

Madison County Elected Officials Sworn Into Office

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EDWARDSVILLE — Madison County held a virtual swearing-in ceremony on Tuesday for its elected officials.

Chairman Kurt Prenzler was sworn into his second term in office. Former County Board members David Michael and Tom McRae, were sworn into their new positions as auditor and circuit clerk, respectively, as well as newly elected State's Attorney Tom Haine.

It was the first virtual swearing-in ceremony of its kind in Madison County. The event, which started at 10 a.m. and went every 30 minutes, was held to protect public health during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The officials thanked everyone for coming and especially their families and the voters who elected them.

"I want to thank the taxpayers of Madison County for trusting me with this position," Michael said. "I promise to always put you first in the decisions in the auditor's office."

Michael said when he was in college, and taking his CPA exams, there were conversations with his parents about how to integrate accounting with the passionate service of others.

"At that time I never even knew that a county auditor existed," he said. "This is going to be a great opportunity to serve others and use my passion for public policy, as well as accounting and auditing skills."

McRae said his family has been in public service as long as he could remember. He said he once heard the term "service above self" and found it befitting to those elected into office.

"I believe in service above self," McRae said. "As public servants, I think we all have to remember who we serve. The office of the circuit clerk belongs to the people."

County Board member Ray Wesley, of Godfrey, resigned Tuesday and was sworn in as McRae's chief deputy.

County Clerk Debra Ming-Mendoza introduced retired state senator William Haine.

"I would like to impose on you, since I'm a former state's attorney and senator, to say a few words, if that's OK?" Haine said. "I have to hurry because I'm getting the 'bins' with all these Republicans around."

The four elected officials sworn in during the virtual ceremony were Republicans. The elder Haine, a Democrat, served as Madison County State's Attorney from 1988 to 2002 and as Illinois State Senator from 2002 to 2019.

Haine gave an overview of the office “this fine young man” would be assuming.

“The State’s Attorney is the chief law enforcement officer in the county,” he said.

He said by that he means the state’s attorney is the one who decides what is to be done to assure the fair and proper administration of justice and the law is followed in Madison County.

“This young man is entering into an office during very troubling times,” he said.

The elder Haine gave the younger Haine his oath of office.

“I want to give all glory to God,” Haine said. “I thank him for all the blessings he’s given to me in my life.”

Tom Haine said the administration of justice is a sacred trust and one he takes seriously. He said it’s a great honor that Madison County citizens bestowed that trust upon him.

“I will not let them down,” Haine said. “I will fight every day to fairly, equally, and aggressively enforce the law in Madison County and protect all of the constitutional rights we have all fought for and hold so dear.”

Prenzler congratulated all those sworn in, including Coroner Stephen P. Nonn, who took his oath of office for his sixth term during a private ceremony held early Tuesday.

“2020 has been a difficult year,” Prenzler said. “With the COVID-19 situation and the imposed business shutdowns.”

Prenzler said it reminds him of one of the earliest flags in the war for Independence — “The Appeal to Heaven” flag. The flag is white with a green pine tree in the center and the slogan “The Appeal to Heaven.”

“You will see a version of this flag in the famous painting the ‘Battle of Bunker Hill,’ which took place outside of Boston in 1775,” Prenzler said. “As we end 2020 and move into 2021 we should remember our history and those who founded this great country and the freedoms we have enjoyed. Now is the time to give ‘The Appeal to Heaven.’”