

3rd-term victory a repeat of last election

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

ATTLEBORO - Mayor Kevin Dumas rolled to his second straight landslide win and his third term with almost 72 percent of the vote Tuesday over City Councilor John Davis.

The margin of victory mirrored that of two years ago when Dumas beat Tom Parker with 71 percent of the vote. But in that race, Parker was a political newcomer and not nearly as well known as Davis, making Tuesday's vote all the more impressive, some observers said.

All told, Dumas garnered 5,022 votes to Davis' 1,974. Davis had 28 percent of the vote.

Meanwhile, all five incumbent at-large city councilors were re-elected with five-term Councilor Walter Thibodeau leading the ticket with 4,386 votes. At the same time, voters rejected a comeback from former Mayor Judith Robbins, who came in last in the field of at-large candidates, with 2,687 votes.

An ecstatic Dumas said he was "humbled" by the vote. The result meant city voters are happy with the way the city is being run and the direction it's headed, Dumas said during a victory party with supporters at Moose Cabin on O'Neil Boulevard.

"I think the message from the voters is very clear," he said. "They are pleased and want the leadership to remain the same. We will continue to work on all current projects and will plan new initiatives."

Downtown revitalization, the industrial business park and streetscape are among the main projects now under way.

For the coming term, Dumas said he aims to move forward with high school renovations, improving fiscal stability and rehabilitating South Attleboro Memorial Park.

Dumas rolled to victory despite a fusillade of criticism by Davis in the final weeks of the campaign.

The four-term councilor blasted away, charging water and sewer fees were too high and that Dumas had failed to reach out to the community and failed to create new initiatives.

But the charges didn't resonate with voters.

One voter in Ward 6 seemed to sum up the general mood.

"I'm fairly satisfied with how things are going, especially with the mayor," he said. "I know he's working on projects started before he came into office, but I think he's doing a fine job and is leading the city onward and upward."

A female voter echoed the comments. "He seems to have good ideas, and I like what he's doing with revitalization and education," she said.

While it rained steadily for the first six hours of voting, turnout was about 28 percent or 7,073 of the city's 25,023 registered voters.

Two years ago turnout was about 29 percent.

While Davis's message was not well received by most voters, not all rejected it.

One woman who voted at Ward 6 said she's on a fixed income and voted for Davis in hopes he would make it less expensive to live in Attleboro.

"I'm elderly and I'm kind of hoping he'll drop taxes instead of raising them like Dumas did," she said.

A male voter said Davis was his choice because he thought it was time for "a new face and new ideas."