

News Democrat

BarberMurphy Group buys Johnson Properties

By Will Buss

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Commercial real estate and brokerage firm BarberMurphy Group in Shiloh has announced that it has acquired another metro-east commercial real estate brokerage firm, Johnson Properties Inc. in Fairview Heights.

Six commercial brokers from Johnson Properties will relocate to BarberMurphy Group's offices in Shiloh, including Johnson Properties President Terry Johnson, who will serve as a broker with BarberMurphy Group. The terms of the deal do not include any physical assets or liabilities from Johnson Properties. Further terms of the transaction were not released.

Wayne Barber Jr. and Paul Murphy established the BarberMurphy Group in 2004. Steve Zuber, who joined the firm in 2005, was named as a third principal at the company in 2012.

Murphy said Johnson contacted BarberMurphy Group three weeks about selling Johnson Properties. Murphy said the deal creates the largest commercial real estate company in Southern Illinois.

"Between the two of our companies, separately, we had a large majority of the listed properties in this area," Murphy said. "And by combining them, it's obvious we have almost doubled that."

Johnson formed Johnson Properties in 1996. In 2007, he merged his business with another commercial real estate firm, the Kenneth Johnson Agency, which his father founded in 1945.

Johnson said this move reunites him with Murphy and Barber after they had worked together at the Kenneth Johnson Agency during the early to mid 1990s.

"We have worked together before and we obviously worked on deals together since then," Johnson said. "This will be a pretty dynamic group with a very large market share."

He also said he did not have a successor to his business and it made a lot of sense to combine his workforce with BarberMurphy Group.

"I am very excited about the merger of our two sales forces because you eliminate a lot of dual expenses doing business this way versus as two separate firms," he said. "Most importantly, I am free of management duties and can focus on putting deals together with 100 percent of my time."

Murphy said he is pleased to be adding experienced commercial brokers to the company who are already familiar with the local market.

"This helps us better serve our clients and our listings so that we can be more efficient in marketing our properties," he said.

Said Johnson, "This will be a pretty dynamic group with a very large market share."

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