

Independents and Labor celebrate results in Ryde, Hunters Hill and Lane Cove

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Local voters have turned towards Independent, Labor and Greens candidates in Ryde, Hunters Hill, Lane Cove and Canada Bay with only one in three voters supporting the Liberal Party in these former blue ribbon Liberal areas.

As counting continues, the Ryde Liberals took only 31 per cent of the primary vote just ahead of a resurgent Ryde Labor (30 percent), the Independents (22 per cent), The Greens (10 per cent) and The Christian Democrats with 6.5 per cent.



Clr Roy Maggio



Clr Jerome Laxale

A coalition of Labor and The Greens could even hold the majority on Ryde Council with up to six councillors and the possibility of a Mayoral vote if Labor's Jerome Laxale is elected as Mayor later this month.

In contrast, former Liberal turned Independent Roy Maggio was comfortably elected in East Ward alongside Jordan Lane (Lib) and Penny Pedersen (ALP) with The Greens Christopher Gordon in front on votes as we go to press.

The Greens Edwina Clifton and Labor's Bernard Purcell had big wins in Central Ward alongside well known Liberal Sarkis Yedelian OAM, which leaves independent Jane Stott fighting for the last spot with The Liberal's Chris Moujalli.

Labor's Jerome Laxale received a massive vote in West Ward and will be joined by Labor colleague Peter Kim and the Liberal Trenton Brown, which leaves Simon Zhou (Ind) and the Liberal Amy Lee fighting for the remaining spot as we go to press.

In nominally safe Liberal municipality of Hunters Hill the Liberals polled a low 34 per cent of the vote against a combined 65 per cent for independent candidates.

Independent Mark Bennett could become Mayor on preferences from Independent Ross Williams but Liberal Zac Miles is still in there with a chance of being Mayor as votes go down to the wire this Thursday.

If Mark Bennett is elected Mayor, his colleague Elizabeth Krassoi will take the one undecided seat in North Ward alongside Ross Williams (Ind) and the Liberal Ben Collins.



Clr Mark Bennett



Ross Williams



Clr Pam Palmer



Andrew Zbik

If Zac Miles is elected Mayor, his Liberal colleague Vince Messina will take the last spot from South Ward after the election of Justine McLaughlin (Ind) and Jim Sanderson (Ind).

In Lane Cove Independent candidate Pam Palmer could be elected Mayor on the back of a comfortable victory in East Ward where she out polled the Liberal's David Brooks-Horn with Independent Lynne Spencer ahead on votes and likely to take the fourth spot.

Mayor Deborah Hutchens looks like being the lone Liberal elected from Central Ward alongside Independent Karola Brent and possibly the Independent Katherine Morris.

Labor's first ever seat on Lane Cove Council has fallen to Andrew Zbik who joins anti-amalgamation Liberal Scott Bennison and Independent Daniel Strassberg.

Ryde Labor is crowing about doubling its number of candidates on Ryde City Council and State Opposition Leader Luke Foley was in Ryde on Sunday where he said the Berejiklian Government's forced council mergers, poor policy and overdevelopment had hit the Liberals hard.

"The Liberals received a hiding," Mr Foley said at the Ryde Civic Centre.

"This result is hot on the heels of last September's local government elections where there were dramatic swings against the government and by-election thumpings."

Ryde Labor Clr Jerome Laxale said Colonel Bill Pickering's proposed redevelopment of the Ryde Civic Centre for high rise apartments now needs to be debated, as a matter of urgency.

"It will be one of the first issues a new council will have to deal with but the massive 23.9 per cent swing to Labor in West Ward clearly reflects voter anger with the proposed car park under Eastwood Oval, there's no doubt about that at all," he said.

"This has been a crushing defeat of the Liberals agenda that has even exceeded my own, wildest expectations."

In Hunters Hill, Independent Mark Bennett said the Liberal Party will be worried by the result.

"This has been a strong vote for independents, absolutely outstanding and the Liberal Party in Hunters Hill, which has two branches here, will be circling the wagons this week," Clr Bennett said.

“This is despite the Liberal Party running a strong, well-funded campaign, with popular candidate Clr Zac Miles (Lib) personally receiving the majority of first preference votes for Mayor.”

Councillor Roy Maggio (Ind) was dumped from the Liberal Party ticket but he took around 22 per cent of the vote in East Ward and he is likely to be elected.

“Gladys Berejiklian’s advisers should be worried by this result because change is happening and the people have spoken,” Clr Maggio said.



Phil Jenkyn



Gladys Berejiklian

In Hunters Hill, Phil Jenkyn OAM from the Save Hunters Hill Municipality Coalition attributed the poor Liberal vote to the hugely unpopular proposed merger of Hunters Hill with the City of Ryde and Lane Cove.

“Around 60 percent of voters in an otherwise safe, blue ribbon, traditional Liberal Party voting area rejected the Liberal Party and that’s an extraordinary figure which shows that almost two out of every three voters here don’t want this Party to run local government,” he said.

“What a sad indictment of State Government policy this is.”

Pam Palmer said her strong team and the issue of forced mergers had hurt the Liberal Party. “Local people want councillors who are first and foremost for their community,” she said.

One traditional Liberal voter in Gladesville said she was “shocked” by the election result.

“With record prices for homes in Ryde, Hunters Hill and Lane Cove and low interest rates under a Liberal Government this is a shocking outcome that should never have happened .. something has gone horribly wrong with the image of the Liberal Party brand.”

In Canada Bay, Labor’s Angelo Tsirekas has been re-elected Mayor on the back of another strong Labor vote and another poor showing by the Liberals who received only 35 per cent of the total vote.

In a further show of outrage against the forced amalgamations, outspoken pro-merger Liberal Mayor Sally Betts has been dumped from the Mayoralty in Waverley where Labor hopes to secure four seats to the Greens three ... a record high vote for The Greens in this once safe Liberal area.

<http://www.weeklytimes.com.au/independents-and-labor-celebrate-results-in-ryde-hunters-hill-and-lane-cove/>