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Egan leaving mayoral post

By Anne Jacobson

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Egan

Mayor Dennis Egan will resign by April 1. He made his decision public today, 12 days after the Red Wing City Council voted to have an independent investigator look into Egan's involvement with the Minnesota Industrial Sand Council.

Egan has maintained that there was no conflict of interest in holding both positions. The public

conflict, however, proved another matter.

He reiterated Friday that he's pleased city attorney Jay Squires issued an opinion that no legal conflict of interest exists at this time.

"Yet, I believe that a mayor must live to a higher standard than just avoiding conflicts of interest," Egan said in a statement. "The position of mayor is one of public service and, if a mayor's activities serve as a distraction or roadblock for the city, the public is not well-served. The last few weeks have

demonstrated that my new position can serve as a distraction to the city and my family."

On Feb. 11, the council also decided to ask the state attorney general for input on pieces of the situation, such as a recall petition some citizens have started. That recall petition ends with Egan's resignation.

He said he will spend the next six weeks helping

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▶ EGAN

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the city transition. After that time, he will dedicate his time to his wife, two daughters and his business, Egan Public Affairs.

"We should never lose our willingness to maintain the balance of interests that has made Red Wing a strong city," he said. "We must never lose the ability to bring people together to look at facts, share information and make decisions that are in the best interest of our community."

A professional lobbyist for about 15 years and former Red Wing Area Chamber of Commerce president, Egan became mayor — the titular

head of city government — following a special election Feb. 9, 2011. He won 60 percent of the votes and carried 11 of 12 precincts. The margin grew in his 2012 re-election: He won all 12 precincts and carried more than 73 percent of the vote.

The second election came a few weeks after Red Wing City Council passed and Egan signed an ordinance that basically prohibits any mining of silica sand within the city limits. He told the newspaper the fact he signed the ordinance made clear his stance on mining of the Mississippi River bluffs surrounding Red Wing.

In January, Egan accepted the post with the Minnesota Industrial Sand Council, a group of four state-based companies that mine sand and aggregate predominantly in the Mankato area. They want to ensure that any legislative action won't affect their existing operations and current expansion plans.

Egan and City Council Administrator Kay Kuhlmann discussed his decision to accept the lobbying post at that time. The general public learned about the position after Politics in Minnesota published a story Feb. 1 about the mounting frack sand debate the state Capitol.