

Town Councilman Joining Law Firm

By David Ambro

Before Councilman William Rebolini leaves the Huntington Town Board for a seat on the bench he is leaving Huntington village for a new law office.

Beginning today, April 15, Mr. Rebolini will reportedly vacate his second floor office at 355 New York Avenue. He will become an attorney "of counsel" to the law firm Sarisohn, Sarisohn, Carner, Steindler, LeBow, Braun and Castrovinci and will work from the firm's offices at 350 Veterans Highway, Commack. Suffolk County Democratic Party Chairman Dominic Baranello is also of counsel to the firm.

"The bottom line is that they are a broad spectrum law firm and have been around for a long time and they are a firm I would like to be affiliated with so that I can better serve my clients," said Councilman Rebolini during a recent interview.

Mr. Rebolini said that an interesting aside to the story is that Bernice Sarisohn, the firm's office manager and wife of Floyd, was his fifth grade teacher at Pulaski Road Elementary School in East Northport. "Everyone calls her Bernice but I have trouble with that. I still call her Mrs. Sarisohn," he said.

According to Floyd Sarisohn, a founding partner of the law firm, the Rebolini association was finalized at a partners meeting Monday, April 12.

"We don't know if it will be for six days, six weeks, or six months but we are glad to have him with us," said Mr. Sarisohn, eluding to Mr. Rebolini's pending appointment to a judgeship. "He will provide strong representation to our clients and he is a very good young litigator."

He said that it seems "quite likely" that Mr. Rebolini will be cross endorsed to fill a District Court Judge vacancy, left by the election of Anthony Corso to the County Court. The Huntington Democratic Committee voted Tuesday, April 13 to endorse Mr. Rebolini for the judgeship. The Huntington Republi-

can Executive Committee last week reaffirmed a previous decision to cross endorse the Democratic councilman for the judge post.

Mr. Sarisohn said the next step in the judicial appointment process will be for Town leaders, Democrat Frank Grimes and Republican Robert Lifson, to formalize the deal. County committee chairmen, Democrat Baranello and Republican Howard DeMartini, will then have to approve the deal. County Executive Robert Gaffney, a Republican, would then have to make the appointment and it will be subject to approval by the 18-member Suffolk County Legislature, which is controlled by the Republicans.

"That whole process can be at least six weeks and politics being what they are in Suffolk County, there can be a false step anywhere along the line and it can be over," said Mr. Sarisohn, of the Rebolini appointment. He said that even if Mr. Rebolini becomes a judge he will remain of counsel to the firm.

The law firm was formed in Commack in 1957 by Floyd and Bernard Sarisohn, his brother. Both have long been active in Democratic Party politics. Floyd Sarisohn is the former Smithtown Democratic Committee chairman and was an elected Smithtown Justice of the Peace in 1959, when the justices also served as the Town Board. He was later elected a District Court Judge.

For the past several years, Mr. Rebolini has been in conflict with Democratic Party leadership. The division reached a peak December 15, 1992 when the 35-year old Councilman forged a coalition with the two Republicans on the Town Board and fired long time Democratic Party loyalist Dominic Feeney from his post as Director of General Services. Mr. Feeney has long been a close political ally of Mr. Baranello and his firing is reported to have enraged the County chairman.

In January, Mr. Rebolini voted with the Republi-



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cans to amend the budget of fellow Democrat Steve Ferraro. The vote added \$1.2 million to the payroll and restore numerous patronage jobs cut by the Supervisor. Mr. Rebolini and the two Republicans then voted to appoint long standing Republican appointees to those posts.

"That was not a happy situation," said Mr. Sarisohn of the firing of Mr. Feeney. He said, however, that he did not feel it would interfere with the relationship in the firm between Mr. Rebolini and Mr. Baranello.