

Only two years after the Democratic Party took control of the Town Board for the first time in more than a decade in Lewisboro, they have been voted out of office, as the Republican candidates have swept the three Town Board seats — including town supervisor — and will hold a 3-2 majority when the new administration, led by Town Supervisor-elect Charles Duffy, takes office in January.

Despite having more than a 400-person edge in registered voters, the Democrats lost handily, as their nominee for town supervisor, incumbent Edward Brancati, garnered only 42% of the vote, 1,389, while challenger and Republican nominee Mr. Duffy, a registered Conservative, received 58%, or 1,931. Just two years ago, the numbers for the parties were reversed, with Mr. Brancati outdrawing Town Board member Peter DeLucia 2,043 to 1,237.



Republicans also took the two open Town Board seats with ease, as incumbent Peter DeLucia and newcomer Frank Kelly had nearly identical tallies, 1,891 and 1,890, respectively, to each garner 34% of the vote. Democratic nominee Maureen Maguire trailed Mr. Kelly by 384 votes, with 27% of the total. Bob Goett, a write-in candidate after Lewisboro Democratic Committee leadership failed twice to get him on the ballot, finished with only 276 votes, or 5%. All results are unofficial until verified by the Westchester County Board of Elections.

The carriage house at the Waccabuc Country Club echoed with upbeat conversation, intense speculation, and confident laughter as a large group of Republicans and their candidates assembled to get Tuesday night's election results.

Buoyed by early reports of a triple GOP win in Virginia, and a probable GOP win in New Jersey, the group was highly optimistic that their slate of candidates would prevail in the town election.

And they were not disappointed.

Mr. DeLucia and his wife, Kim, manned the telephone and the results board, and when the first

numbers showed that all three Republican candidates had handily won Goldens Bridge, the home territory of Democratic candidates Mr. Brancati and Ms. Maguire, the mood soared even higher.

“We just swept Goldens Bridge,” Mr. DeLucia announced to cheers and shouts. “It’s far from over, but things are looking good for Republicans.”

## **Election factors**

When asked by The Ledger to explain the dynamics behind their win, the three candidates were on the same page.

“Finances were the biggest issue in this campaign,” said Mr. Duffy. “The people in this town recognized this and the election results show their feelings.”

Mr. Duffy went on to say that after the celebration was over, a lot of hard work lay ahead.

“Tonight there is a lot of merriment, but we know we have a hard task ahead of us,” he said. “We have plenty of planning and organizing to do during the transition phase. We are going to show up immediately and get to work.”

Mr. Kelly said he was “humbled and privileged” to win the first time he entered a political race and to be “so well received by my friends and neighbors.”

“I have a wealth of diverse occupational and educational experience that I will bring to bear on the issues facing the town during a time of such dire financial concerns,” he said. “It’s my intent to be as open as possible, as dynamic as possible, and also responsive to our great community.”

Mr. DeLucia also recognized the people of Lewisboro.

“These results show that the voters in our town recognize the importance of electing quality candidates who are going to be responsive to all of their needs, especially for fiscal conservatism,” he said.

“I am excited to be working with Charlie and Frank and knowing that, come January, Lewisboro will have the supervisor it deserves.”

## Democrats



The mood was funereal Tuesday night for the opposition, as Lewisboro’s Democratic leaders gathered in Goldens Bridge to witness their chosen candidates fall. One by one, results from Lewisboro’s 12 voting districts came in, and with each, the news grew bleaker.

“I am still very proud of all that we’ve accomplished over the last two years,” said Mr. Brancati. “There’s a lot of work that we have done. Unfortunately, voters wanted to go another direction, and that’s their choice. We would’ve liked the opportunity to continue a lot of the initiatives that we’ve started. ... There’s still a lot of work to be done over the two months before the year’s out. I certainly will work to always ensure that the town is moving forward, and offer the best of luck to the incoming Town Board members and supervisor-elect Duffy.”

Ms. Maguire and Mr. Goett thanked their supporters.

“The election didn’t go the way that I would have like to have seen it go, but I’d like to thank all of our supporters who helped in the campaign, and I wish the Republicans all the best in their efforts to move the town forward,” Ms. Maguire said.

“I’m delighted with the tremendous support that I had from so many people, particularly as a write-in candidate,” said Mr. Goett. “I wish the outcome for the team was different, but I applaud the victors and I wish them well.”

## By the numbers

It was only two years ago when a Democratic uprising nationally was reflected in Lewisboro, as well, similar to how the Republican Party performed well on both levels on Tuesday. In 2007, the Democrats took control of the Town Board and had more registered voters than did Republicans, a first in Lewisboro. While the Democrats have continued to expand that margin in voters, 3,288 to 2,854, it was not enough to keep the majority in power.

At least 38% of the 8,760 registered voters cast ballots in this election, based on the number of votes for supervisor. That is similar to the last town election, in 2007, when 40% of voters went to the polls, but below the 50% that voted in the 2005 election. The number of people who voted in Lewisboro was nearly identical in 2009 and 2007 — 3,328 and 3,330, respectively.

In addition to the two major parties, there are 2,104 unaffiliated voters in Lewisboro and 514 registered with other parties.

The election results for town supervisor continue a trend that has not been reversed in recent memory: An incumbent supervisor, regardless of the party in power, loses the election when running opposed.

## Other races

Receiver of Taxes Joann Vasi and Town Justice Marc Seedorf, both incumbent Republicans who were also endorsed by the Democratic Party, ran unopposed, as did Democrat Peter Harckham, incumbent 2nd District county legislator. Republicans not only did well locally, they also won on the county level, as challenger Republican Robert Astorino unseated longtime Democrat incumbent County Executive Andrew Spano in the overwhelmingly Democratic county. In Lewisboro, Mr. Astorino outdrew Mr. Spano 1,844 to 1,343, or 58% to 42%.

## Change in power

Residents may be interested to see how the shift in power affects how the town handles some issues come 2010. Perhaps the most liberal member of the Town Board, Dan Welsh, has reignited the controversy over where to build a larger library since taking office in 2007, challenging the Town Board's push to have a new building at the town park. Even as part of the majority party, Mr. Welsh seemed to have little support, at least publicly, from fellow Democrats

on the board in that matter.

Also, the town's wetlands law, a controversial topic a few years ago, had not been a hot button issue in this year's election — the town had largely left the law unchanged the last four years and a lawsuit against it was defeated — until Mr. DeLucia revived it in a guest column in The Ledger and while campaigning. It is unclear if the Republicans plan to review the law once they regain power.

In addition to taking a 3-2 edge come January, the Republicans will also have a minority party member, Democrat Bruce Pavalow, who has sided with the Republicans on a number of issues since being elected in 2007.

And with Ms. Maguire's defeat, the board will remain without a female member until at least 2012. The last female on the board, Suzanne Whalen, did not seek re-election in 2007.