

3 Newcomers Win Seats on San Fernando City Council

March 03, 1999 IRENE GARCIA, TIMES STAFF WRITER

SAN FERNANDO — Incumbent Doude Wysbeek lost his bid for a fourth term on the City Council in Tuesday's election, with the three seats at issue going to newcomers Beverly Di Tomaso, Cindy Montanez and Richard Ramos.

Ramos, 30, is a third-grade teacher at Morningside Elementary School in San Fernando; Montanez, 25, helps run her family's construction business, and Di Tomaso, 65, is a receptionist at Guide Dogs of America in Sylmar.

With most of the votes counted, Ramos had 25% of the ballots cast, Di Tomaso 24% and Montanez 21%.

The other candidates vying for a seat on the five-member council were Wysbeek, 60, owner of an electric motor repair business and John Becker, 46, service representative for the Auto Club of Southern California.

The two seats not open this year are held by Silverio Robledo, an engineer and banker, and Cal State Northridge Chicano studies professor Jose Hernandez.

As in most recent elections in this mostly Latino working-class city, the big issue among all the candidates was economic development. For years, the 2 1/2-square-mile city has tried to lure major retailers.

Wysbeek, a longtime San Fernando political figure, campaigned with promises of keeping San Fernando fiscally sound and making the changes necessary for the city to attract major retailers.

Ramos said he will focus on education and getting better materials for local schools.

The Cal State Northridge graduate plans to increase home ownership by promoting city-sponsored loans to prospective low-income buyers.

Montanez, who served as a legislative assistant to former Los Angeles City Councilman Richard Alarcon, intends to push for more female- and resident-owned businesses rather than focus on bringing in outside merchants. She also would like to expand cultural facilities in the city and establish a playhouse and art galleries within its boundaries.

Di Tomaso, who lost a bid for the council in the 1980s, hopes to introduce more city-run programs for seniors and children. She also wants to seek additional funding for the city's antiquated library, a branch of the Los Angeles County Public Library system.

The newcomers replace Wysbeek, Raul Godinez II, who resigned to run for the Los Angeles City Council seat vacated by Alarcon, and Joanne Baltierrez, who did not seek reelection.