

O N G U A R D F O R 1 7 3 Y E A R S

Metropolitan Voice Press

Vote YES on Prop. B on Nov. 2!

Ferndale

Votes would carry more weight with instant runoff

Ferndale voters can make every vote count more by approving Proposal B for instant runoff voting.

The instant runoff ballot proposal would let voters register their first choice and rank the other options. Voters could, in effect, hedge their bets and maintain influence even when their first choice doesn't win. The system is common in Europe but rare in the United States.

A yes vote would amend the Ferndale city charter and apply to mayor and City Council elections only. The sophisticated system more accurately reflects voter sentiment.

As it stands, candidates with little support can now win some elections when several candidates split the vote. Under the new system, voters would get a first, second and third choice, ranked in order of preference. If no candidate gets a majority, the system eliminates the candidate with the fewest votes. Second-choice votes for those candidates go to remaining candidates until one candidate gets a majority.

Council member Scott Galloway said the new system would bring out more voters and give diverse candidates, including conservatives, a better chance to win.

It would also allow voters to vote

for a long-shot candidate without feeling that they're throwing away their votes.

Instant runoff wouldn't start until Ferndale has the technology for it. The city plans to buy new optical scan voting equipment next year. Adding the software to make instant runoff work would cost little.

Often on the cutting edge of government, Ferndale deserves credit for trying something different. The city would have to educate its citizens on how the new system works. First, Ferndale residents should embrace the opportunity for more choices, and power, by voting YES on Proposal B.

THURSDAY

Oct. 21,

2004