

# T Woodward TALK

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## election has no competition

*But hot pot issue might  
draw in the masses*

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**FERNDALE** — In the first election since the old lever voting machines were replaced with high-tech computerized scanning equipment, there's not much of a competition to draw voters to the polls in Ferndale Nov. 8.

Ferndale Mayor Robert Porter is seeking re-election to the post he's held for two terms, and no one's fighting him for the job.

"People seem to be pretty happy with our current administration," Porter said after hearing he was running unopposed. "I look at it as an honor, and a great opportunity."

Scott Galloway is seeking re-election to his spot on the Ferndale City Council, and he's joined in the race by newcomer Tomiko Gumbleton. But, like Porter, both are shoo-

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ins, as longtime Councilwoman Helen Weber has opted to vacate her post, and no other residents entered their names into the running.

"I think it says that we're doing a good job," Galloway said. "People are generally pleased with the direction the city is going in."

However, a hot ballot issue might draw in the masses to cast their vote on whether to legalize marijuana for medicinal purposes.

The proposal was submitted by 19-year-old Ferndale resident Donal O'Leary, who is seeking to ease the suffering of residents afflicted with debilitating diseases, such as cancer, HIV and muscular dystrophy.

If passed, smoking marijuana would become legal in the City of Ferndale for patients who consult with their doctors and are under the direction, supervision, guidance and

prescription of a physician or other medical practitioner licensed under state law.

"With this initiative, I am confident that this is the right thing to do to help patients within the City of Ferndale; to allow them to have their medicine and to use the medicine they need," O'Leary said.

The only problem for proponents lies in the fact that the drug will still remain illegal elsewhere.

If passed, police officers will still be able to arrest those buying, selling or using marijuana under state or federal law.

"We don't turn our back on anything," said Ferndale Police Chief Michael Kitchen.

In addition, the mayor and council members are seeking their first pay increase in 78 years. If approved, the mayor's pay would increase from \$750 to \$8,142.24 per year, and City Council members' pay would increase from \$500 to \$5,428.15 per year.

"It's adjusted by the rate of inflation, as directed by the Depart-

ment of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics," said Ferndale City Attorney P. Daniel Christ.

In the first election for the new Ferndale Public Library Board, the candidates are Mary Ann Neal, Darlene Johnson-Bignotti, Tiffar Gagne, Ken Miller and Sarah Paulee.

In addition, the city is seeking to eliminate the police and fire commission.

*Citizens for a Fair Ferndale will be hosting a City Council Candidate Forum, Library Board Candidate and Issues Presentation and a Ballot Proposals Discussion on Sunday, Oct. 30 from 1:30 - 4:30 pm at the Kulick Community Center located at 1201 Livernois.*

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