

Kleckner loses town seat after 36 years

Written by CAROL POMEDAY
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Longtime supervisor, former board chairman edged by incumbent Janeshek, challenger Blick

For 36 years, Francis Kleckner has served on the Town of Belgium Board either as chairman or supervisor, but that ended when he was defeated in Tuesday's election.

Incumbent William Janeshek was re-elected with 207 votes and James Blick, a member of the town's Plan

Commission, received 187 votes in the four-person race for two seats on the Town Board.

Kleckner garnered 132 votes and Dennis Dimmer, who was making his first bid for public office and is a member of the Plan Commission, received 90 votes.

"I guess I'm going to attend meetings like I used to, but I'll be in the audience," said Kleckner, who was chairman for 20 years and a supervisor for 16 years.

"I want to see whether they're going to correct the situations I addressed."

In addition to proposing controlling nonconforming businesses in agriculture districts through conditional-use permits, Kleckner said he does not want the town to change its ordinance to accommodate the state's Working Lands Initiative, which replaces the Farmland Preservation program.

"I guess the people don't agree with me and maybe I should have done like Bill and said we're going to try to stay the same," Kleckner said.

Janeshek, who has been a supervisor for 16 years and teamed up with Kleckner in a campaign to vote for experience, was surprised by the outcome.

"I think some things will change a little bit, but I'm hoping we can keep pretty much the same as we have been doing," Janeshek said. "I'm sure we'll have some new ideas, but that isn't all bad, I guess. We'll see how it goes."

Blick is obviously pleased with the results and is ready to assume his new role.

"I'm surprised because it's very difficult to beat an incumbent and I'm thrilled," Blick said. "I had some very good support, especially along the lake. I'm going to savor the victory for a day or two.

"I want to keep working for the taxpayers and keep the rural atmosphere. That's what we'll focus on."

Blick, who grew up in Lake Church and returned 10 years ago when he bought his

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grandparents' farm, said he wants the town to follow its long-range plan.

Dimmer, who said he wanted to be on the board to ensure all residents are treated equally, said the result didn't surprise him.

"There are more issues here than just the results," Dimmer said. "I knew there wasn't a hope and a prayer chance I was going to win after last Thursday."

Dimmer was referring to the fact he was inadvertently omitted from last week's Ozaukee Press election coverage.

Chairman Tom Winker was re-elected to his second term without opposition with 282 votes.

Winker said he is friends with all four supervisor candidates and can work with all of them.

"I can live with whoever the voters sent," Winker said. "We can all work together. Obviously, I steer the ship and have a little more say, but not much. I don't see huge changes. We want to remain rural and work on our 2035 plan."

Also re-elected without opposition were Clerk Ginger Murphy, who received 319 votes, and Treasurer Janet Coeur, who got 300 votes.