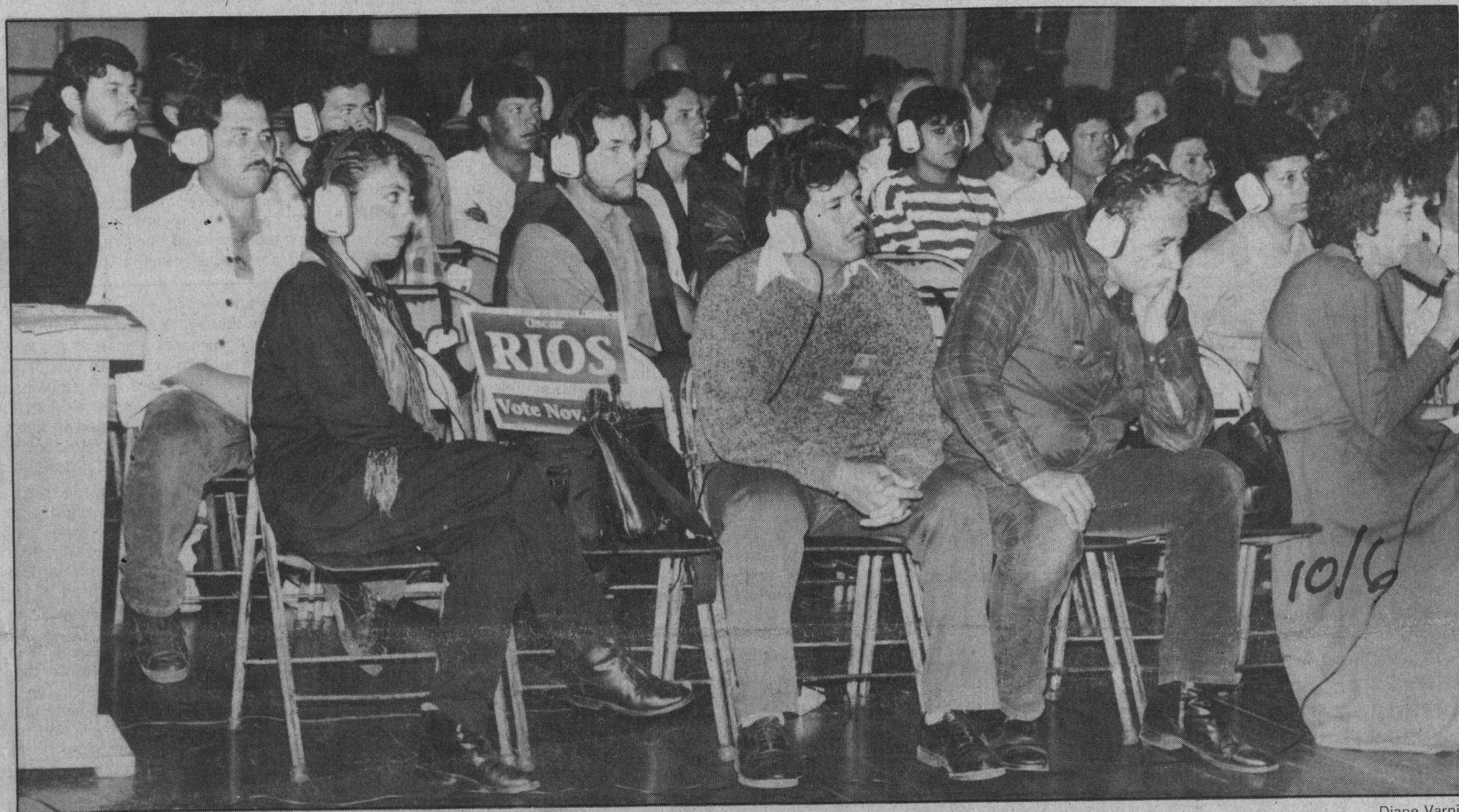


PUBLIC LIBRARY
 SANTA CRUZ

A night for politics



Diane Varni

About 80 people, many wearing headsets for simultaneous Spanish translation, listened to council candidates last night.

Candidates call for more jobs, affordable housing

By LANE WALLACE
 STAFF WRITER

The first forum for all candidates in the Watsonville City Council race came off well last night, despite the large number of candidates attending and a speaker system that bounced sound around the cavernous Veterans Hall on East Beach Street.

In the five minutes allotted to each candidate, the 80 people attending were able to get an idea on where each stood on three or four issues. There was no ques-

tion-and-answer session afterward — "or we'd be here all night," said Joe Fahey, president of Teamsters Local 912, Watsonville, which co-sponsored the event with the Central Labor Council.

There were no surprises — all the candidates came out in favor of affordable housing, although they had some different ideas on how to provide it, and everybody was in favor of creating jobs for city residents. The Teamsters asked candidates to address the issue of labor peace, and most of

the candidates said the city didn't take a strong enough role in the frozen-food strike of 1985-87 in Watsonville.

Whether the candidates swayed anybody with their presentations is doubtful, because almost all the people attending were supporters of one candidate or another. Campaign workers for Dan Dodge and Oscar Rios, candidates in District 2, held up signs when their candidates spoke.

Except for one man who blurted out "liar" in Spanish as City Councilman Tony Campos

spoke, the audience was polite to all candidates. By the time the event ended, half the crowd had left.

Of the 16 people running in the seven city districts, 11 attended the forum. Paul Milladin, in District 1, sent a statement which was read aloud. Luis De La Cruz, in District 5, had a family commitment and sent his friend Dana Sales to speak for him. Also absent were Ray Hoffman, District 2, Johnny Kasemaryk, District 7, and Gwen Carroll, District 4. Carroll sent word that she was

unable to attend because of illness in the family.

Cruz Gomez, who is running against Paul Milladin in District 1, the West Side, charged him with recruiting strike-breakers and maintaining low wages in his role as a part-owner of the Richard A. Shaw frozen-food company.

Milladin, Gomez said, "tries to pass himself off as a friend of the worker."

In his statement, Milladin said
 See FORUM page 2 ►

FORUM

► From page 1

if elected he would work with the council to establish new industries and jobs. Milladin said he supports more efforts to get affordable housing and opposes new taxes.

The city, Milladin said, has no authority in matters of labor negotiations.

Oscar Rios, who directs the local office of an organization that helps cannery workers, said, "I want to be a voice for labor" as a council member from District 2, the Downtown.

Rios called for stronger efforts toward affordable housing and for putting more minorities on the city payroll.

Dan Dodge, also running in District 2, said the current City Council "has taken too much of the developers' side" in land-use issues. He urged strong efforts to provide jobs and affordable housing.

In District 3, the North End, candidate Lowell Hurst said the city needs to work more closely with other government agencies and to create more jobs.

"We need jobs that pay enough so people can own a home in this community and can support a family," Hurst said.

Bob Armstrong, running in

District 3, emphasized efforts to prevent and reduce crime.

"I think you want to be safe in your homes," said Armstrong, a former policeman.

David Wildman, a District 3 candidate, said the city needs to look to non-profit organizations to build affordable housing. Wildman, who said he's been on both sides of the negotiating table as a postal employee, said the city should take a neutral position on labor issues.

Todd McFarren, running against Councilwoman Gwen Carroll in District 4, the Arthur-Alta Vista area, said if developers want to build high-priced houses, the city should "charge them heavily" in development fees. Those who build affordable housing should be charged substantially lower fees, he said.

Parr Eves, running in District 5, the Heights area, urged preservation of agricultural land and more cooperation among governmental agencies. Eves, who supports a measure on the November ballot for rent-control in mobile-home parks, said the city needs to explore the ramifications of rent control on other types of housing.

Sales, who spoke for De La Cruz, said the candidate is committed to his family and the community, noting De La Cruz's spent 15 years as a school teacher and principal. De La Cruz was principal of Calabasas

School before leaving to buy a trophy shop last year.

Mayor Betty Murphy, running in District 6, the Martinelli-Brewington area, said the city needs to "attract a diversified economy" while working to retain the businesses that are already here. Murphy said she favors additional efforts to get funds for subsidized housing.

Councilman Tony Campos, Murphy's opponent, said the city needs an "inclusionary" housing law, which requires developers of large housing projects to build a certain percentage of the homes to sell at lower prices.

As the available land for new housing fills up, Campos said, the city may have to consider more multi-story housing, although he said it's not the ideal solution.

"Three stories is better than none," said Campos, mentioning the area of Kearney and Sixth streets as a possible site for such development.

Robert Chacanaca, running in District 7, the East Side, also called for the city to require developers to provide affordable housing.

Chacanaca, an American Indian, referred to himself as an "indigenous Californian." He flipped up his long pony tail and said it was sometimes misunderstood.

"It's part of my cultural heritage," he said.