

City councilmen face election test Nov. 6

By BEN J. PLASTINO

Post-Register political editor

For 1979 being a so-called off election year, there appears a multitude of them and the most important one is likely still to come.

That's the city election Nov. 6, but it will be lacking much interest as no mayor will be elected, only three councilmen.

This past spring, in April and May, there have been school trustee elections, plus school bond, plant facility and levy override elections. In fact there have been 28 in the 20 school districts of East Idaho. Each district elected trustees and eight were for bonds, plant facility or levy overrides. All passed, except in Madison and Clark counties.

In Idaho Falls, the terms of three councilmen expire, while Mayor Thomas Campbell and Councilmen Melvin Erickson, Paul Hovey and Ralph Wood hold over for two more years.

The terms of Councilmen Jim Freeman, Charles L. Clark and Sam Sakaguchi expire this year.

Freeman, who is rounding out four terms, or 16 years, has indicated strongly he will step aside this year, due to health and pressing business.

Freeman is editor of a cable television magazine and his activities extend to many facets of the city's civic life.

The two other councilmen, Clark and Sakaguchi, were appointed two years ago to fill vacancies. Sakaguchi filled the position held by Campbell when he was elevated from councilman to mayor, and Clark was appointed shortly thereafter when Councilman Gilbert Karst resigned.

Sakaguchi has strongly indicated he will seek re-election, but Clark says he is undecided.

Sakaguchi recalled that when he was appointed, it was with

The Post-Register

The political pulse

Idaho Falls, Wednesday, June 6, 1979 Section D

the understanding he likely would seek a four-year term after filling the unexpired two-year term. Sakaguchi added he found the councilman's job challenging and educational, even though it isn't entirely enjoyable.

Sakaguchi is an employee of an Idaho Falls irrigation supply company.

Clark is a retired naval commander and has served as superintendent of three school districts, Bonneville 93, Ririe 252 and Blaine County.

He has been engaged in a number of mental health programs and is presently director of the Headstart programs.

Clark, who keeps busy serving on a number of mental health and other humanitarian boards, said his decision on whether to run will depend on future developments.

The councilman job pays \$350 a month, or \$4,500 a year, and it incurs many long hours at City Council, committee and other meetings.

Freeman has served as chairman of the parks and recreation and the building and zoning committees; Sakaguchi, public works and fire committees; and Clark, airport and police committees.

The filing period is between 30 and 45 days preceding the election, or Sept. 22-Oct. 6. Most candidates are expected to announce in early September. All Idaho cities will elect at that

time, including 36 in East Idaho but nearly all will be for councilmen, not mayors.

Much of the past campaigning swirling about finances will be restricted this year because of the 1 percent limitation which gives cities no choice but to offer only essential services and no expanded programs.

Changing city hands

THREE CITY councilmen will be elected in the Nov. 6 biennial elections. The picture above shows Mayor Thomas Campbell, right, congratulated by outgoing Mayor S. Eddie Pedersen, left, after the 1977 city elections.

The terms expire of City Councilmen James R. Freeman, who does not intend to seek re-election; Sam Sakaguchi, who plans to run again; and Charles F. Clark, who is undecided.

Post-Register/Robert Bower

PHOTO BY ROBERT BOWER

