

Cass County Attorney Christopher Strandlie announces election bid



Chris Strandlie. Photo submitted

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Cass County Attorney Christopher J. Strandlie announced last Friday that he will be seeking election as Cass County Attorney.

Strandlie has been the county's attorney since March 2008 when he was unanimously appointed by the Cass County Board of Commissioners, after former County Attorney Earl Maus was appointed as a district court judge.

Strandlie has been with the Cass County Attorney's Office since 2001, serving as the first assistant from 2003 until being appointed county attorney.

His primary focus before becoming county attorney was the prosecution of violent and controlled substance crimes. As county attorney he continues to make prosecution of those crimes a priority but also is the chief legal advisor for all county departments.

"I have enjoyed the challenges that this job has presented," Strandlie stated. "It has been interesting building a relationship with the county board and all of the other department heads. I also appreciate the importance of having hard-working, competent assistant attorneys and support staff. Public safety is our No. 1 priority and it takes a team effort to accomplish that goal."

Strandlie also said he is extremely proud of what he has accomplished while with the county attorney's office. During his tenure he has represented Cass County in nearly every case imaginable, from petty misdemeanor traffic tickets to first-degree murder.

He said he understands the importance of maintaining good communication with the various law enforcement agencies in Cass County.

"Successful prosecutions come from good police work. We are very fortunate in this county to have extremely-competent law enforcement officers conducting investigations," he noted.

Strandlie enjoys serving Cass County as the County Attorney. "I grew up here and have chosen to raise my family in this area. These people are my friends and neighbors. I am committed to continuing the long tradition of and reputation for integrity originally established in this office by Ed Rogers, Cass County's attorney for 46 years, and continued for the last 25 years by Earl Maus."

He is particularly proud of the commitment that his office has made to exploring innovative ways to combat domestic violence, preventing repeat DUI offenders and keeping youth from becoming involved with drugs and alcohol.

"We continuously work to find solutions to the relationship of drugs and alcohol to all crimes, but especially to domestic violence," he said.

Strandlie is a member of the Working Together Coalition, ATOD (Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drugs) and ZAP (Zero Alcohol Providers) groups that focus on educating youth about the risks and consequences of alcohol consumption, educating kids about alternatives to drinking and prosecuting those who provide the alcohol.

The County Attorney's office is also committed to the success of Wellness Court, a collaboration between the Cass County and the Leech Lake Tribal Courts that provides intensive supervision of qualified repeat DUI offenders. Strandlie indicated that his office is in the process of implementing a Domestic Violence Court that would provide enhanced supervision and consequences to those offenders.

Strandlie was born and raised in Walker and graduated in 1984 from Walker-Hackensack High School. He joined the U.S. Army shortly after graduation and proudly served until being honorably discharged in 1986. He ultimately returned to Walker in 1995 and entered a private law practice after completing law school at the University of North Dakota. He continued to work in private practice until being hired by Cass County.

Strandlie is a 15-year member of the Walker Fire Department, the Walker American Legion, Northstar Sportsmen's Club, the Minnesota County Attorney's Association and is a lifetime member of Hope Lutheran Church of Walker. He has served on the Walker-Hackensack-Akeley School Board and as president of the Leech Lake Area Chamber of Commerce. He also volunteers as a youth hockey coach and sits on several local nonprofit boards and committees.

He and his wife, Erica, live in Walker and have four children – Sarah, 14; Caleb, 11; Benjamin, 8; and Abigale, 6.