

Two council seats up for grabs in runoffs

By Gerrit Koepping
Emerald Reporter



In the Eugene City Council races, only the Ward 7 race seemed decided in Tuesday's election, with Shawn Boles leading by more than 59 percent.

To avoid a runoff, more than 50 percent of the vote must go to one candidate.

In Ward 3, Kevin Hornbuckle will likely face Eben Dobson in a November runoff election, and Nancy Nathanson will face Tom Slocum in the Ward 8 race.

Nathanson, who was leading by more

than 8 percent, said her showing was due to a high-energy, high-visibility campaign involving knocking on more than 2,300 doors.

"With hard work I think I was able to demonstrate to Ward 8 that I understood their concerns," she said.

Slocum, who was behind by only about 100 votes, also went door to door in a district that he described as very hilly.

"I found the cul de sacs from hell," he said. "I didn't realize how big the ward was but it seemed for every block I canvassed there was always two more."

In Ward 3, Hornbuckle was leading by nearly 6 percent at press time. He attributed his lead to his history as an active member in reform organizations such as Oregon Peaceworks and Oregon Fair Share.

"They know my reputation of community service, they know I'm not going to be in the service of the movers and shakers," he said.

In the race for Ward 7, an almost 500 vote margin may mean that Shawn Boles is assured of his seat.

Boles said his victory was the result of a campaign based strictly on his ideas.

"I stayed focused on the issues, like a sensible economic policy and adequate resources for social services," he said.

Boles said he doesn't enjoy campaigning because of the hostility elected politicians face from the public. He blamed this hostility on the media, who he said confuse entertainment with politics.

MEASURE

Continued from Page 7



Photo by Jeff Paslay

Measure 20-08 opponents crowd together, looking at a list of voting results Tuesday at the Lane County Fairgrounds.

said. "This should not be seen as a defeat for what (20-01's backers) were trying to do.

"The initiative was just one method; it was the wrong method."

Roberts said the board will examine strengthening the legal "language" protecting the river, which could include raising fines for violations and working with government and other agencies to protect the McKenzie watershed.

Initiative supporter Louise Bilheimer said she would try to hold Roberts and commissioners to their word.

"The commissioners in the voter's pamphlet said this was something the county commissioners should be taking care of," she said. "Now we're going to see if they meant what they said."

Despite claims by initiative opponents, who cite studies showing that the McKenzie's water quality is good, Bilheimer said the McKenzie is still threatened.

"There's obviously a lot of concern that the river is not perfect, that there is some environmental degradation," she said, referring to the more than 14,000 Lane County residents who voted for the measure. "Now we'll see what (the commissioners) will do. The ball's in their court."

The question of whether to open Olive Street to motorized traffic was too close to call — 7,143 had voted to open the mall, and 6,980 preferred to keep it open to foot traffic only. The measure's supporters said that without allowing cars access to the mall, businesses would continue to leave.

Donna Taggart, spokeswoman for Citizens United for Responsible Budgeting, said using downtown development funds to open Olive Street would be a waste of funds that could be put to better use downtown. She also said the mall is merely in a state of transition from a retail-oriented area to one devoted to offices, specialty shops and housing.

"When we said yes to Valley River Center, we said no to downtown being major retail," she said. "It's a trend all across the country, that downtowns are becoming mixed-use."

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