Written by Mark Jaeger
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Barb Dickmann

Village president faced first opposition since taking office in 2003

For the first time in her political career, Saukville Village President Barb Dickmann faced a challenge on Tuesday's spring election ballot.

Dickmann withstood a challenge from newcomer Michael Rintelman, 579 to 415.

After the votes were tallied, she was philosophical about the lessons learned in the electoral showdown.

"All along, I've been saying I believe in competition. I felt if the voters chose me again, I would be honored to serve, but I truly think people deserve choices," Dickmann said.

She said she didn't really approach this election differently than her uncontested races of past years.

"I didn't have signs, didn't send out fliers or go door to door. But what I did do was talk about what is going on in the village whenever I was in a group setting," Dickmann said.

In making his first bid for elected office, Rintelman made a surprisingly strong showing at the polls.

Rintelman, a therapist for a nonprofit agency, campaigned on "aggressively implementing" the provisions of Walker's budget-repair law.

"What I think really helped him is having worked on Gov. Scott Walker's campaign, and he was

not shy about pointing that out," Dickmann said.

The cost-cutting sentiments of the Republican-controlled Legislature may make the job of leading the Village Board especially challenging in the years ahead, but Dickmann said she is anxious to take on the task.

"These are definitely going to be very challenging times, but finding ways to stretch a dollar to make it do the work of five has always been the part of the job I enjoy most," she said.

Dickmann, a Port Washington High School graduate, is a retired office manager for Manpower International and president of the League of Wisconsin Municipalities.

She has been village president since 2003, and was a village trustee prior to that.

While pleased with the outcome of her first contested race, she said she expected to take some ribbing from at least one trustee who received more votes than her.

All three incumbent trustees were uncontested Tuesday. Mike Krocka received 582 votes, Dave Maglio 551 and Joe Caban 498.

"That is the first time anyone has received more votes than me in a village election," Dickmann said jokingly.

The only contested race in the Town of Saukville was for town treasurer, where Gloria Arredondo topped Darryl Habeck, 290 to 285.

The position had been vacant since Kay Danielson stepped down last year.

In the uncontested voting, incumbent Barb Jobs received 481 votes for town chairman; Kate Smallish received 410 votes and Curt Rutkowski 324 in the bid for two town supervisor posts; and Steve Golec was re-elected constable with 460 votes.