

Prenzler calls for return of more than \$25,000 in campaign contributions

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EDWARDSVILLE — Madison County Treasurer Kurt Prenzler is calling for the return of more than \$25,000 in campaign contributions made to the county board chairman by an appointee under investigation by a special prosecutor.

Last week, Prenzler called for the resignation of the Metro East Sanitary District board president after it was reported by the *Belleville News Democrat* that his auto repair shop did \$33,000 in business with the taxing district.

This week, the county board chairman called for the removal of his appointee and “personal friend.” However, it was stated earlier by the county administrator that the chairman had “no oversight” of the situation.

Prenzler was the first public official who pointed out the chairman, under Illinois law, could remove the appointee. All the chairman needs is the county board’s approval.

“It’s funny the chairman is asking for his removal due to ethics violations,” he said. “He’s trying to take credit for doing the right thing after the fact.”

Prenzler believes the chairman should return all political donations made by his appointee and top individual donor, who contributed \$25,000, and also disclose the donation history of all board/commission appointees.

“What does it take to get on a board or commission in the county?” Prenzler asked. “There is a perception to get appointed you need to be a personal friend or political donor.”

Certified public accountants are trained to look for patterns and one Prenzler has noticed in Madison County is the pattern of “pay to play.”

“The chairman appoints individuals to boards and commissions who are personal friends and campaign donors,” he said. “Some of them serve as volunteers, while others get paid — such is the case with this appointee who makes \$15,000 a year. People are tired of machine politics.”

The county chairman claims the MESD board president committed an ethics violation when he failed to disclose information on his economic interest statement related to business dealings with local government units.

“Too often, the only ethics you see in this county are ‘caughtya’ ethics,” he said. “If someone speaks up it’s often ignored, unless the FBI comes walking through the door. Accepting a campaign donation from an appointee is not the best practice and one I would stop.”