

Standard Form For Members of the Legislature

Name of Representative Rekows, Leigh Senator _____
Represented Allamakee, Clayton and Fayette Counties, Iowa

1. Birthday and place _____
2. Marriage (s) date place _____

3. Significant events for example:
 - A. Business _____

 - B. Civic responsibilities _____

 - C. Profession _____

4. Church membership _____
5. Sessions served 79th General Assembly 2001-2002
6. Public Offices
 - A. Local Postville town city councilman for a decade; mayor of Postville, Iowa
 - B. State _____

 - C. National _____

7. Death _____
8. Children _____

9. Names of parents _____

Rekow, Leigh

10. Education _____

11. Degrees _____

12. Other applicable information *Republican* _____

Postville's new mayor took political contributions from Rubashkins

By Lynda Waddington | 04.17.09 | 12:35 pm

Leigh Rekow

The man appointed by the Postville City Council to serve as interim mayor accepted campaign contributions totaling more than \$2,000 from members of the Rubashkin family, who founded and operated the beleaguered Agriprocessors meatpacking plant, site of a massive 2008 immigration raid.

Leigh Rekow, 74, took the oath of office Wednesday after being appointed mayor by a 3-2 vote of the council earlier in the week. He will serve as mayor through November.

Rekow, a Republican who served more than a decade on the Postville City Council, formerly represented Iowa House District 32 in the Legislature and served on the agriculture standing committee. It was during his campaigns for the Iowa House that Rekow accepted political contributions from Abraham Aaron Rubashkin, founder of Agriprocessors, and his son, Sholom Rubashkin, day-to-day executive in charge of the Postville plant.

The contributions, which were made during 2000 and 2002, total \$2,100 — \$1,600 from Sholom and \$500 from Aaron Rubashkin.

Rekow, according to Stephen Bloom's account in the book "Postville," led the local effort to annex the meatpacking plant into the city. The plan was severely disliked by the Jewish community to the point of some accusing local residents of anti-Semitism and Sholom Rubashkin threatening to pack up the business and move it elsewhere if residents voted in favor of annexation.

"What upsets me is that some people in Postville think that we came in and took something that wasn't ours," Aaron Rubashkin is quoted in the book by Bloom as saying. "My sons are native-born Americans, just like the people of Postville. We have every right to make a life there — like the Postville people have. This annexation, what this Rekow is trying to make, we don't need people putting sticks in the spokes of our wheels."

The people did ultimately vote to annex the property, which allowed taxes and further regulation of the plant. Given that Bloom's book was published in 2000, the same year as the Rubashkins began support of Rekow in his statehouse bid, logical assumptions can be made that either the rift was healed or the Rubashkin family preferred to have Rekow in Des Moines and out of local politics.

Either way, the person who now has the reins in Postville, is someone intimately familiar with the Rubashkin family and the history of Agriprocessors in Postville.

Speaking with Janell Bradley, a correspondent for the Waterloo Cedar Falls Courier, Rekow said his love for the city prompted his seeking the seat.

"I want to see Postville succeed," Rekow said. "As a community we're all pretty much working together. We have great hopes for Postville. We're not giving up on anything."

Rekow said he is willing to do what it takes to improve employment opportunities and fill empty houses and apartments. A community coalition is trying to address those issues.