



COUNTY OF KENOSHA

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News release

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Samantha Kerkman takes oath of office as Kenosha County Executive

KENOSHA — Samantha Kerkman took the oath of office as Kenosha County Executive early Monday evening.

With that, Kerkman became Kenosha County's fifth elected executive since the office was established 40 years ago, and the first woman to hold the post.

"I'm excited to hit the ground running," said Kerkman, who was elected to the office on April 5. "I look forward to continuing a process of listening to stakeholders inside and outside of county government about their needs and concerns, and forging a productive path forward for the county. I am honored to have this opportunity."

Kerkman, 48, was elected to the office on April 5. She succeeds former County Executive Jim Kreuser, whose previously announced retirement took effect Monday.

A native of western Kenosha County and a current resident of Salem Lakes, Kerkman has served the area as a representative in the state Assembly since 2001, first in the 66th District and now in the 61st. She will resign from her state post in June, with a successor to be elected this fall.

Kerkman's former husband, Kenosha County Circuit Court Judge Chad Kerkman, administered the oath of office in a small, private ceremony including their sons, Ian and Evan; Kerkman's parents, Mark and Marge Starzyk; and a few close friends. A larger, public event will be scheduled in the coming weeks.

Staff hires announced:

Kerkman on Monday also announced the hiring of two members of her County Executive's Office staff.

Tami Rongstad, a longtime staff member in Kerkman's legislative office in Madison, will serve as her Chief of Staff.

Jill Tatge-Rozell, a Kenosha News reporter and western Kenosha County native, will serve as Office Manager.

Rongstad, who has worked for Kerkman since 2011 and was previously a staff member for former state Rep. Jeff Stone, has been present in the County Executive's Office during Kerkman's transition process with Kreuser and his staff.

Tatge-Rozell will join the staff on May 16, after she has ended her employment with the Kenosha News.

"I'm pleased to have the opportunity to bring these talented staff members to the County Executive's Office," Kerkman said. "I am confident they will be of great service to my administration and the people of Kenosha County."

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