

# Lieber becomes mayor

BY KARA CHALMERS  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

A tearful Sally Lieber heard cheers and jeers as she took over the Mountain View mayor's seat last night from her embattled fellow City Council member Mario Ambra.

Before taking the gavel, Lieber came under fire from critics who questioned her ability to carry out her duties while mounting another campaign.

Lieber opponents who spoke at the council meeting said she would be too distracted with her Assembly run to be an effective mayor and accused her of using Mountain View as a stepping stone on her quest for higher office. Lieber will run against fellow council member Rosemary Stasek and Santa Clara council member Rod Diridon Jr. in the March Primary for Elaine Alquist's state Assembly seat.

## Letters and cards

Some who spoke have formed a committee to recall Lieber from office. By yesterday afternoon, the committee had submitted to the city more than 62 letters and 13 postcards from residents who oppose Lieber as mayor, City Clerk Anger Salvador said. Committee members want to recall Lieber because they disagree with her stance on some issues, including Lieber's suggestion to construct housing on open space on Shoreline Boulevard. They say she is unresponsive to citizens.

Lieber supporters said the others were engaging in a smear campaign and that Lieber would be an excellent mayor despite running for Assembly. They noted how she led the campaign for low-rent housing for seniors living in mobile home parks and advocated for the day laborers in the city.

Salvador has received two letters supporting Lieber.

Lieber, alternately smiling and straight-faced, listened to all comments from the public and some from council members. After the proceedings, she commented that she was "glad that's over."



**MOUNTAIN VIEW MAYORS** -New Mountain View Mayor Sally Lieber honored outgoing Mayor Mario Ambra at a council meeting last night. Daily News photo by Susan Bradley.

In electing Lieber, council members followed a procedure for rotating the one-year mayorship that they agreed on in 1999 -the vice mayor becomes mayor the next year. Council members all voted for Lieber, except for Ambra, who abstained from voting. He wouldn't say why.

After the seven council members unanimously voted for Mike Kasperzak as vice mayor, Lieber read a resolution of appreciation for Ambra, who will stand trial on public corruption allegations Feb. 11.

## Crying

Council member Stasek cried when she said she supported Lieber -her "worthy Assembly opponent" as mayor.

"The night I was elected mayor,

not having ever gotten married, was probably one of the happiest days of my life," Stasek said. "I'm sorry that this evening is different for you."

The comment made Lieber cry.

Another intense moment came when Ambra, in his outgoing speech, possibly alluded to the accusations against him. Ambra thanked his family, friends and people of Mountain View for supporting him during a "memorable" year.

He thanked City Clerk Salvador and her staff for their hard work and assistance, but did not mention City Manager Kevin Duggan or City Attorney Michael Martello, who brought Ambra's case to the district attorney last summer. Ambra denies the allegations.

"I was proud to be mayor of my hometown and I still am," Ambra