

Madeira Beach // Lamont is mayor by 30 votes

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MADEIRA BEACH - In a hard-fought mayoral race that drew a record voter turnout Tuesday, Hugh L. Lamont edged Miller Newton by 30 votes, and both incumbent city commissioners held onto their posts.

Lamont garnered 667 votes to Newton's 637.

"I thought it would be pretty close, but I thought I'd win by 100 votes," Lamont said.

He said a letter delivered to voters shortly before the election may have helped put him over the top.

Newton supporters denounced the letter as a "smear tactic." They said Newton did not have a chance to respond to charges in the letter about his tenure as director of Straight Inc., a controversial drug treatment program.

"I won't ask for a recount because there were at most eight ballots that got clogged in the (voting) machine," Newton said. "But I think it is very unfortunate for Madeira Beach that the election was based on smear tactics."

Lamont said the information in the letter is a matter of public record. "The only reason I did that was because Mr. Newton introduced his background to the voters."

The mayoral race was left without an incumbent because J. Kenneth Jacobsen decided not to seek re-election after 12 years of public office. Jacobsen had endorsed Newton.

A record 1,356 residents voted Tuesday, sparked in part by the city's controversial decision in 1987 to buy a \$650,000 piece of property in John's Pass Village. The city hoped to ease parking problems by buying the Gulf Beach-Seminole Board of Realtors property, but a dispute arose over who would ultimately have to pay for the land.

In the commission contests, Arnold Alloway and Warren Sturgis easily fought off challengers.

Alloway defeated Paul T. O'Connor 669 to 602. Sturgis edged Alan R. DiSesa 706 to 573.

Residents voted down a referendum basing pay for commissioners on their attendance at meetings.

- Caption: BLACK AND WHITE PHOTO, (3)Hugh L. Lamont; Arnold Alloway; Warren Sturgis
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