



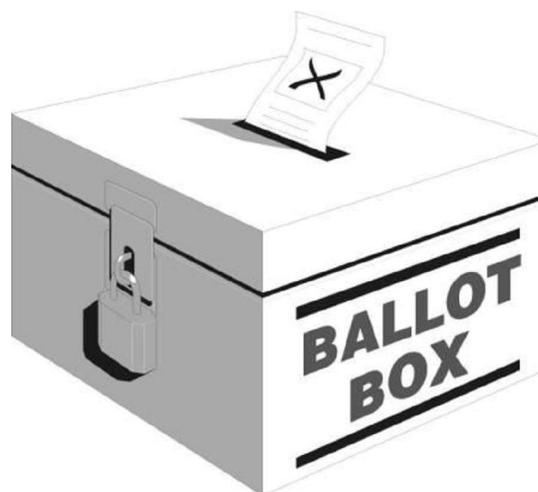
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NEWS LOCAL

All incumbent councillors returned to office

By Elaine Della-Mattia, Sault Star
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All incumbent councillors seeking another term at city hall were successful in Monday's municipal election.

In all, 33 candidates sought 13 positions around the municipal council table.

Mayor Debbie Amaroso was the only incumbent candidate who lost her seat in the election.

Amaroso lost her seat to challenger, now mayor-elect, Christian Provenzano by about 2,000 votes.

The six-person mayoral race quickly came down to two front runners – incumbent mayor Debbie Amaroso and challenger Christian Provenzano.

Ted Johnston, Heather Cook, Robin Coull and Austin Williams were all expected to trail somewhat behind.

Mayoral candidate Robin Coull called his first-time candidate experience overwhelming and educational.

"I don't regret it at all," he said while watching the results come in at city hall. "I didn't expect to win but I'm proud of what I accomplished."

The council table automatically will see three new faces as a result of Ward 3 incumbents Pat Mick and Brian Watkins not seeking re-election, as well as Ward 6 incumbent Frank Manzo.

Matthew Shoemaker topped the Ward 3 results with 2,705 votes, followed by Judy Hupponen with 1,864 votes.

In Ward 6, newcomer Ross Romano joins the council table with 1,643 votes. Incumbent Joe Krmpotich retained his seat with 2,085 votes.

The initially slow filing of candidates in Ward 1 ended with the largest number of candidates seeking the job.

Incumbents Steve Butland and Paul Christian return to the council table with veteran Butland garnering more than 3,000 votes and Christian following closely behind at 2,840 votes.

Butland said the election win was gratifying. "I love the job. The campaigning is getting tougher and tougher."

He said he's also pleased his wardmate was re-elected. "He deserves to be in there with me and we make a good team."

Christian said being re-elected "feels fantastic. It was a pretty tough campaign for me. My mother passed during the middle of it so I dedicated this campaign to her."

Challengers Derek Crowell, Andy Martens, Christopher Newman and Rick Turco trailed behind.

In Ward 2, incumbents Susan Myers and Terry Sheehan earned the nod of voters again.

Sheehan received 3,178 votes and Myers, 2,481 votes, both much higher support than for challengers John Duke and Michael Selvers.

Sheehan also said he's pleased. "We worked really hard. I'm pleased to be the first on the ballot for the fourth consecutive time. It means a lot."

Sheehan said his focus will be targetting the priorities his constituents raised during the election campaign.

In a release, Duke thanked his family and supporters and offered congratulations to Sheehan and Myers.

"I wish them luck over the next four years," he said. "I would also like to assure you that I will continue to fight for a transparent and accountable city hall."

Wards 4 and 5 saw the smallest candidate races in Sault Ste. Marie.

Both incumbents Rick Niro and Lou Turco were re-elected for another term in the close four-candidate race.

Turco received 1,575 votes, Niro just 15 votes behind at 1,560.

Challenger Luke Dufour had an impressive first time showing with 1,201 votes and former councillor Lorena Tridico trailed with 1,146 votes.

In Ward 5, incumbents Marchy Bruni and Frank Fata were both re-elected, leaving former councillor Dave Celetti at the sidelines for the second consecutive election.

Bruni received 2,507 votes, Fata 2,026 votes and Celetti finished with 1,259.

This year's election resulted in a dismal turnout of only 40.9%, almost 10% lower than the last municipal election.

The lower turnout was somewhat of a surprise when advance polls resulted in higher-than-normal turnout.

Weather is often considered a factor in voter turnout and the windy and rainy day could have prevented voters from heading to polling stations.

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Congratulations to all the successful candidates in last night's municipal election. There were some interesting races and obviously, there were some disappointments. But, to see such a low turn out from the voting public was very sad indeed.

Now, as we move forward during these next 4 years, individually, I believe we must remain firm and committed to being clear, accountable and transparent to the citizens of Sault Ste. Marie. They should expect nothing less from their City Councillors.

Again, congratulations to everyone.

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