

East Palo Alto voters OK taxes to end deficit

By Michael Shapiro
Times Tribune staff

East Palo Alto citizens voted overwhelmingly Tuesday to pay off the city's deficit through increased taxes.

"The people are willing to pay the cost to be the boss," said Solomon Tucker, president of the East Palo Alto Sanitary District Board.

An unofficial count Tuesday night showed 1,373 people (62 percent) voted for Measure A; 848 (39 percent) voted against it.

Turnout of registered voters for Tuesday's election was 25 percent.

Supporters of Measure A said defeat would have meant the end of East Palo Alto as an independent city.

"We don't want to be controlled by outsiders," said Tucker, who be-

lieved the voters demonstrated a sense of responsibility regarding their city.

Until 1983, the community was part of San Mateo County. In an election that year citizens voted to become an independent city.

"The people in this community want to save this community," said Sharifa Wilson, a leading supporter of Measure A. "Now that this is a city, people understand the importance of self-government."

Measure A imposes a \$175 assessment per house, \$60 per apartment unit, and \$1,000 per commercial property.

Landlords will be billed the \$60 per unit and may bill tenants for the \$60 fee. All taxes will appear on property tax bills.

The new tax is expected to raise

Please see TAXES, A-12



Times Tribune photo by Vern Fisher

East Palo Alto Mayor Bill Vines and his supporters enjoy themselves at an election-night victory celebration at Vines' home Tuesday.

Rent control favored again by overwhelming margin

By Michael Shapiro
Times Tribune staff

East Palo Alto residents Tuesday soundly defeated Measure B, which would have limited rent control to 20 percent of apartments in each complex.

Slightly less than 70 percent of the voters rejected the measure.

According to voting records, 1,499 residents opposed Measure B while 689 voters supported it.

Gerald Nugent, a leading opponent of Measure B, called the decisive vote "a mandate of the people."

For the third time in five years, East Palo Altans voted to support rent control, but Nugent predicted that its foes will try to undermine it again.

Opponents said "they will put it on the ballot every opportunity they get," he said. "I'm savoring the victory, but we have to go back to work."

On Measure B, which council members

Pat Johnson, Warnell Coats and John Bostic supported, Johnson said voters are "not interested in affordable housing programs — they're interested in keeping rent control."

During voting hours, opponents of Measure B were angered by a "Yes on Measure B" flier that said "Save rent control in East Palo Alto — Yes on Measure B."

The flier had originally said "No on Measure B" but was altered by placing a rectangle that said "Yes" over the "No."

"It's dishonest," said East Palo Alto voter

Jon Cowans.

"I guess they feel they can't win on the merits of their argument."

Joe Horwath, a leading supporter of Measure B, said it was "scandalous" to say that voting "No on B" would save rent control.

He said Measure B would not have abolished rent control but would have amended it.

"This measure is being smeared by the 'No on B' campaign," Horwath said at the time.