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## Democrat Defeats GOP Incumbent

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AVON

Republicans still dominate the five-member council after Tuesday's election, but a Democrat ousted a GOP incumbent for the first time in decades.

David Pena, a marketing consultant and planning and zoning commission member, ran on a platform for change and beat Joseph Woodford, who served on the council for 24 years, by 35 votes.

"I feel great," said Pena, who paced and was visibly nervous as returns were reported at Avon High School. "I think the voters have put their confidence in me in that I can lead the town in a new direction."

Woodford was the only incumbent to lose on Tuesday.

Republicans Mark Zacchio and John Carlson, chairman of the council since 2005, were re-elected, as was Democrat William Shea, who has been the lone Democrat on the council for years.

Among council candidates, Shea was the top vote getter with 2,288 votes, but the chairman is chosen from members of the majority party, so Shea's high vote tally does not guarantee him that spot.

Also winning a council seat was Pamela Samul, a Republican and another non-incumbent, who posted the second-highest vote total after Shea.

Samul ran on the Republican ticket in place of Diane Hornaday, who opted not to seek re-election after 14 years on the council.

"It's bittersweet," Samul said of her win. "I'm sorry we lost Joe. I think he's a great person and contributed a lot to the council."

Woodford could not be reached for comment. Kenneth Notestine, chairman of the Republican town committee, had no comment when asked about the loss. "It's too early," he said, referring to analyzing the results.



Republicans swept the only other contested races. James R. McCarthy, Stephen E. Hunt and Russell C. Peckham won seats on the board of assessment appeals, and Brian J. Ladouceur Jr. and William E. Eschert won seats on the zoning board of appeals.

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