

News

Kellogg to head health agency

Mentor resident will take over Lake General Health District in 2010; replacing retiring commissioner

Saturday, November 22, 2008 1:34 AM EST

By John Arthur Hutchison

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A familiar face within the Lake County General Health District will take over in 2010 as the new health commissioner.

Frank Kellogg, the agency's director of environmental services and deputy health commissioner, will officially take over Jan. 1, 2010, replacing retiring Health Commissioner Joel Lucia.

Kellogg, 58, of Mentor, will continue his current responsibilities and will work with Lucia during the transition.

Kellogg has worked as environmental health director since 1980 and was given extra duties as deputy commissioner in 2007.

Becoming a health commissioner is something with which Kellogg has had past experience.

From April 1979 to October 1980, he served as Geauga County's health commissioner.

Kellogg got his start in public health as an intern for the Lake County General Health District in 1971, when he first met Lucia.

Working for the agency is what he always wanted to do.

"I really like the work and the people, and Joel was great," Kellogg said.

"At the time when I graduated from Cleveland State there weren't any job openings so I went to grad school and there weren't any openings so I went to Geauga County and then the environmental health position opened here."

Kellogg said with the economic downturn one of his most important tasks will be to figure out how much revenue the agency will have to work with, especially with the potential of shrinking grant dollars and property tax funds.

"I welcome the challenge and want to thank the board for having their trust," Kellogg said.

He said the Health District is known for its reputation as a leader in the field.

"It's nice to work in the county. It's urban and rural both," Kellogg said. "If you're in the public health field it's a nice mix of things."

Lucia will conclude his service with the Health District at the end of December 2009.

He started with the agency in 1971 and became health commissioner in 1980, and has a total of 47 years of service in public health.

Lucia said he asked the board to make a decision on a new health commissioner this year because work on the agency's 2010 budget will begin this January.

"Whoever is the health commissioner, I wanted them to have some say because it will be their budget," Lucia said.

Kellogg has the experience, the confidence of the staff and the leaders of the county's 23 political subdivisions, which pool together to form the Health District, Lucia said.

Lucia had planned to retire in 2005. Interviews were conducted at that time, with Kellogg being one of the top finalists out of about 50 applicants.

The board eventually asked Lucia to stay another year, and when that time came in 2006 he said he felt it wasn't the appropriate time to leave.

Lucia stayed on to help with the agency's purchase of their building in Painesville, add a new roof to the facility and to help cut costs by restructuring some of the administration.

"Now I can leave with a good feeling," Lucia said.

Kellogg and his wife, Karen, have two grown children, Allen and Ryan.

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