

Assembly Republicans re-elect Vos as speaker

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Assembly Republicans today unanimously voted to keep Robin Vos, R-Rochester, as speaker as the chamber prepares to come back next session with a 63-36 majority.

Members also unanimously supported Tyler August, of Lake Geneva, as speaker pro tempore; Jim Steineke, of Kaukauna, as majority leader; Dan Knodl, of Germantown, as majority caucus chair; Romaine Quinn, of Barron, as majority caucus vice chair; Jessie Rodriguez, of Oak Creek, as secretary; and Samantha Kerkman, of Salem, as sergeant at arms.

And they voted to elect Rep. Mary Felzkowski, of Irma, as assistant majority leader, an office previously held by Rep. Rob Brooks, of Saukville, who stepped down from leadership earlier this fall after news reports showed he made inappropriate comments to female legislators. Joel Kitchens, of Sturgeon Bay; and Scott Krug, of Nekoosa, also sought the post this afternoon.

The leadership elections this afternoon came after the Assembly GOP lost just one seat in last week's midterms and prepare to work under Dem Gov.-elect Tony Evers' administration following his inauguration Jan. 7.

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Vos, who addressed the caucus following his re-election as speaker, touted Republicans' accomplishments over the last eight years, including the state's economy and low unemployment rate, as he warned his colleagues they'll have to work to "protect that legacy (and) enhance it where we can."

He added his colleagues would have a "front row seat to revisionist history" over the next session, "where people who are beginning to occupy the East Wing of the Capitol will want to somehow downplay the accomplishments we have put together

over the past eight years.”

He also pledged the caucus would stand beside Evers when he’s right, but if that isn’t the case, “we are going to stand like bedrock to make sure that Wisconsin does not go back.”

“We are not going to roll over and play dead like they assume we probably should,” Vos said, noting that Evers’ win last week didn’t give him “a mandate” over state control.