

RESULTS from page 1A

It's that youth that the council will rely on with Lucio, as it looks to bring about city planning changes that help foster and strengthen the lives of the city's younger workforce and help bring in younger entrepreneurs to the city that will both strengthen and stabilize the local economy.

"So grateful for the love and support that has poured my way," Lucio wrote on her Facebook page after the election. "I'm thankful for each and every one of you who have supported me running for city council. Friends and family from Oregon to Texas, thank you for your thoughts, prayers and encouragement. Thank you to the citizens of Florence for electing me and giving me the honor to serve you."

Lucio was locked in a tight and sometimes contentious race for council with fellow council candidate Maureen Miltenberger, who came in just 208 votes behind Lucio in the current Lane County vote count. But don't expect Miltenberger to remain silent in local politics, as she will still continue to work on local environmental issues as a member of the City of Florence Environmental Management Advisory Committee (EMAC) and the Democratic Club of Florence.

The latest vote count for the two had Lucio at 2,048 and Miltenberger at 1,840 votes.

With 2,964 votes, Councilor Woody Woodbury, the third candidate for an open city council position, handily won reelection.

tion. This is the first time that Woodbury's position has been up for a city vote, as he was first appointed to the position in January to replace outgoing councilor George Lyddon, who moved out of town before finishing his full term.

Incumbent Mayor Joe Henry, who ran unopposed this election, received overwhelming support with 3,245 votes, compared to 205 write-ins.

Region-wide, the Siuslaw School Bond left voters with a heart-wrenching choice between upgrading schools for the district or keeping local property taxes down. The bond failed to pass with 4,933 against, 3,615 for.

On the one hand, the electorate was faced with the deteriorating school grounds of Siuslaw High School and Siuslaw Elementary, both of which need renovations for seismic safety and new facilities that would enhance student education. One of the key factors in helping grow the local economy is good schools, and the district was hoping that the new changes would be a rallying point for bringing in new businesses and professionals to the community.

On the surface, public support for the bond seemed high, with the Siuslaw News receiving editorials and letters in favor of the bond, and very few in the negative.

But the financial realities of the bond were too insurmountable for some. The bond asked for \$2.72 per \$1,000 of assessed property value, which would mean an increase from \$180 per

year to \$544 per year for property owners with a median-assessed home of \$200,108.

Proponents of the bond pointed out that the current 20-year middle school levy, which is currently costing property owners 90 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value, will expire this December. Because of this, they argued, the bond only had a net increase of \$1.82.

It was also pointed out that the bond would only have been issued as needed for construction, and that the first year of the project would be primarily dedicated to planning, staving off the sticker shock until 2020.

However, the price tag was still considered steep for many taxpayers. In comparison, the Eugene School District's \$319.3 million bond measure, which passed this election by a 66 to 34 percent margin, only would see an increase of \$135 a year for a median-assessed home.

Oregon's housing crisis, which the Siuslaw region is keenly feeling, mixed with the seasonal nature of employment of the area, makes any tax increase difficult for homeowners, particularly for low-income families, which would have seen the greatest benefit from school improvements.

Not only would the bond hit homeowners, but it would more than likely be passed down to renters as well, who have already seen a drastic increase in rates over the past year. According to the rental aggregate website Rent Jungle, Florence has seen a 17.98 percent rent increase from 2017 to 2018, with the average rent being \$812 per month, up from \$666 the year prior.

But still, the core issue of aging school facilities remains a problem for the district. As the community grows, so too will the number of students graduating from Siuslaw High School, and the limitations of the facilities will only be magnified in the years to come.

The district has been unable to pass an improvement bond since 1999, with the last attempt being made in 2016 for a \$40 million bond measure. That failed narrowly by 300 votes.

Siuslaw is expected to once again attempt to pass a bond, though what it will look like in the future is unknown.

Property taxes, along with two other measures, were on the ballot in Dunes City this election in what council members described as a vote for the very future of the city's existence. With the final results of the election, the future of Dunes City is on shaky ground. Measure 20-295 would have issued a five-year local option tax on Dunes City property owners, which would have cost owners around \$2 or \$3 a year in extra fees.

The purpose of the measure was not to get money from taxpayers — the city was only expected to receive \$1,216 in total from the measure — but to keep payments flowing into the city from state taxes, including cigarette and gas taxes. These taxes give the city anywhere from \$70,000 to \$100,000 annually.

But because of a missed rule change a decade ago, the city is now in danger of losing that money altogether.

Before 2007, any city could receive those taxes. However, a rule change made it so only cities that assess a tax on their citizens could receive those funds. Dunes City has never imposed a property tax.

The rule change went unnoticed by state and city officials until recently, when it was found that Dunes City could no longer accept that money unless it imposed a tax. That was the attempt of Measure 20-295, except it failed to pass with 244 for, 645 against.

Because of that, it is more than likely that the city's annual budget will be slashed by \$70,000 to \$100,000, a difficult task for a city that is already financially burdened.

The city had also hoped that measure 20-295 would help gain some additional funds. The measure, which was planned to allow the city to negotiate for a municipal judge to enforce city code rules, was not expected to bring a windfall to the city but could have cushioned a financial loss if Measure 20-295 did not pass.

It would also give the city some teeth in enforcing regulations such as nuisance laws. Currently,

city staff are taking on the responsibility of enforcing laws, since Dunes City has no police force nor a judge to enforce rules. The city has found that many citations that it gives out are being ignored by residents.

The judge measure was hoped to fix this by giving some legal framework behind citations, but the measure failed, 313 for, 547 against.

The only measure that did pass in Dunes City was Measure 20-293, which places a permanent ban on medical marijuana processors and dispensaries, as well as recreational marijuana producers, processors, wholesalers and retailers in the city.

The measure came about when three commercial medical marijuana growers applied for permits to begin operations within city limits. A temporary ban was placed on additional operations until the Dunes electorate could decide if they wanted such facilities in their city. The ban was approved this week with 566 for, 331 against.

However, the future of that ban is linked with the future of the city, which is now in flux because the tax measure did not pass. Will the city be able to cut make cuts and still remain financially solvent? Will it find ways to more effectively enforce code without a judge? Will it be forced to unincorporate, going back to county rules which, incidentally, have much more lenient marijuana zoning rules?

It is unknown exactly why voters didn't pass the judge and tax measures. Perhaps the full implications of the measures were not communicated to the electorate, or perhaps the idea of any tax, no matter how small, was antithetical to the spirit of the community, along with stronger government enforcement of city code.

Or perhaps, as expressed by some residents in an October article in the Siuslaw News, some people just don't feel the area should actually be a city. Whatever the case may be, the residents and representatives of Dunes City will have some tough discussions in the coming months, as the existential question of "Do we really want to be a city?" — as Mayor Robert Forsythe asked in 2017 — continues to be pondered.

As for Oregon, 1,902,953 voters participated in the Nov. 6 election, or roughly 68.9 percent of eligible voters. Gov. Kate

Brown was reelected, garnering 49.9 percent of the vote, just slightly more than the next candidate, Knute Buehler, who received 43.8 percent of the votes.

At the federal level, District 4 voters reelected Rep. Peter DeFazio to the U.S. House with 55.9 percent of the vote, over challenger Art Robinson, who received 41 percent.

Statewide:

- Measure 102: Passed with 56.7 percent. It amends the Oregon Constitution to allow local bonds for financing affordable housing with nongovernmental entities.

- Measure 103: Failed with 57.4 percent. This amendment sought to prohibit taxes/fees based on transactions for groceries.

- Measure 104: Failed with 65.3 percent. This amendment sought to expand the use of a three-fifths legislative majority to approve bills raising revenue.

- Measure 105: Failed with 63.3 percent. This amendment sought to repeal the law limiting use of state/local law enforcement resources to enforce federal immigration laws.

- Measure 106: Failed with 64.5 percent. This amendment sought to prohibit spending public funds directly or indirectly for abortions and would have reduced abortion access.

In the Oregon House, incumbent Caddy McKeown retained her seat representing the Ninth District with 54.1 percent of the vote, over opponent Teri Grier, who received 45.5 percent.

Locally, Dunes City's candidates for city council were all reelected, including Mayor Bob Forsythe and councilors Sheldon L. Meyer, Susan Snow and Duke Wells.

In the rest of Lane County, the Lane County Assessor is Michael Cowles and the West Lane County Commissioner is Jay Bozievich.

In the Heceta Water People's Utility District, Crystal Farnsworth, Debby Todd and Alan Whiteside were all elected to four-year terms.

In the Siuslaw Soil and Water Conservation District, Noland Huntington, Ray Kinney and Johnny Sundstrom were reelected to their positions as directors.

Finally, Lane County Measure 20-290, which sought to establish STAR Voting, failed with 52.5 percent of the vote.



**Victorian Belle's
Christmas Bazaar**

November 16, 17 & 18

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, 9am-7pm
SUNDAY, 9am-3pm
~ Three Rivers Casino ~

FREE ADMISSION & OUTSIDE FAMILY ENTRANCE

SWITCH TO THE CONVENIENCE OF AUTO PAY!

SAVE TIME & SAVE MONEY



Use your Credit or Debit Card account to renew your subscription to The Siuslaw News (includes online edition) by using AUTO PAY. Complete the credit card information on the enclosed billing notice and make your payment the easy way with Auto Pay.

Bring in or send this ad back with your payment and save \$5 OFF

Yes, Sign me up for Auto Pay*!

☒ ☐ 10 Weeks = \$18, (Reg \$23) ☐ 6 Months = \$47, (Reg \$52)
BEST OFFER ☐ 1 Year = \$71 (Reg \$76)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Credit or Debit Card Exp. Date: _____

Security Number _____

Card Number: _____

Name on Card: _____

Signature of Card holder: _____



Siuslaw News

148 Maple Street, PO BOX 10
Florence, OR 97439
541-997-3441
thesiuslawnews.com

*Auto Pay Subscriptions renew automatically unless cancelled.



Socks for those in Need

Share the Warmth

Socks are the most needed but least donated article of clothing for those in need.

This winter, **The Siuslaw News** is having a **sock drive** to help those in need in our community.

Please help us by donating new or gently used and clean socks to those in need.

You may **drop off** your donated items at The Siuslaw News
148 Maple St. in Historic Old Town Florence
Donations accepted until November 30th.



Siuslaw News

Need more info? Call us at 541-997-3441