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## Trutanich marvels at victory in City Attorney race

By Rick Orlov, Staff Writer

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Carmen Trutanich

Winning by a landslide, Los Angeles City Attorney-elect Carmen Trutanich on Wednesday said he was still in a state of disbelief about his victory over City Councilman Jack Weiss.

"It gives me chills," said Trutanich, who lives in Harbor City and practices law in Long Beach. "I

looked at this like an athletic contest: You go on the field and lay it all on the line, and that's what I did. I gave it my all."

Trutanich, a political novice who was asked by District Attorney Steve Cooley to get in the race more than 18 months ago, scored a stunning victory over Weiss, 55.7 percent to 44.3 percent.

"We thought we were ahead, but we didn't think by that much," Trutanich said. "They threw everything they had at me, but we were able to hold on."

It was one of the most bitter races in recent memory, with the two sides spending nearly \$4 million in television advertising critical of one another.

Trutanich said he was now looking to create a transition team to work with outgoing City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo and ask City Controller-elect Wendy Greuel to undertake an audit of the office.

"I need a baseline on where we stand and to give me an idea of exactly what needs to be done," Trutanich said. "I want to see what we're taking on."

Weiss was not available for comment.

The election also marked a defeat for Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and Police Chief William Bratton, both of whom endorsed Weiss.

Villaraigosa shrugged off the loss.

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"I've been in a lot of elections," he said. "You win some, you lose some."

"That was yesterday. Today is another day and we have to begin to work together."

Bratton also said he planned to work with Trutanich. Sheriff Lee Baca, one of Trutanich's key supporters, is setting up a breakfast or lunch for the three to talk over public safety issues.

"We need to work closely with the City Attorney's Office on gang injunctions and other matters, and it's important we work together," Bratton said. "He is starting off well, with the support of Cooley and Baca, and I'm sure we will work together as well."

Villaraigosa said he called Trutanich on Tuesday night and the two agreed to meet to develop plans on how they can work together.

Westchester-area Councilman Bill Rosendahl, who has been at odds with the mayor over the budget and was a Trutanich supporter, said there will be no enduring impact.

"It was a mark against the mayor, but it won't last long," Rosendahl said. "The real issue facing the mayor is the budget, and if he shows leadership on that, he will come out of this all right."

Villaraigosa, who used his influence with the county labor movement to help Weiss, said he was sorry for the Westside councilman.

"He's like my little brother," Villaraigosa said. "We worked together on the City Council and I saw what a good man he is, his intelligence. I also saw how close he is to his family and the support they gave him. Now, he will be able to spend more time with them."

Weiss will continue to serve on the City Council through July 1, but it might make for difficult relations with his colleagues.

During the election, most did not discuss their preference. But, on Wednesday, several of them gathered around Dennis Zine's desk to discuss the election results. In addition to Zine and Rosendahl, council members Janice Hahn and Bernard Parks said they voted for Trutanich.

In the race to succeed Weiss in the 5th City Council District seat, former Assemblyman Paul Koretz held a tentative lead over neighborhood council leader David Vahedi. The two were separated by 335 votes, with Vahedi saying he would not concede until he sees how the vote changes with uncounted ballots.

County election officials said they were unable to determine how many of the 88,000 uncounted ballots countywide came from the council district. A final count is expected within the next three weeks.

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