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## New London change

**A mix of trust in the Republican incumbents and disdain over the ugly infighting among Democrats led voters to make dramatic changes on the New London City Council. It's for the better.**

We were glad to see the seven New London City Council candidates endorsed by The Day elected Tuesday. It has the makings of a great council.

This will be a politically diverse group - three Republicans, three Democrats and one Green. Cross-endorsed by the Republicans, the expectation is that John Russell, the Green Party member, will side with the GOP when it comes to selecting a mayor and making appointments. The Republican-Green coalition would end two decades of Democratic council control. Such change is healthy for a city. When one party holds power too long it can lead to hubris, the assumption that continued control is a legacy, not something that has to be earned. New London Democrats learned that lesson Tuesday.

The council should name Republican Robert M. Pero as the next mayor. The top vote-getter, he enters his eighth term. Mr. Pero has the temperament to be a good mayor and to make the best use of the position's limited powers.

Joining Mr. Pero as the only two candidates to get more than 2,000 votes was fellow Republican Adam Spreccace, elected to a second term. Both men conducted themselves professionally in the past two years, staying clear of the infighting that dragged down the Democrats. On issues such as dealing with the city's homeless, the city manager search and charter revision, the pair resisted the temptation to play politics and instead kept the city's interests in mind.

The two returning Republicans will play a critical role in policy formation. When campaigning they emphasized a desire to use increased tax revenues from the Pfizer Research and Development Headquarters, which will see its property-tax breaks expire in 2011, to ease the tax burden on homeowners and reduce city debt. It's a good strategy.

Joining them in the new majority will be Republican Martin T. Olsen Jr., a veteran of a prior stint as a councilor, and Mr. Russell.

For the city's good, we trust returning Democrats Wade A. Hyslop Jr. and Michael Buscetto III, along with Democratic newcomer Michael E. Passero, will work with the new majority and not try to undermine it.

We urge the new council to form a charter revision commission with the goal of placing a clear-cut choice before the voters whether to switch to a strong mayor form of government. By their actions Tuesday, city voters demonstrated that, if given the opportunity, they would not let party loyalties determine their choice in electing the best candidate for mayor.

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