

Stevenson Re-elected First Selectman, Richards Off Selectman Board, Replaced by Sparkman

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First Selectman Jayme Stevenson thanked voters and supporters for electing her to a fourth two-year term as the chief town elected official.

"I want to thank all the voters who came out today," a rainy election day, she pointed out, "and I want to thank the tremendous ton of people who helped Susan [Marks], Kipp [Koons] and I [the Republican ticket for Board of Selectmen]."

- ***Editor's note: This article has been updated, with later updates incorporated into the body of the text. FINAL UPDATE — 11:49 p.m.***

"We'll work very hard for everybody in Darien, regardless of their party," she added. She hoped to work well with Pamela Sparkman, who will be the new Democrat on the Board of Selectmen, and she and other Republicans will welcome her to the board, Stevenson said.

Asked what factors were different this election year, Stevenson pointed out that "There are many outside pressures this year," some of which could have hurt Republican candidates, others that could hurt Democrats running for office.

Her Democratic opponent, Selectman Rob Richards, who was running this year for first selectman, may have been hurt by voters' concerns about the state budget, when Democrats have a majority in both houses of the Legislature and the governor is a Democrat.

But GOP candidates faced a problem too, with the unpopularity of President Trump in Darien. "I call it the 'Trump Effect,'" she said. "People's resistance to voting for a Republican" because it's the party associated with Donald Trump. Stevenson said that before the polls opened, she didn't know which factor would have more of an influence on the minds of Darien voters.

"Clearly, the Darien electorate is satisfied with the job our team is doing for Darien," she said. "We do our best for everybody. We do everything in a nonpartisan way, and I'm really pleased to see that reflected in tonight's vote."

Unofficial vote totals (without absentee ballots) collected by party members at the various polling places in town for the Board of Selectmen race were displayed at the Republican election night headquarters at the Goose restaurant.

They showed what official results confirmed: Stevenson's challenger in the race for first selectman, Democrat Rob Richards, received the lowest vote totals of the six candidates running for the five seats on the Board of Selectmen, so he is out for the upcoming term. In: Newcomer Democrat Pamela Sparkman.

Official returns, starting with the First Selectman race:

- Jayme Stevenson (R): 2,470
- Rob Richards (D): 944
- Chris Noe (unaffiliated): 22

More results: Board of Selectmen:

- Susan J. Marks (R): 2,316
- Charles "Kip" Koons (R): 2,176
- Marc Thorne (D): 1,153
- Pamela Sparkman (D): 1,048

Besides the Board of Selectmen race, the only other contested race in Darien this year was in the Representative Town Meeting District 2, where nine candidates were vying for eight seats.

- In that race, Vincent C. Arguimbau III lost out with the fewest votes, at 251. He is not listed as a current RTM member on the town government website, so he was running as a challenger, not for re-election.
- The eight successful candidates: Helen (Nina) Miller (330 votes); Stacy Tie (315); Monica McNally (308); William Cusack III (296); Timothy Goertel (295); Iris Mix (294); Heather Pommernelle (288); Susanne Handler (287).

Other official returns (all are winners since none of the rest of the town elective positions were contested this year):

Town Clerk: Donna Raczewski (R) (no opponent): 2,727 votes

Town Treasurer: Joan Hendrickson: 2,681 votes

Town Tax Collector: Kathleen Larkins: 2,679

Board of Finance

Jon Zagrodzky (R) (the board chairman): 2,400

Paul Hendrickson (R): 3,392

Robert Cardone (R): 2,237

L. Francis Huck (D): 1,391

Board of Education

Full term:

David Dineen (R): 2,227

Dennis Maroney (R): 2,182

Michael Burke (D): 1,411

Filling out last year of a term:

Debra Ritchie (R) (unopposed): 2,566

Board of Assessment Appeals

Christopher Peters (R): 2,068

Glenn Ritch (D): 1,014

Planning and Zoning Commission

Full term:

Stephen Olvany (R): 2,268

James Rand (R): 2,172

Jenniver Leahy (D): 1,326

Filling a vacancy for two years of a term:

John Sini Jr. (R) (the board chairman): 2,481

Elizabeth Riva (write-in candidate): 25

Constables

Joseph Tarnowski Jr. (R): 2,490

Lewis Calastro (R): 2,484

Representative Town Meeting

District 1

Patricia Bumgardner (372); Curtis Butler (300); Patrick Keane (328); Colin Kelly (321); Derek Lublin (294);

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Arpita Muchhal (290); Bradley Pattelli (311); Lois Schneider (334); Bert von Stuelpnagel (391)

District 2

(see above)

District 3

Adele Conniff (301); Elise Feldman (285); Holly Giordano (297); M. Carolina McGoe (290); Sue-Ellen Mitchell (316); Thomas Moore (299); Seth Morton (the RTM moderator) (293); Peter Riorden (295); Tamara Sload (294); Nicholas Vitale (273); Edward Washecka (269); Jennifer Woodbury (325); Lisa Yarnell (289)

District 4

Martha Banks (330); James Cameron (365); Lucy Fiore (314); Frank Kemp (337); Joseph Miceli (361); Andrew Miller (320); Sandra Savage (338)

District 5

Carolyn Bayne (304); Terrence Duffy Jr. (295); Kenneth Fiveson Jr. (275); Harry McLachlin (283); Jennifer Moller (293); Sara Parent (309); James Patrick (295); Anna Reed (292); H. William Smith III (278)

District 6

Amy Chickles (333); Marie Handler (326); Susan Lauritzen (302); Susannah Lewis (319); Martha Luz (342); Emily McDermott (340); Peter Orphanos (323); Shannon Silsby (355); Gary Swensen (341); William Van Loan Jr. (339); Theresa Vogt (346)

Update 9:15 p.m.: Reports from Darien Republican Campaign Headquarters have unofficial results showing First Selectman Jayme Stevenson has been re-elected, with challenger Rob Richards getting fewer votes than fellow Democratic Board of Selectmen candidates, meaning he will be off the board in the new term.

Results without absentee ballots, according to a picture published online by the Darien Times, showed Sparkman with 1,004 votes and Richards well behind, with 906. Absentee ballots cast in this election, according to the Registrars of Voters Office, only totalled 144. If these numbers are correct, Richards would need to get an overwhelming number of the absentee votes.

Original article:

Polls closed at 8 p.m. for Darien's town government elections, with all seats on the Board of Selectmen up for

election to two-year terms and some seats on other boards, along with various town officers, including first selectman.

A total of 3,460 voters cast ballots in the election, or 26.3 percent of the total number of 13,146 registered voters in town.

As of early Nov. 7, Republicans were 5,748 of the total number of registered voters (43.7 percent of all registered voters), Democrats number 2,659 (20.2 percent) and there are 4,623 unaffiliated voters (or 35.2 percent; those three figures add up to 13,020 — perhaps the other 126 voters belong to minor parties).