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Big spending divide in president's race

By Ken Knutson

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While the two candidates in the April 4 election for Hinsdale village president were separated by only 110 votes, their campaign spending totals registered a much larger gap.

According to filings with the Illinois State Board of Elections, Tom Cauley spent \$37,776 on his campaign, while Laura LaPlaca spent \$10,070. Cauley won a third term in the election with 1,600 votes, or 51.6 percent, with 1,490 votes, or 48.1 percent, for LaPlaca.

The records show that Cauley loaned the Residents for Tom Cauley campaign almost \$35,800, with an additional \$2,925 coming from individual donors.

Campaign funds paid for direct mail (\$18,225), door hangers, fliers and other printed material (\$7,290), consulting (\$7,000), a phone bank (\$2,442) and newspaper advertising (\$2,640).

Cauley said he expected that he would need to spend money in anticipation of a tight race.

"I viewed it as an important election, and it was important to get our message out. He the communications consulting firm was employed to boost his online presence.

"In a modern election, you have to do a lot of things that I'm not very adept at, like creating a website and a Facebook page," he said. "I just found somebody that was able to do (those tasks)."

Asked if he thought appointing Deb Braselton, who donated \$2,000 to his campaign, to the village's plan commission should raise eyebrows, Cauley noted that she was already serving on the zoning board of appeals.

"Different members of the community support different candidates," he said, adding that recruiting volunteers for village commission posts is an ongoing challenge. "I don't think

that's wrong."

Cauley thinks investing heavily in mailings and other printed materials gave him an edge, but he also said nothing replaces the traditional method.

"My sense is the door-to-door campaigning is the most effective campaigning I had," he said. "I spent four to five hours every Saturday and Sunday for a month knocking on doors."

LaPlaca loaned Citizens for Laura LaPlaca \$8,183, with an additional \$1,038 coming from the Hinsdale Caucus, \$750 coming from individual donors and \$606 in in-kind contributions.

Those funds were used to buy newspaper advertising (\$4,400), yard signs (\$2,913), brochures, mailings and palm cards (\$2,244) and printing (\$168).

LaPlaca said she hoped buying yard signs and brochures and using her virtually free social media platform would help get her exposure in the commu-



nity.

"I tried to be responsible and not be excessive in getting my message out there," she said.

She questioned how much difference the spending gap made in the end.

"I realized that in a contested election that I was going to need to spend some money," she said. "I guess I'm a little too frugal and (spending three times more) would have just made no sense to me. I don't think the disparity in the amount of spending was reflected in the results of the election."

LaPlaca said, in hindsight, she would not change her approach.

"I can find some solace in the fact that I made Tom spend a lot of money," she quipped.

Walking the Walk through Hinsdale



More than 1,100 people turned out for the annual 2017 Walk the Walk for Autism sponsored by The Community House Sunday morning. Almost \$107,000 was raised to support the programs and services provided by Charlie's Gift Center for Autism and Related Disorders. Charlie's Gift offers programs at their clinic in Downers Grove and at The Community House. (Jim Slonoff photos)