

Clark Responds to Ruling by Region 9 Republican Committee

After years of attending county government meetings and documenting issues, concerns, and challenges, I chose to run for Commissioner to contribute to improving the quality of services provided to Brown County citizens. I outlined my motivation and strategy on my campaign website, TimJClarkforCommissioner.com.

One of the challenges that I saw was the current leadership of the Brown County Republican Party, which is headed by Party Chair Mark Bowman. Not too surprisingly, my candidacy was challenged by Bowman, claiming *"Incomplete & untrue candidate forms submitted. Not affiliated with the Republican Party."* The Brown County Election Board refused to consider Bowman's argument that I was not in good standing and confirmed that I met the criteria to run as a Republican.

Bowman's contention was that I was an Independent as opposed to a Republican who has an independent mind. An Independent voter would include someone who votes for the best candidate despite political affiliation. In my case, I have consistently primarily voted for Republicans but have also very occasionally voted for a non-Republican who may have had a more conservative position on issues than the Republican candidate.

It is interesting that Mark Bowman shares this philosophy. In an interview after the 2018 county election, where Republicans swept the elections, he was interviewed and confirmed his support for independent voters:

- *"Even as a party chairman, Bowman said he doesn't like to see so many voters choosing the straight-party option. To him, that shows voters lack knowledge about the candidates. The choice listed from one's own party isn't always automatically the best choice for the job, he said."* ["GOP SWEEP Nov 14, 2018"](#), Brown County Democrat.

After I won the May primary, Bowman publicly supported an Independent Candidate – Greg Taggart, to challenge my candidacy in violation of Rule 1-25. Taggart has stated that he was a Republican running as an Independent. Taggart also identified that he was an independent voter: During his closing remarks at the [League of Women Voters Candidate Forum](#), he stated that:

- *"I am not a Republican, I am not a Democrat, do not put me in a category. ... if you want to say I am a Republican, I am not that..."*

In December, I filed a complaint with the 9th District Republican Committee against Bowman for violating Rule 1-25. I was supported in the complaint by Rich Stanley, Charles Shaw, and Ben Phillips. *"The term 'Republican in Good-Standing' shall be defined as a Republican who supports Republican nominees and who does not actively or openly support another candidate against a Republican nominee."* Many voters commonly choose to vote for the candidate that they believe would best serve the community. However, if you are in a party leadership position or an elected official, you should respect the documented rules of the State Party.

On January 23, 2025, the 9th District Republican Committee held a hearing on my complaint. However, at the hearing, the District Officers ignored the arguments that I raised in my complaint. Instead, the District Officers put me on trial along with Rich Stanley without telling us that we were now the ones on trial instead of Bowman. In the decision, the District Officers dismissed my complaint against Bowman (which they never seriously considered). But they went even further than that by punishing me and Rich Stanley with bans preventing either of us from running as a Republican for a period of five years. Although the District Officers have no power to remove me from my current position as Commissioner of Brown County, if I had the desire to run for reelection in four years, I would not be able to run as a Republican if the Brown County Election Board supports this judgment.

The Region 9 Committee's decision will be appealed. It will be interesting to see if the State Republican Party follows this illogical and deeply flawed decision.

At the hearing, Amanda Lowry, Chair of the Region committee, explained the unwritten rules that governed the committee's decision:

1. "The Republican Party is a Private Club with Rules."
2. You are NOT a Republican in good standing if you criticize the party or its members, vote, or donate money to a non-republican candidate—*at any time in a person's life*.
3. The rules can be selectively applied - as they were in this case.

Given this Region 9 criteria, President Trump could be considered a Republican "not" in Good Standing.

While we wait for a decision on our appeal, please remember that the election of new officers for the Brown County Republican Party is on March 1, 2025. The election is for the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. If you want to see a positive change in leadership, contact your precinct and vice precinct committee members.

Tim Clark