



Saint Louis County

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Kevin Z. Gray
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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Cancer claims the life of Commissioner Steve O'Neil

St. Louis County Commissioner Steve O'Neil passed away earlier today, according to his family. O'Neil was in his home, surrounded by loved ones. He represented the county's second district since 2005 and was most recently re-elected in November 2012. In March, O'Neil was diagnosed with a rare and aggressive form of thyroid cancer. While undergoing treatment, he continued to serve and attend meetings, including the most recent meeting on July 9.

"We are deeply saddened by the loss of Steve O'Neil," said Kevin Gray, County Administrator. "To know Steve was to like him, and to be impressed by his unwavering commitment to serve the less fortunate. He was a tremendous advocate for the homeless and people in need.

"On behalf of the County Board and all of our employees, our thoughts and prayers are with his family, friends and all those who benefitted from his service," said Gray. "We are grieving with them."

According to the family, a visitation will be held Saturday, July 20, 6-10 p.m., at Peace United Church, 1111 11th Avenue East, Duluth. The funeral service will be Sunday, July 21, at 1 p.m. in the DECC Auditorium.

"We have received inquiries as to next steps, and are working with the County Attorney and County Auditor to review state statute on proper procedure for filling a vacant commissioner seat," said Gray.

The last time the county had a commissioner vacancy mid-term was in 2000, due to the resignation of Liz Prebich. In that instance, a special election was held.

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