

Week of April 7, 2017

Imagining Mayor Krewson

I talked to a few St. Louis civvies over the past week to get their thoughts on how a Mayor Krewson will differ from the past sixteen years of Mayor Slay.

The one thing that pretty much everyone mentioned was her relationship with County Executive **Steve Stenger**. **Francis Slay** and Stenger never really hit it off. There was no sense of partnership that Slay and Stenger's predecessor **Charlie Dooley** had established. It's said that Krewson and Stenger have genuine affection and respect for each other.

Additionally some think that this type of "reset" won't be limited to the city's relationship with the largest county. It could also extend to the new governor, to whoever the new US Attorney is, to the Bi-State board, and on and on. Slay's relationships with many entities – in Jefferson City as well – were ultimately weighed down with sixteen years of baggage. What Slay did or didn't do or say, what the city did or didn't do, in various episodes piled up. As former mayor **Vince Schoemehl** famously quipped: your friends come and go, but your enemies just accumulate.

Krewson starts fresh.

Most people describe Krewson as "nice," but the insiders who know her think that folks will be surprised how tough she is. They won't be surprised if she takes on some controversial issues or powerful interests; in fact, they expect it. Confrontations might not have the brashness of **Jeff Rainford**, but below the surface, it will be very similar steel.

She's an intense listener who is more wonk-ish and data driven than Slay. Look for her to be in the weeds and details of policy proposals that her office puts forth.

And

This gem: "Slay knows the words to every Pink Floyd song. Krewson knows the words to every Taylor Swift hit. Slay is more likely to use social media. Lyda is more likely to use email. Slay had a favorite restaurant. Krewson will be every restaurant's favorite..."

March State Revenues

March tax receipts were depressingly flat, -.19%. That brings the year-to-fiscal-date total to a positive, but hardly robust, 4.31% growth.

Within the month's tax numbers: individual income barely budged; it was up a meager 1.71%. Refunds meanwhile rebounded. After being down significantly last month they were up 11.15%.

Budget watchers caution that the tax receipts this time of year are volatile. And April is obviously a big month. A lot hinges on the next couple of weeks.

Credit Cap

Word is that the historic tax credit program is now \$50 million over its cap for the year. These applications are all in line (first-come, first-served) for when the new fiscal year starts July 1. In other words, a third of next year's allocation is already spoken for.

Meanwhile the governor's tax credit commission is due to make its report right about then – June 30. One rumor has a special session being contemplated...

Rumor: Wagner Prepping Kick-Off?

Word is circulating that Congresswoman **Ann Wagner** is planning to announce her Senate exploratory as early as Monday. It's said that she's waiting for the incumbent, US Senator **Claire McCaskill** to cast a No vote on the Gorsuch nomination.

And – one observer reiterates the consensus that well be seeing a Republican primary. “Wagner is far from a consensus GOP choice...”

Meet Ron Hicks And Associates

Late last month former Rep. **Ron Hicks** formed an LLC, “Ron Hicks and Associates LLC.” In the paperwork filed with the secretary of state's office, the purpose of Hicks' LLC is “to study proposed legislation to determine possible effects on clients.”

Hicks has been up in the building a few times this session. But he hasn't registered as a lobbyist, and can't for a few more months. The new anti-revolving door legislation imposes a six-month wait for Hicks whose term just ended in January.

State Employee Moves

Michelle Halford has joined the Office of the Governor as Executive Secretary. She moved from Office of Administration where she worked for the Chief Information Officer for 11 years.

Brian Bear joined the Department of Economic Development as chief counsel. Previously he was with Spencer Fane LLP for a year, and before that the Attorney General's Office for 5 years.

Rochelle Reeves re-joined the Department of Revenue, where she was before spending 7 years in the Attorney General's Office.

Katie Jo Wheeler joined the Department of Natural Resources as legal counsel. Previously she was with Spencer Fane LLP for 5 years.

Khristine Heisinger has joined the Office of the Secretary of State as Elections Counsel. She was previously with Stinson Leonard Street for 11 years.

Colette Neuner joined the Office of the Secretary of State as Securities Counsel. Previously she was with the Attorney General's Office for 3 years.

Jason Dunkel joined the Office of the Attorney General as an assistant attorney general. He was previously with Runnymede Law Group for 3 years. Before that he had interning stints with the Eastern District U.S. Attorney, the Jefferson County Prosecuting Attorney and the Stoddard County Prosecuting Attorney.

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