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AG-elect Schuette names transition team

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Attorney General-elect Bill Schuette today named seven people to his transition team.

The top three positions in Schuette's team include director Troy Cumings , a Grand Rapids lawyer; senior counsel Richard D. McLellan, a Lansing attorney and Republican activist; and senior advisor Jim Barrett, former Michigan Chamber of Commerce president.

Rounding out Schuette's team will be Gary Gordon, former chief deputy of Cox's AG office; William Danhof, East Lansing attorney; Lori Wortz, owner of a company that specializes in strategic planning for public policy issues, and Rusty Hills, Schuette's campaign spokesman.

Schuette has assembled a transition slate that is more than double the size of Gov. Rick Snyder's team, which includes three people.

"Next to the governor, the attorney general's office touches more people in more ways than any other office in state government," Hills said. "This is a wide ranging position and there are a lot of outstanding issues.

"To prepare for the next attorney general, Cox and Schuette are trying to work out a time to meet next week, said Joy Yearout, Cox's spokeswoman.

The AG's office has made space available for Schuette and his staff to work in between now and January.

To help in the transition, the AG's 23 divisions have created an overview of the work each division does, highlighting the budget, workload, significant cases, successes and goals.

"Cox wants to secure an orderly transition and ensure that incoming Attorney General Schuette has a full understanding of the office," Yearout said. "Attorney General Cox looks forward to serving as a mentor for Attorney General Schuette and answering his questions or anything that might come up throughout his term."

Meanwhile, Oakland County Clerk Ruth Johnson has chosen Stu Sandler to chair her transition to the Secretary of State office. Stu Sandler is the former director of external affairs and campaign manager for Cox's gubernatorial bid.

"She's going to be very aggressive about the transition," Sandler said.

Johnson also has plans to meet next week with outgoing Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land.

"She's given me an open door policy and access to the staff there," Johnson said about Land. "It will enable me to hit the ground running."

In addition to her clerk duties, Johnson over the next two months will convene about a dozen advisory committees to help carry out her campaign promises, among them establishing an election crimes unit, and making ATV and boat registrations easier. Johnson has tapped Detroit City Clerk Janice M. Winfrey to join the effort.

What Cox or Land will do after leaving office is uncertain.

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