

Letter to the editor: Rich Stanley

By **Staff Reports** - September 17, 2024



Editor:

We need a change in the leadership of the Brown County Republican Party. Specifically, I am referring to Mark Bowman, the Chairman of the Brown County Republican Central Committee. There has been indications for some time that Mark is running the Brown County Republican Party for his own personal ambitions instead of the good of the party. But, a recent event and scandal confirms that Mark Bowman cannot be trusted to lead our party, and we must remove him from political office.

The facts and circumstances of this latest scandal are simple and clear—and appalling. It involves the Brown County Republican Lincoln Day Dinner that was held September 6, 2024 at the Seasons Event Center in Nashville. This is a regularly scheduled event where active members of the Brown County Republican Party get together to mingle, have

dinner together and listen to well-known Republican speakers. There were about 150 people in attendance at this year's event. Individual tickets sold for \$45 and a table for eight could be reserved for \$500. In general, there are no restrictions on who can attend beyond the basic limitation of the number of seats available. This year's event was well-attended and went smoothly.

But here's the scandal. Mark Bowman refused to allow Tim Clark, who is the Republican candidate for Commissioner for District 3, to attend the Lincoln Day Dinner event. On its face, this sounds hard to believe, but it is true. The head of the Republican Party in Brown County (Mark Bowman) excluded a Republican candidate (Tim Clark) from an official Republican event (the Lincoln Day Dinner). I doubt that Mark Bowman would want to admit that he did this, but at the same time, I doubt that Mark would deny it either.

I am not going to try to delve into Mark's personal agenda here. But this particular event I can speak to. Tim Clark won the Republican primary this past May against Jerry Pittman for the District 3 Commissioner seat. For some reason, Mark Bowman has been unwilling to accept Tim Clark's primary victory and has been working to undermine Tim Clark's campaign even though the majority of Brown County Republicans voted for Tim Clark over Jerry Pittman. Excluding Tim from the Lincoln Day Dinner was just one more part of Mark's own personal campaign against Tim.

But what happened with the Lincoln Day Dinner event is categorically different and indefensible—it's scandalous. Tim Clark sent a check to the Brown County Republican Central Committee for seats to the dinner about a month before the event. However, they refused to deposit his check and give him any seats at the event. Tim then found someone else who was willing to buy tickets for him, but Mark apparently found out about this attempt too and still refused to allow Tim to have a ticket to the event. In the end, Mark was successful in excluding Tim from the Lincoln Day Dinner.

I am going to emphasize this again. This was an OFFICIAL Republican event where the LEADER of the Republican Party intentionally excluded a Republican CANDIDATE.

We cannot have a leader of our Republican Party undermining our own candidates. In fact, according to the Indiana GOP rules, Mark Bowman is no longer a Republican in good-standing because Rule 1-25 specifically defines a "Republican in Good-Standing" as "a Republican who supports Republican nominees". Because Mark has actively tried to undermine Tim's campaign by excluding Tim from an official Republican event, Mark Bowman has violated Rule 1-25 and is not currently a Republican in good-standing.

We cannot have a leader of the Republican Party in Brown County who is at odds with our very own candidates. Besides the GOP rules that explicitly forbid this kind of conduct, it violates common decency. It is time for Brown County Republicans to take back control of our own party and clean house.

Rich Stanley