

# Newcomers oust incumbents for OCC board seats

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STAFF WRITER

In an unexpected upset, two newcomers beat out incumbents Monday for both open seats on the Oakland Community College Board of Trustees.

Carol Crew, of Waterford, and Pamela Davis, of Clawson, were the top vote-getters Monday, with 9,476 and 8,646 votes respectively, in a race filled with discussions of millage increases to help ease OCC's funding woes.

Ten candidates ran for the two seats held by 30-year board veteran David Hackett and relative newcomer Richard Blonde, who sat on the board for four years.

"I'm really pleased," said trustee-elect Crew, who was endorsed by OCC's teacher bargaining unit, the Oakland Community College Faculty Association. "I worked really hard at it and so did everyone else."

Despite repeated attempts, The Eccentric was not able to contact trustee-elect Pamela Davis for a comment. Late last week, Davis left a message on The Eccentric's voice mail system saying she had been hard to reach because she had been in the hospital for five weeks. There was no answer at her home phone and an employee at the city of Royal Oak, where Davis is a code enforcement officer, said she is on leave.

## Looking at the future

Crew said her victory may have been due in part to her ability to communicate her sincere interest in OCC's future to voters.

"The issues of change are important and that's what a lot of candidates ran on," she said.

## Key districts decide race

Results of Monday's Oakland Community College election for two seats on the board of trustees show that the areas of Royal Oak and Southfield held the keys to outdistancing incumbents by challengers Carol Crew and Pamela Davis.

David Hackett, a 30-year veteran of the board, received 1,043 and 1,399 votes in Royal Oak and Southfield, respectively. Richard Blonde, who had served for four years, received 841 and 1,365 votes respectively.

That compares with a whopping 1,264 (Royal Oak) and 2,736 (Southfield) for Crew, and 1,323 and 2,616 for Davis.

Other important areas included Birmingham, Bloomfield, Novi and Troy.

Vote totals for each of the candidates as of Tuesday afternoon were (Clarkston not reporting): Aljouny, 3,012; Blonde, 8,028; Bushart, 3,636; Crew, 9,476; Davis, 8,646; Fleischer, 5,045; Hackett, 7,031; Mack, 5,819; Riley, 6,136; Woloson, 3,047.

"But I decided that if I was going to spend what little time I have free on something, it had to be worthwhile, where I could make a difference. Maybe (voters) sensed that."

But Crew also said name recognition might have had something to do with it, and gave credit not only to her volunteers, but to the OCCFA. After endorsing both Crew and another candidate, Jan Mack, Crew said OCCFA's election committee paid for and posted many "Crew and Mack" signs around the precincts with both candidates' permission.

"There were a lot of people out there pushing the name and talking to people," Crew said.

OCCFA president Rod Chase said the teacher's union is satisfied with the outcome of the race, even though only one of its candi-

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dates took a seat on the board.

## Union success

"We're very pleased, and Mrs. Davis is another strong candidate we had considered supporting as well," he said. Along with posting campaign signs, Chase said OCCFA's election committee distributed information about the endorsed candidates to OCC's faculty and provided workers to help the candidates with campaigns.

While incumbent candidate

Blonde, who came in seventh place overall, said he didn't know exactly why voters didn't re-elect him, board-veteran Hackett said he believed Monday's bad weather might have kept people from the polls, possibly affecting the election results.

"Whether those people who didn't come out would have voted for me, I can't say," said Hackett, who came in third with 7,031 votes. "But I know turnout was very low compared to previous years. There have been years where I got as many votes from

one precinct as I did altogether in this election."

Hackett said he'll miss being on the board, but has several accomplishments he's proud of, including helping to start OCC's Auburn Hills campus.

"OCC has kind of been my child. I was there at the beginning and watched it grow and succeed," said Hackett, who worked to get the bill passed to form OCC in the early 1980s. "I know I had a part of it."

## Millage increase

While Hackett, a proponent of a millage increase, said he wishes he could be there to help push the issue through, he urged Crew and Davis to listen, learn and vote their conscience — always with the students' welfare foremost in

their minds.

Davis, who could not be reached for a comment on her agenda as a new trustee, did attend a meet-the-candidate session at OCC in April and said there she opposed a millage increase.

"Funding is the major problem facing OCC," she said at the April meeting. "But I do not favor asking voters for an increase in the millage. It simply won't pass."

Crew said she would make a decision after doing some research.

"With the economic times we're facing, I'm not opposed to it," she said. "But I want to know what we're doing with the money we have currently. There is some outstanding money and it needs to be explained why it's just sitting there."

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