

LGCC

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again, he said he had a year and a half to think about it.

Rock's experience in city governance spans more than a decade. He said his extensive experience — including more than nine years on the La Grande Planning Commission, five years on the budget committee and nine years on the Mt. Emily Recreation Advisory Committee — has helped him serve confidently on the city council.

"I have always strived to make conservative decisions when it comes to the budget and any fiscal decisions," he said in a previous article. "I make decisions based on the laws, rules and procedures set forth by Statute, the City Charter, Bylaws, Ordinances, and Resolutions and not based on my personal feelings or preconceived bias. I take all different perspectives into consideration before making decisions. I really try to listen to the overall voice of the people."

Rock will be joined by Jim Whitbeck, who is taking over current City Councilor Troy Pointer's position.

Whitbeck, who owns Blue Mountain Outfitters in La Grande, said he's sat on the La Grande Planning Commission and La Grande Main Street Downtown board.

At the candidate forum in October, Whitbeck said one of his top priorities will be the housing shortage in La Grande as well as economic development.

He said there's a balance to be found between attracting businesses on a large scale while maintaining and attracting businesses in the downtown area to keep it vibrant.

Walden defeats McLeod-Skinner for 2nd Congressional District

■ Greg Walden wins 11th term with 56.6 percent of the vote, compared to McLeod-Skinner's 39.2 percent

Observer staff

Incumbent Greg Walden defeated Jamie McLeod-Skinner Tuesday night, but his challenger received more votes than any of his previous opponents.

Fifty-six percent of the Second Congressional District, which is the eight largest district in the country, voted for the congressman, who has held his seat since 1998. He has previously taken at least 70 percent of the votes. McLeod-Skinner received nearly 40 percent.

"I thank the voters of Oregon's Second District for supporting me to serve as their representative in Congress for another term," Walden said in a press release sent Tuesday night. "I remain committed to getting results for our veterans, farmers, ranchers, small business people and our way of life in our district."

In Union and Wallowa counties, Walden received the vast majority of the votes with 67 percent in Union and 66 percent in Wallowa. McLeod-Skinner has been cam-

paigned for the last 18 months in the district. She held upwards of 35 town halls, according to a press release she sent out Tuesday night.

"Decency, compassion, and empathy are bipartisan," McLeod-Skinner said. "Our campaign has brought people together around these values to make our communities stronger, healthier, and more inclusive."

McLeod-Skinner said she's proud of the campaign she led.

"This campaign has been about the people of our district, and

our shared vision of fixing what's broken and treating people fairly," McLeod-Skinner said. "Through our efforts, we have helped to bring to the forefront the issues people throughout our district truly care about: protecting our healthcare, educational opportunities, local economic development, fair immigration reform and fixing the broken V.A. system. Rep. Walden has my support in addressing these critical issues, and I congratulate him on his successful campaign."

Brookshire, McMillan win Union City Council races

By Dick Mason
The Observer

Incumbent Walt Brookshire and political newcomer Leslie McMillan won the two contested races for positions on the Union City Council Tuesday.

Brookshire won the race for Position 6 and McMillan topped a three-person field in the Position 2 contest.

Brookshire beat challenger Brian McDowell 607 to 233, according to unofficial balloting results from the Union County Clerk's Office. Brookshire has been on the council since March 2017 when he was appointed to fill a vacancy.

"Everything I do, I do with the community in mind. People appreciate that," Brookshire said.

Brookshire is the longtime owner of Union Drug Company and Fountain, a business that has not been

sold, contrary to a rumor circulating in the Union community.

Brookshire said he wants to continue helping Union attract new businesses.

"If we do not revitalize our business core, we will not have one," the city councilor said.

Brookshire praised McDowell, a new face in Union's political scene who has lived in the community 1-1/2 years.

"Brian will be a great asset, (and) we will be hearing from him in the next few years. People are excited to have him in the community," Brookshire said.

McDowell works for Business Oregon, a state program designed to help businesses in Oregon and boost the infrastructure of cities. He said he is impressed with Brookshire's commitment to Union and

enjoyed running for public office.

"It was a great learning experience," he said.

McMillan received 334 votes to beat incumbent Randy Knop and Hugh Johnson, according to unofficial results from the Union County Clerk's Office. Knop received 275 votes and Johnson collected 217.

McMillan is the former owner of LG Brewskis, a Union pub she operated for almost nine years until April of this year. She opened the business in September 2009 after moving to Union from Yakima, Washington, in April 2008.

McMillan said during her campaign she wanted to promote new business and support existing business in Union. Community safety is another area McMillan expressed interest in focusing on. Along this line, McMillan said she would like

to see discussions started about possibly reviving a community volunteer group that used to check all downtown businesses to make sure they were locked and secure.

Knop has served on the

city council for 3-1/2 years, after being appointed to fill a vacancy.

"I congratulate the winner and I hope she will do a fine job. I look forward to having new representation on the council," Knop said.

ORDINANCE

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some types of weapons and high-capacity magazines in Oregon.

Wisdom said when gun-control advocates began collecting signatures for IP 43, it pushed him toward action.

"We decided we had to get on the ball and do something about this because (IP 43 supporters) were really pushing," Wisdom said. "We really needed to step up and do something (because IP 43 would) really affect businesses right here in Union County."

Phil Gillette, manager of the sporting goods department at Ace Hardware in La Grande, said in a previous Observer article the law would have severely limited the type of guns he would have been able to sell.

"It would have affected a wide variety of businesses," Gillette said. "We are known in Northeast Oregon to be the hub of the outdoor

center. Something like that passes, guess what? You're going to see businesses close. Pretty simple."

Yet, it's unclear whether the laws are enforceable. Douglas County Sheriff John Hanlin told Oregon Public Broadcasting the law is more a message to lawmakers.

"I think more than anything it's just symbolic," Hanlin said. "We all know the state Legislature can pass laws that we can't ignore."

Wisdom said he has talked to lawyers in Union County and assured him the law is enforceable. He said the law is modeled off the sanctuary state law for undocumented immigrants.

"If they can enforce the illegal immigrants sanctuary they can enforce this bill," Wisdom said.

He also said he was very happy with the outcome Tuesday.

"I thought it went great," he said. "Citizens stood up and stood their ground. We got it passed and really

showed that we do want to protect our rights here."

With the law passing in seven other counties, Wisdom said he is hopeful the law will get on even more

county ballots in 2020.

"It could have been a hell of a lot more," Wisdom said. "We didn't have time to get a lot of the counties to put it on the ballot."

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