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Russo out at St. Vincent de Paul

Organization drops executive directorship to help financial woes

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WATERLOO — Pat Russo is out after 38 years leading the local Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

The Waterloo District Council of the Catholic charitable organization has eliminated the executive directorship as it works to right its financial ship and repay a large federal tax debt.



RUSSO

Joe Sobczyk, St. Vincent de Paul council president, said Russo, who had served as the executive director since 1980, will not be replaced.

His duties are being divided among council leadership and volunteers.

“We appreciate Pat Russo’s many years of dedicated service as executive director,” Sobczyk said. “During this transition, members of the Society carry on serving those in need in the community.”

“As we go through this time of transition, we ask for continued support and contributions from the community,” he added.

Russo declined initial comment when reached Thursday but said he may have a statement in the future.

The leadership shake-up comes after the Internal Revenue Service filed \$67,078 in federal tax liens against the nonprofit agency for failing to remit federal income, Social Security and Medicare taxes withheld from employee paychecks from September 2015 through March 2018.

St. Vincent de Paul’s national organization had put the Waterloo council on a 90-day suspension last fall for failing to have the proper leadership structure in place, Sobczyk said.

New board members were appointed and three temporary board members with business and legal experience were brought on to help restructure the organization.

“We’ve been fully reinstated with our national organization,” Sobczyk said. “We’re going to move forward with our missions.”

St. Vincent de Paul operates a

thrift store at 320 Broadway St. and a warehouse at 522 Bratnober St. It also provides assistance to the needy through donations. A second thrift store on Main Street in Cedar Falls closed in February when the building it rented was sold and the lease was not renewed.

The local organization has gone from 17 to seven employees. It will attempt to sell the warehouse to repay the IRS debt, which is currently being retired on a monthly payment plan.

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AP PHOTOS

Treyton Gubser, left, and his uncle Daniel Gubser paddle using shovels through the floodwaters after they rescued Daniel’s kid’s cat, Bob, Wednesday in Hamburg.

Absentee, early votes influence Senate win

Absentee ballots made up 45.7 percent of vote

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WATERLOO — Absentee ballots and early voting made all of the difference in the special election for Senate District 30.

Democrat Eric Giddens won Tuesday by 1,976 votes. Of those votes 1,813 were from absentee ballots and early voting, according to the unofficial voting results. On Thursday Black Hawk County canvassed the results.

After the canvass Giddens had 7,611 votes to Republican Walt Rogers’ 5,635 and Libertarian Fred Perryman’s 143. There were seven write-in votes.

Overall the 6,122 absentee ballots made up 45.7 percent of the overall vote Tuesday.

The election saw about 29.7 percent of registered voters turn out.

“You can compare to the special elections and senate races in the past,” said Grant Veeder, Black Hawk County auditor. “You can draw your own conclusions from the numbers.”

In July 1997, Senate District 13 had a special election that drew a 32.6 percent turnout, and in January 1986 the same Senate district, with different boundary lines, had a turnout of 34 percent, Veeder said.

On Monday Giddens is heading



GIDDENS

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Flooding response eyed

Over \$1B in damage to communities, farms and businesses

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DES MOINES — A week after a “bomb cyclone” triggered major flooding across Iowa, lawmakers say they will follow Gov. Kim Reynolds’ lead in responding to what is expected to be more than \$1 billion in damage to communities, farms, businesses and infrastructure.

“I am looking forward to sitting down with the governor and talking through that,” House Speaker Linda Upmeyer, R-Clear



The cab of a pickup truck peeks out of floodwaters Wednesday in Hamburg.

Lake, said Thursday. “She’s been out assessing this really effectively, I think, and understanding what’s going on.”

“Right now, the governor is on the ground evaluating the situation and we expect to work with her as she comes back to figure

out what any appropriate or necessary legislative response is,” added Senate Majority Leader Jack Whitver, R-Ankeny.

Floodwaters have inundated a large swath of western Iowa and eastern Nebraska along the Missouri River, North America’s longest river, prompting about half of Iowa’s counties to declare states of disaster. The flooding has killed at least four people and untold numbers of livestock, destroyed corn and soybeans in storage and cut off access to farms because of road and rail damage.

According to the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land

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