

# Weber will not ask for recount in close mayoral race

By Mark Williams Daily News staff writer

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Moscow Mayoral Candidate John Weber said he is not planning to seek a recount of Tuesday's election despite losing to incumbent Nancy Chaney by just 40 votes.

Chaney received 2,095 votes, or 50 percent, and challenger John Weber received 2,055 votes, or 49 percent.

Weber has 20 days from the time the election was canvassed Wednesday to call for a recount and would have to pay for the process himself.

On Tuesday evening, he was noncommittal to the idea, but by Wednesday afternoon indicated a recount would be unlikely.

"Some new information would have to come forward to indicate that something was worth looking at," he said. "I trust (Auditor) Susan Petersen and her staff with the count."

Chaney maintained a close but comfortable lead throughout most of the vote count Tuesday evening. Weber actually won more precincts than Chaney with 10, while Chaney won eight precincts and the absentee vote.

However, Weber tended to carry areas on the outer edges of town and precincts with smaller vote counts. Chaney won most in larger residential districts further inside the city limits, often doing so by comfortable margins.

The 5th Precinct was the final to be counted and pulled Weber to within 40 votes and a near victory, winning 279 to 173. That precinct consists of residences on the far eastern portion of the city surrounding Panorama Drive

Chaney, 54, was first elected mayor in 2005. Weber was elected to the Moscow City Council in 2005 and this year served as council president.

A tight race for the three open seats on the Moscow City Council ended with Susan Scott, incumbent Walter Steed and Tim Brown prevailing.

Scott lead throughout the vote count Tuesday night, ending with 2,284 votes, or 21 percent.

Steed and Brown were within less than 50 votes of each other, with Steed winding up with 2,047 votes and Brown receiving 2,004 votes.

Nels Reese finished in fourth place when the final precinct was counted. He received 1,933 votes, or 17.5 percent.

Reese surged ahead to second place and Steed fell on the second to last precinct count. That precinct, number 15, consisted of neighborhoods surrounding East City Park where Reese lives and had strong support.

Like Weber's surge, it was the far eastern 5th Precinct that allowed Steed to reclaim the second spot for the final tally with Brown remaining in third.

Steed, who busied himself on election night by removing campaign signs, said he was not surprised the 5th Precinct allowed him to win re-election.

"That's where I've always had my support is along that eastern (part of the city)," he said. "I was probably cautiously optimistic. We don't have any way to judge what might happen."

Brown, like Steed, spent election evening removing campaign signs and was looking forward to taking over his new post.

"I'm thrilled I got elected," he said. "Any of the candidates would have been great, and I'm very appreciative that it was me."

Also falling short of a council seat were Dennis Deccio with 1,533 votes, or 14 percent, and Scott Billing with 1,098 votes, or 10 percent.

Autry White was the lone write-in to officially file and received 37 votes.

There were also dozens of write-in candidates for the mayoral race, but did not count in the tally due to no mayoral write-in candidate officially filing before the deadline. The City Council votes on those ballots remained valid, however.

County Auditor Susan Petersen said 40 ballots were disqualified for the council race because people voted for more than three candidates. The mayoral selections on those ballots were also valid.

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