

AFSCME Local 88 endorses Jeff Cogen for Multnomah County Chair

The American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 88, representing nearly 2,800 workers at Multnomah County, conducted an emergency endorsement meeting March 10 due to last-minute changes in candidate filings for Multnomah County Chair and Commissioner, District 2.

Chair Ted Wheeler vacated his position to accept an appointment by Gov. Ted Kulongoski to serve as state treasurer, following the death of Ben Westlund. Wheeler then filed to run for treasurer in the May primary.

Upon Wheeler's sudden departure, Multnomah County Commissioner Jeff Cogen dropped his re-election bid in District 2 in order to run for chair. Local 88, which endorsed Cogen for re-election, voted to support him in his race for County Chair.

Local 88 took no action in the race to succeed Cogen. Eight candidates have filed to run.

At a candidates' forum March 10, each candidate had an opportunity to make opening and closing statements, and each responded to questions submitted directly by members. Afterward, members took three straw polls, and numerous proposals were made for endorsements. Unable to reach consensus

after nearly two hours, members voted to withhold an endorsement.

The eight candidates are Karol Collymore, Chuck Currie, Gary Hansen, Tom Markgraf, Paul van Orden, Roberta Phillip, Maria Rubio and Loretta Smith.

Teamsters, Longshore, endorse Cornett for Portland City Council

Teamsters Joint Council No. 37 and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union's Oregon Area District Council have endorsed Jesse Cornett for Portland City Council.

Cornett is challenging three-term incumbent Dan Saltzman, who has been endorsed by the Northwest Oregon Labor Council.

"Our members think what we need right now is a fresh voice who is willing to make the tough decisions needed to put Portlanders back to work," said Teamsters Political Director Lynn Lehrbach.

Cornett has been an active participant in Portland's progressive politics, co-founding the Oregon Bus Project and the political blog Blue Oregon. It is his first run for public office.

...Labor endorsements for May primary

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can gubernatorial primary.

In other political action, the Oregon AFL-CIO endorsed Congressmen David Wu, D-1st District, and Peter DeFazio, D-4th District, for re-election. Representatives of the Oregon State Building Trades Council abstained in the Wu vote, citing issues it has with the congressman on several construction projects.

COPE postponed making endorsements in the 3rd and 5th Congressional Districts, and for U.S. Senate. Incumbent U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer and U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden have yet to fill out questionnaires, and the state labor federation wants to discuss with incumbent Rep. Kurt Schrader his positions on trade, health care reform and finance accountability.

Delegates took action in only two other statewide races, supporting the re-election of Susan Castillo as Superintendent of Public Instruction and Judge Robert Wollheim to the Oregon Court of Appeals.

In State Senate races, the AFL-CIO endorsed Alan Bates, D-Medford, for re-election, and Chris Edwards, D-Eugene. Edwards is leaving the House, where he received "Silver Medal" status from COPE, to run for the Senate.

In the House, the AFL-CIO supported Bob Jensen, R-Pendleton; Greg Smith, R-Heppner (contingent on him turning in an acceptable questionnaire); Jeff Barker, D-Aloha; Margaret Doherty, D-Tigard; Lou Frederick, D-Portland; Sara Gelser, D-Corvallis; Nick Kahl, D-Troutdale; Mike Matthews, D-Gresham; Arnie Roblan, D-Coos Bay; and Jefferson Smith, D-Portland. All are incumbents.

COPE also is backing Lynn Howe, D-Medford. She is running against incumbent Republican Sal Esquivel.

Both Smith and Jensen have decent COPE voting records in the Legislature, and both supported Ballot Meas-

ures 66 and 67. Last session, Smith, whose father is a member of Plumbers and Fitters Local 290, received a "Bronze Medal" from the AFL-CIO, putting him on par with Democrats Kahl, Jefferson Smith, Debbie Boone, Carolyn Tomei, Jean Cowan, Suzanne Van Orman, Nancy Nathanson, and Chris Harker.

Jensen received an "Honorable Mention" for his voting record last session.

Now, Smith and Jensen are targets of the Oregon Republican Party. GOP Chair Bob Tiernan sent each a scathing letter warning them not to accept endorsements or contributions from any labor group. 'Tea party' members have been recruited to run against them.

Tiernan's letter read in part:

"I have recently been made aware of the intentions of public employee unions in Oregon to provide you and your campaign with monetary, consulting and grassroots support.... I strongly urge you to refuse this support of the public employee unions and their Democratic allies.... If you choose not to reject any assistance from the public employee unions and their Democratic allies, then I respectfully request that you consider removing yourself from the election for the Republican Party nomination ..."

In December, COPE made a round of early endorsements for incumbents with 100 percent COPE voting records.

Congressional and state races in which no endorsement was made will be revisited after the primary.

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Our Legal Staff are Proud Members of UFCW Local 555

Bakers Union inks law firm to union contract

Bakers & Grain Millers Local 114 has signed a collective bargaining agreement to represent employees at the law firm of Kevin Keaney, P.C.

"Kevin has done an excellent job serving as counsel for our local and representing our members," said Local 114 Secretary Treasurer Terry Lansing.

Keaney has been the attorney for both Bakers & Grain Millers Local 114 in Portland and Local 364 in Vancouver since forming his law firm in the late 1990s.

Keaney previously worked for several law firms practicing labor law. He also has a bachelor of science degree in nursing.

Keaney represents employees and labor unions, focusing on labor law, employment law, and personal injury cases in both Oregon and Washington.

"We are committed to the rights of employees and labor," Keaney said.

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