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And the Winners Are?

By Andrea A. Firth

Orinda's City Council election may still be too close to call until the very last ballot is counted. As of press time the Contra Costa County Board of elections still had thousands of mail-in and provisional ballots across the county to add to the election counts. The number of ballots that remained outstanding in Orinda was not known.

According to City Clerk Michele Olsen, Orinda has historically had a significant percentage of residents voting by mail, as high as 68%, so the City is watching closely for updates from the County.

Based on the election night results, just under 10,000 votes were cast by Orinda residents who were given the option to vote for three of the five candidates-Amy Worth, Dean Orr, Sue Severson, Scott Zeller, and Tom McCormick. In the 2006 election, when voters were also given the option to vote for three out of five City Council candidates, a total of 21,569 votes were cast.

With the potential that several thousand votes still need to be counted, at this point we can only make educated guess as to who will be sitting on the stage of the Library Auditorium when the new Council members are sworn in on December 7th.

Here's what we know now. It's a safe bet that Victoria Smith and Steve Glazer, who each have two years left in their terms, will be at the table. For the three open Council seats, the current results have Amy Worth leading the group with 2,485 votes followed by Dean Orr (2,010 vote) and Sue Severson (1,949 votes). Scott Zeller, M.D., the newcomer to Orinda's civic scene, remains in the hunt trailing Severson by just 59 votes. Current Mayor Tom McCormick trails the pack with 1,633 votes.

The election to fill three seats on the Orinda Union School District Board (OUSD) of Trustees is also very tight and uncounted absentee ballots could impact the results of this race as well. A total of 9,037 votes have been counted so far. This compares to 17,128 votes cast in the 2006 OUSD school board election that also filled three trustee posts. Based on the election night results, Julie Rossiter (1,952 votes), Chris Severson (1,923 votes), and Tyson Krumholz (1,877 votes) have the top three spots. Bekki Van Voorhis-Gilbert trails Krumholz by just 120 votes, and Sarah Butler is currently in fifth place with 1,516 votes. Rounding out the Board will be current Trustees Pat Rudebusch and Matt Moran who each have two years left in their terms.

Note, this information is up-to-date as of Monday morning, November 8th. We'll keep you informed as the election results are updated. Go to www.lamorindaweekly.com.

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