

Panel members may run for Hills council

By Bob Sklar
staff writer

If you're a Farmington Hills board or commission member, and you want to run for city council, you won't have to resign from your appointed post first.

Farmington Hills voters said yes to a charter amendment Tuesday that will let members of city boards and commissions become council candidates without first having to resign.

By a margin of 432 votes, voters amended the 15-year-old city charter.

Twenty-three percent of the city's 44,303 registered voters voted in Tuesday's primary.

In 1965, voters rejected a similar charter amendment proposal by 410 votes. That year, the proposal was the fifth of five on the ballot; the others all passed.

The amendment becomes law once the vote is certified by the city's board of canvassers, which was scheduled to meet Wednesday night. The first time it will be applied is next year's city council election, when four seats will be up for grabs.

woman Jan Dolan won the GOP nomination for the 6th state House district seat.

"I thought the contrast of city council members not having to resign was brought home during this election. Now, everyone is on an even keel as far as running for office," said councilman Aldo Vagnorzi, who had to resign from the library board last year when he announced his candidacy for the city council.

He cited more awareness "of the

unfairness of limiting people on volunteer boards and commissions from running for city council."

He also said the ballot wording "did a better job explaining the issue this time."

The "must resign first" rule was included in the charter to prevent appointed city board or commission members from playing politics on having an unfair advantage while seeking an elective city council seat, opponents of the amendment said.



RANDY BOSTI/staff photographer

Preparing to vote

Election worker Viola Dow (seated) assists Patrick Armistead and Kathleen Andrews prepare to vote at Precinct 11 in North Farmington High Tuesday. Precinct chairwoman Sophie Slotter is standing at left. Twenty-three percent of Farmington Hills' 44,303 registered voters voted in the primary —

4,120 by absentee ballot. In the 1984 primary, 16 percent of the city's 39,533 registered voters took part. City clerk Kathy Doran attributed the higher percentage to the hotly contested local races "and lots of people caring about local issues."

THE AMENDMENT brings consistency to election qualifications in the city charter.

The charter doesn't require board or commission members to resign to seek a county or state office.

It also doesn't require city council members to resign when seeking election to county or state office. Tuesday, Mayor Jody Sorenen was defeated in her bid for the Republican nomination for the 27th county commission district seat. Council-

boards and commissions to become candidates for election to the City Council without first resigning from their appointed position? Yes, 4,168 No, 3,734

Unofficial vote tallies

Aug. 2 primary
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