

Ag industry advocate to leave Hageman and Brighton law firm

Cheyenne – After spending much of her legal career working with Harriet Hageman, Kara Brighton decided to leave Hageman & Brighton, P.C. in mid-March to serve on the Wyoming Public Service Commission.

“My career to date has been a fabulous experience and Harriet has been supportive of this opportunity,” comments Brighton. “This has been an extremely difficult decision to make because of what Harriet and I have done together and how

much I love what we do, but this is an opportunity I felt I needed to pursue.”

Long history

After graduating from law school at the University of Nebraska in 1996, Brighton began working in the Water Division of the Wyoming Attorney General’s Office, specifically focusing on the Nebraska vs. Wyoming lawsuit over the North Platte River.

“Harriet interviewed for one of the trial attorney positions for the North

Platte litigation in January of 1997, and we began working together on March 17 of that year,” says Brighton.

“We have worked together every day since,” she adds.

After their positions with the Attorney General’s Office ended with the North Platte Settlement, the two decided to start their own firm – Hageman & Brighton, P.C., commencing business on Aug. 1, 2000.

“We wanted to work with the agriculture industry, as well as other business and industry groups in our state to provide a strong advocate for them on the difficult issues that they are facing,”

Brighton explains, adding, “I think we have done that.”

Brighton notes that her work has been largely water related, while the law firm has been involved in broad array of issues, including protecting grazing rights, working for the Wolf Coalition in the wolf litigation and dealing with national forest service issues – the roadless litigation in particular. Hageman & Brighton has also represented landowners and irrigation districts in lawsuits involving the Clean Water Act and has repeatedly challenged the jurisdiction of the EPA and Corp of Engineers.

“We’ve taken on a lot of big issues because we thought it was important to do so,” she adds.

Hageman comments, “We’ve worked together for 16 years, and we’ve had our own firm for 12 of those. It has gone very quickly, and I am proud of the type of work that we have done.”

Next steps

Governor Matt Mead first discussed the possibility of nominating Brighton to a post as one of three Commissioners on the Wyoming Public Service Commission (WPSC) last fall. Brighton says she chose to take the position only after a lot of thought.

“I love my job now,” she says, noting that she is also excited about the opportunity moving forward. “I’m

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interested to learn about this new area, and I hope that it will give me the opportunity to continue to protect Wyoming’s interests, albeit in a different area of the law and policy.”

Subject to Senate confirmation, Brighton’s six-year term will begin on March 1 and expire in February 2019. On the WPSC, Brighton will serve as one of three Commissioners overseeing all utility regulation in the State.

The future for Harriet Hageman

Hageman reports that she will be continuing her law practice under the name “Hageman Law, P.C.,” and will remain at the same location in Cheyenne.

“Hageman Law will continue doing what we have done in the past, with the same mission in place – to represent a variety of industry and business groups, including the agriculture industry (farmers, ranchers and irrigation districts), as well as sportsmen groups, outfitters, land developers and resource providers,” explains Hageman. “We will continue to fight against federal overreach and to protect

the citizens of Wyoming.”

Stacia Berry, who grew up on a ranch north of Cheyenne, will continue to work for Hageman Law. Korry Lewis, who hails from a ranch in southeastern Colorado, will be joining the team this summer.

“These women are dedicated to Wyoming and to our mission. The three of us, with our staff, will continue to provide the very same services we have for 12 years,” Hageman reports.

“We have always felt that we had a broader mission in the state related to protecting our heritage, our history and our future in terms of the clients we represent and the battles that we have taken on,” adds Brighton. “That dedication will remain the same; the only difference is that I won’t be here. As I move on to this new opportunity and new set of challenging issues, I am grateful for Harriet’s support and for that of our clients and friends. It has been an amazing ride.”

Saige Albert is managing editor of the *Wyoming Livestock Roundup* and can be reached at saige@wylr.net.



To learn more about Hageman and Brighton Law Firm, visit hblawoffice.com.



Hageman and Brighton – Harriet Hageman and Kara Brighton began working together in March, 1997, and started their own law firm in August 2000. Brighton will be leaving the firm in March of this year to pursue the opportunity of serving as one of three Commissioners on the Wyoming Public Service Commission. Courtesy photo

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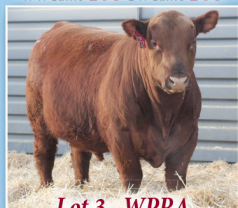
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