

# Page's Nominations To Board Of Freeholders Include Mantovani And Nations

By JASON ROSENBAUM · OCT 1, 2019

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*St. Louis County Executive Sam Page made his nine nominations to the Board of Freeholders on Tuesday.*

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St. Louis County Executive Sam Page on Tuesday nominated nine people to serve on the Board of Freeholders, which will soon examine the future of St. Louis and St. Louis County governance.

The nominees include Mark Mantovani, who lost the 2018 Democratic nomination for county executive to Steve Stenger, and former Bi-State Development Agency CEO John Nations.

Both Page and St. Louis Mayor Lyda Krewson have to appoint 18 out of the 19 members of the board, which could potentially ask city and county voters to approve a consolidation or merger proposal. [Krewson made her nine nominations last week.](#)

In addition to Nations and Mantovani, Page's picks include:

- Democrat Cheryl Milton Roberts, senior equal opportunity and diversity practitioner at the Missouri Department of Transportation.
- Independent Dee Joyner, director of resilient communities at the Adrian Dominican Sisters and former senior vice president at Commerce Bank.
- Democrat Carol Stroker, a Hazelwood city councilwoman and former member of the Missouri House.
- Democrat Jason Wilson, CEO of Northwest Coffee Roasting Co. and a member of the Clayton Board of Education.
- Republican Katy Forand, president of the board of directors for Lemay Child and Family Center and a sales associate at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices. She previously worked for then-Gov. Matt Blunt as his director of outreach.
- Democrat Fred Searcy, a trustee at Mt. Herald Missionary Baptist Church and director of minority recruitment for Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 562.
- Independent Alex Garza, chief medical officer at SSM Health.

Soon after he made his nominations, Page told members of the county council that his selections mark “the beginning of a year-long process that will bring 19 people together to determine if there’s a better way to address some of our regional challenges.”

“I want St. Louis County to be as strong as possible — to provide opportunities for all of our residents and to be at the top of the list when someone thinks about bringing jobs or new business to a new location,” Page said. “We know that the stronger St. Louis is, the stronger that St. Louis County will be.”

The Board of Freeholders has a year to present options to city and county voters. It could decide to combine certain services, which is what happened in the 1950s with the creation of the Metropolitan Sewer District. It could present to voters

some sort of merger proposal, including having St. Louis become a municipality within St. Louis County. Or it could offer up nothing.

Page said he's "focused on ensuring that the right people are on the board and they're ready to pursue a process that's fair and inspires confidence."

"Every part of our diverse community must be heard," Page said. "I want to see a board that thinks creatively, listens carefully and finds solutions that we can all get behind. By following an open and thoughtful process, I'm confident that the board will give us a good result."

Page's selections now go to the St. Louis County Council for approval. In St. Louis, an aldermanic committee will have a meeting Monday on Krewson's picks.

St. Louis Board of Aldermen President Lewis Reed said Tuesday that one thing his colleagues will be examining closely is whether the party affiliation of Krewson's nominees checks out. Krewson nominated two people, Eddie Roth and Abdul-Kaba Abdullah, as independents. Roth served in two Democratic mayoral administrations, while previously Abdullah ran for committeeman as a Democrat.

The Missouri Constitution says that only five out of the nine people that a mayor or county executive nominate can be a member of a political party. That means four have to be affiliated with a party other than the Democratic Party — or be independents.

"Because we don't want a future court challenge to unravel the whole thing, right?" Reed said. "We don't want to go through this work and find out someone made it through without the appropriate credentials."

Before she announced her nominees to the Board of Freeholders, Krewson noted that people don't register to vote by political party in Missouri. "So I take them at their word," she said.

Gov. Mike Parson said last week that he will appoint the final member of the Board of Freeholders soon.