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Warren to lead Contractors Licensing Board

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Holly Warren

Submitted

An extensive search to fill the executive director position at the Bowling Green-Warren County Contractors Licensing Board led the board’s search committee right back home.

In a called meeting Monday evening, the board voted unanimously to hire current Contractors Licensing Board office manager Holly Warren for the executive director position that Bob Appling retired from in June.

Appling was hired to start the board – created to regulate construction activity and protect property owners in Bowling Green and Warren County – in 1992, so the board took seriously the task of finding the right person to fill his shoes.

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Appling retiring after 30 years with contractors board

“As a board, we did our due diligence,” said Steve Speakman, an original member of the board and chairman of the search committee. “We had 30 applicants and narrowed that down to five.”

In the end, the committee determined that the right candidate was someone who had worked closely with Appling for two decades.

“Her knowledge of the operation was key,” Speakman said of Warren. “She’s been here for more than 20 years. She knows how to communicate with contractors and the public, and she can mediate disputes.”

Warren, who joined Appling at the board in 2001 and most recently had been part of a three-person staff, said working with Appling for nearly 21 years was good preparation for her new role.

“I have been able to deal with all aspects of construction, from approval of permits, to investigating

consumer complaints, to bringing cases before the board for disciplinary hearings,” Warren said.

A Clinton County native who graduated from Western Kentucky University in 1997 with degrees in chemistry and biology, Warren came to the contractors licensing board through her role as construction supervisor at Minit Mart Foods.

She has seen the board grow from around 600 licensed contractors to more than 3,000 and has learned from the board’s founding executive director.



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“I have big shoes to fill,” Warren said. “Bob set the board up and mentored me for 20 years. Now I want to take the board forward, especially in technology.”

From its start in 1992, the contractors licensing board has become self-sustaining through its annual licensing fees of \$250 for general contractors and \$100 for specialty contractors.

Now Warren aims to build on that foundation.

She said she would like to implement education and testing programs for general contractors to ensure that they “have a working knowledge of permitting and inspections.”

“This will help protect the health and welfare of the community by creating a more informed contractor,” Warren said.

The new executive director also aspires to implement education programs for high school students as a way of encouraging interest in construction trades, and she would like to improve the board’s use of technology.

“I want to get to where contractors can apply online,” she said.

Speakman, a longtime local electrical contractor, welcomes the new ideas.

“I think Holly is going to improve the board and bring more innovation,” he said.

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