

Colton Republicans Choose Bill Swafford

By LARRY ROBINSON

COLTON - Republican voters in the town of Colton have spoken loudly at the ballot box, endorsing acting Town Supervisor Bill Swafford by a margin of more than two to one over GOP rival and Colton Town Councilwoman Grace Hawley.

Colton Republicans threw their overwhelming support behind Swafford yesterday, casting 182 ballots for the retired Navy veteran to 75 tallies for Hawley.

Swafford stepped into a

leadership role on the Colton town board earlier this year after longtime Conservative Hank Ford abruptly resigned from office in the midst of bitter community-wide political infighting.

At the time that Swafford assumed the role of acting supervisor he vowed to help heal some of the political wounds dividing the township.

However, just months after being on the job, fellow Republican and fellow board member Hawley announced

that she was running against Swafford for supervisor in November because she was unhappy with the direction Swafford was taking the government.

Swafford thanked Republican voters for their support last night and attributed his success on Primary Day to hard work and a desire on the part of GOP members in the Colton to continue his efforts to move the Adirondack foothill town in a positive direction.

"There are certainly people

who voted tonight who thought I was going in the right direction," said Swafford. "The people in the trenches got out and supported me. I feel lucky and happy."

Despite Swafford's convincing primary endorsement by GOP voters yesterday, he could still be facing a three-way race for supervisor this fall.

Democratic Town Councilwoman Joan Kilroy has already been endorsed by her party to challenge Swafford

in November, and he could still face a challenge from Hawley if she is endorsed by the Conservative Party in Colton.

Hawley could not be reached for comment last night to talk about her political plans.

Also running for town council in Colton this fall is incumbent Mary Jane Watson, a Republican. There are also two Democratic newcomers trying to earn a seat on the council, Joe Zelinski and Kathy Hayes.