

Farmington Observer

Volume 91 Number 7 Thursday, November 8, 1979 Farmington, Michigan 88 Pages Twenty-five cents

Hills housing foes, Farmington incumbents win

Conservatives win top seats in race

By STEVE BARNABY
Farmington editor

In what has proved to be one of the highest voter turnouts in a Farmington Hills council election, Donna Wolf, William Lange and Jack Burwell won the top three seats.

Also re-elected was incumbent Councilwoman Jan Dolan. The top three vote-getters will serve four year terms. Mrs. Dolan will serve for two years.

Council incumbent Joanne Smith was defeated. She was the third incumbent to be defeated this election season. In the September primary, incumbents Cathy Jones and Keith Deacon were defeated.

More than 25 percent of the city's registered voters trekked to the polls Tuesday to cast ballots in one of the most controversial elections since Farmington Hills became a city.

Wolf led his winning colleagues in opposing the senior citizen/low income housing project which has been slated for construction on Freedom and Drake roads. The project was to be financed through bonds sold by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA).

Wolf, Burwell and Lange opposed construction of the project without first having a vote of residents.

Both Dolan and Smith were strong backers of the project.

Wolf received 5,215 votes; Lange, 4,678; Burwell, 4,492; Dolan, 3,200. Smith came in fifth with 3,094.

The three moderates were out of the running all night as ballots were counted. Terry Sever came in sixth with

2,838 votes; Michael O'Hair received 2,720 and Planning Commissioner Shirley Stadler garnered 2,598 to place last.

The elated anti-housing supporters packed city hall Tuesday night to watch the ballot counting.

It was obvious from the beginning as absentee ballots were tallied that Dolan and Smith were in trouble. The majority of absentee voters are senior citizens.

Housing proponents were counting heavily on senior citizen support. But seniors split their votes and many supported Wolf, Burwell and Lange.

In the one absentee precinct, the 25th Precinct, the three took the top three spots. Wolf placed first in the 25th, 26th and 27th precincts, all absentee voter precincts.

"The people have spoken loud and clear," said Wolf after learning of his victory.

"They are tired of the bureaucracy. This says something about local control," he said.

Although not taking his seat until January, Wolf said that if the opportunity arises he will attempt to quash the Freedom/Drake project.

The present council could possibly enact the proposals necessary to see that the housing units are started before Wolf, Burwell and Lange are seated.

But it is unlikely the housing plan would survive if the new council has a chance to vote on it. The majority of the new council lies in the hands of those who oppose the project: Joe Alkateeb, Wolf, Burwell and Lange.



From left, council members Joe Alkateeb and Jody Soronen, Mrs. Nadia Alkateeb and top vote-getter Donn Wolf bask in the party atmosphere at Farmington Hills City Hall Tuesday night. (Staff photos by Randy Borst)

Hartsock, Buckler, Yoder returned

By MARY GNIEWEK

The city election in Farmington Tuesday was a repeat of the 1975 council race.

Just the faces of the challengers were different.

But the same three candidates placed in the same top order as they did four years ago in a race once again decided by 21 percent of the city's registered voters.

Incumbents William Hartsock and Ralph Yoder won four-year terms. Warren Buckler Jr. won another two-year term to the city's five-member legislative body.

Hartsock, a 29-year-old accountant, garnered 1,164 votes to clinch his second, four-year term. He began his council career with a two-year term won in 1973.

Council veteran Yoder, who has held a seat longer than anyone presently on council — since April, 1965 — secured 1,083 votes to come in second.

Buckler, an attorney, took 794 votes to beat out nearest challenger Michelle Rhoton by a 212 vote margin.

Of 7,616 registered voters in Farmington, just 1,569 cast ballots Tuesday. That includes 142 residents who voted by absentee ballot.

Hartsock was the top vote-getter in five of the city's six precincts. In the 6th Precinct, the Farmington Training Center, Yoder won the most votes.

THE CHALLENGERS in Tuesday's race were all first-time candidates for city council. Mrs. Rhoton, with 582 votes, missed her chance at becoming the first councilwoman in Farmington. She said she will try again in two years.

Harlan Lorenz, a Libby-Owens employee, racked up 357 votes in his first bid. Ron Gavel and George Volz, who ran a joint campaign, got 173 and 140 votes respectively.

"I'm disappointed with the low voter turnout," Hartsock said Tuesday night. "Myself, Warren (Buckler) and Michelle (Rhoton) did a lot of door-to-door campaigning. People were aware that there was an election. My main emphasis this time was to try to get people out who don't usually vote."

"I guess there were no specific issues people were concerned about or felt compelled enough to vote," he said. "On the other hand, this speaks well of the present city council. I just wish more people would have reaffirmed that confidence."

Yoder said his campaign was limited to mailing literature.

"I was a bit concerned these last few weeks," he said. "I'm just gratified it turned out the way it did."

Buckler, who ran a visual campaign highlighted by large signs and door-to-door visits, said he felt confident he would win another term.

"Really our biggest challenge now is to continue to provide quality city services in times of inflation while keeping the millage down," Buckler said.

The new terms are effective beginning with the next city council meeting on Nov. 19. At that meeting the winners, along with Mayor Richard Tupper and Councilman Alton Bennett, will appoint a new mayor.

Commission seat to Caddell

Dr. G. William Caddell beat George Montgomery in Tuesday's bid for the 25th District seat on the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.

Caddell, a Republican, won 3,236 votes in the district which includes parts of Farmington Hills and three townships. His Democratic opponent got 1,455 votes.

Montgomery, a political science instructor and former state representative, squeaked by with more votes only in his hometown of Commerce Township: 475 to Caddell's 448 votes.

Caddell, a chiropractor in Union Lake, is also a Commerce Township resident.

In West Bloomfield Township, Caddell tallied 427 votes, Montgomery, 377. In White Lake Township, it was Caddell, 111, Montgomery, 42.

Five precincts in Farmington Hills which are a part of the 25th District threw their support overwhelmingly to Caddell: 1,104 to Montgomery's 460 votes.

The special election was called after Commissioner Robert McConnell of Farmington Hills resigned last August. Caddell will serve the rest of McConnell's term, which expires at the end of 1980.

"We had a game plan and we stuck to it," Caddell said yesterday. "We had

the polls covered. At times, we had 30 people knocking on doors and 15 on telephones.

"I'm eager to get into the ballpark," he continued. "I plan to be a viable force."

Caddell is a member of the Oakland County Republican Executive Committee, organization chairman for the 19th District Republican Committee, director of the Oakland County Republican Lincoln Club and has been a delegate in county and state elections.

The 27 county commissioners are paid an annual salary of \$12,000. Caddell will join the team as soon as the election is certified.



Councilmen William Hartsock and Ralph Yoder congratulate each other on their victories Tuesday at Farmington City Hall. Incumbent Warren Buckler Jr. also won another two-year term.



Farmington Hills council candidate Terry Sever checks the precinct returns along with Eileen Hand.

Voters approve charter change

Farmington voters, by a healthy margin, increased the power of the city manager Tuesday by allowing that office to spend up to \$4,000 for daily operations without city council approval.

The sole proposition on the Nov. 6 ballot asked voters to increase the previous charter imposed limit of \$1,000 an amount. City Manager Robert Deadman said was outdated.

By more than a two-to-one margin, 894 voters supported the measure while 381 opposed it. The proposition was overwhelmingly supported in all six of the city's precincts.

"I'm very pleased it passed," Deadman said. "It will aid in proper administration of the city."

Deadman cited a similar proposal brought before Ferndale voters. That

measure, which asked the city managers spending power be increased from

a \$200 charter imposed limit established in the 1930's, was defeated.

Voters defeat all propositions

A majority of Farmington Hills voters were in a negative mood when it came to casting ballots on the five questions on this week's ballot.

All were defeated.

Proposal A to approve an \$8 million bond issue for city-sponsored senior citizen housing lost with 4,798 opposed and 3,489 in support.

Advisory Question 1A favoring rent

subsidies for needy senior citizens went down to defeat with 4,185 opposed and 4,091 in support. Advisory Question 1B, federal rent subsidies for needy families, lost by a vote of 5,649 to 1,824.

Advisory Question 2 favoring a levy of up to three mills of tax in absence of federal rent subsidies was opposed by 7,173 voters. There were 988 votes in favor.

"Literally, without such power, our hands are tied," Deadman said.

Advisory Question 3, favoring building up to 60 feet for senior citizen housing went down by a vote of 5,064 opposed and 3,268 in favor.

Advisory Question 4, favoring buildings up to 60 feet in areas zoned for industrial research office construction lost with 4,573 against and 3,753 in favor.

inside

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Classified Sections E, F
Entertainment Section D
Editorial Opinion 20A
Exhibitions 19C
Obituaries 18A
Sports Section B
Suburban Life Section C

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