

Brister gets up to speed Times-Picayune

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Pat Brister is spending the time until she is inaugurated as St. Tammany Parish's first female chief executive catching up with what she's missed since taking a breather from politics in 2008.

Brister, a former two-term councilwoman who handily won the race last month for parish president, has begun the transition process, which she and outgoing President Kevin Davis assure will be smooth. Davis, who has served in the post for 12 years, could not seek a fourth term because of term limits.

Davis has provided Brister and her transition team with temporary offices in the building adjacent to his, on Koop Drive north of Mandeville, making it easy for the team to attend meetings and learn about the parish's day-to-day operations. Earlier, Brister named four people to her transition team: Howard Daigle, a north shore attorney; Mandeville City Councilwoman Trilby Lenfant; Maura Donahue, a co-owner of DonahueFavret Contractors Inc. and wife of state Sen. Jack Donahue; and **Marty Mayer, president and CEO of Stirling Properties.**

"This is the first administrative transition under this Home Rule Charter," Davis said in a statement. "Everyone is committed to making the move seamlessly. I have instructed my staff to assist the transition team as they begin their process. We are going to do whatever is necessary to make sure that the Brister administration begins successfully."

Brister said she is getting up to speed on the projects that will remain in the progress as she takes the reins, including the fishing pier and the south Slidell levee.

What she's not thinking about is making wholesale changes the minute she walks in the door.

"I have no intention of going in the first day and changing anything," she said, noting that it will take her a few months to get comfortable in the job before she is ready to tackle departmental or structural changes, if she considers that at all. Then, she said she has "lots of plans I want to see come to fruition."

She's also not concerned that she won't know what to do, as she started on the council at the time the Home Rule Charter took effect and knows the duties of the office she soon will assume.

The inauguration will take place Jan. 9.

The transition team may be reached at transitionteam@stpgov.org or 985.898.2362. Residents can find an automatic email link to the transition team at www.stpgov.org.

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Christine Harvey can be reached at charvey@timespicayune.com or 985.645.2853.

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