and visiting with employees to get a feel for his new position.

Slusser was sworn in after the board approved the appointment with a majority vote. He said he was not surprised by the board's approval, stating the Republican majority on the board each pledged their votes to him as did a few Democrats. Slusser's wife, Megan, and his young children, Annabelle and Zoe, stood with him as he was sworn-in by **Madison County Clerk Debra Ming-Mendoza**.

He will be replaced on the board by Bethalto native **Chrissy Dutton (R)**. Dutton's appointment to the board was approved by a simple majority of the board and she was sworn-in by Ming-Mendoza as well. Board member **Art Asadorian (D)** objected to her appointment on the grounds the board was not aware of Slusser's resignation letter. Ming-Mendoza confirmed she had received Slusser's resignation letter and it was valid.

Following Dutton's swearing-in, Prenzler entertained a motion to rescind Dunstan's appointments to the **Madison County Mental Health Board** earlier in the year. Board member **Nick Petrillo (D)** who is on the board objected to Prenzler's decision to rescind the appointments.



"I just really feel, given this election, that Mr. Dunstan was confident he would surely be elected and it would be business as usual," he said to Prenzler. "I think you felt the same way. What we have here is Clinton vs. Trump on a much smaller scale. Why would we want to make this change other than to say, 'I can?'" These people are volunteers, they are quality individuals, and they challenge some of the decisions of the Mental Health Board."

Prenzler said Madison County Mental Health Board members **Edward Pinnell** and **Anthony Traxler** were reappointed at the November board meeting, despite their four year terms officially expiring on Dec. 31, 2016.

Board member **Michael Parkinson (D)** moved for an executive session to discuss the rescinding. That executive session lasted approximately 15 minutes before the board voted to rescind Dunstan's appointments by a majority vote.

Herb Clay of **Edwardsville** was chosen by Prenzler to be placed on the Mental Health Board. According to a release from Prenzler, Clay retired in 2004 as the chief probation

officer in Madison County after serving for 30 years. Clay also served on the **Edwardsville City Council**. His appointment was also approved by a simple majority by the board.

Several appointments were consolidated into one motion, until board member **Jack Minner (D)** requested to separate the appointment for the **Madison County Animal Control director**. Minner asked about the salary of Prenzler's animal control choice, **Michael Firsching**. Minner asked Prenzler if Firsching's salary would be "on the high side," following suit, he said, with Prenzler's other county appointments. Prenzler told Minner the position was hourly and would be the same rate as previous animal control directors.

"He may work less, he may work more," Prenzler said. "Knowing Michael Firsching, he'll try to save money."

Firsching is an Edwardsville veterinarian.

Other appointments included **Glen Carbon** attorney **Mary Beth Williams** in the position of ethics advisor, a position Prenzler said has remained vacant for the last eight months.

"It's been far too long for this position to remain empty," Prenzler said in a release.

Former **Madison County Chief Deputy Treasurer Jeremy Plank** of **Wood River** was appointed to the **Southwestern Illinois Flood Prevention District Council**. He replaced **John Hamm**, who resigned in November.

Madison County Board members appointed to various boards included: **Phil Chapman (R)** to the **Southwestern Illinois Law Enforcement Commission**, **Tom McRae (R)** and **Jamie Goggin (R)** to **Madison County Parks and Recreation**, **Don Moore (R)** to the **Emergency Telephone System Board** and **Clint Jones (R)** and **Mick Madison (R)** to the **Madison County Storm Water Commission**.

