

Four unions endorse Novick, Nolan for seats on Portland City Council

No action yet in mayor's race

Two candidates running for Portland City Council have picked up early endorsements from four union locals.

In a joint announcement Dec. 15 in front of City Hall, leaders of Portland Fire Fighters Local 43, the Portland Police Association (PPA), the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 48, and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 8, endorsed Steve Novick and Mary Nolan for city council.

Novick is running for an open seat being vacated by former Fire Fighters union president Randy Leonard.

Nolan is leaving the Oregon House of Representatives to challenge incumbent Amanda Fritz, who is a member

of the Oregon Nurses Association.

All but the ILWU represent employees at the city.

"We endorse these people because we want to get the City of Portland back looking at jobs," said Joe Esmonde, a business agent for IBEW Local 48. "We need to have a middle class that is strong, which is important to pay those taxes. We know these candidates will be there for us and help our members get back to work."

Daryl Turner, president of the PPA, said the two endorsed candidates "are innovators who think outside the box to solve difficult and complex problems."

Fire Fighters President Jim Forquer said his union and the PPA also have endorsed Rod Underhill for Multnomah County district attorney. Underhill, a chief deputy district attorney for Multnomah County, is seeking to replace his boss, Michael Schrunk, who

is retiring after 31 years as DA.

Forquer said labor wasn't ready to endorse any of the candidates running for mayor.

Labor-backed incumbent Sam Adams is not seeking re-election, and several people have filed to succeed him. The front-runners are businesswoman Eileen Brady, former city commissioner Charlie Hales, and State Rep. Jefferson Smith.

"At this time, our members don't feel comfortable making an endorsement," Forquer said. "We're anxious to continue the conversations with all of the candidates for the mayor's race, and we look forward to more information from them."

Asked by reporters if the Fire Fighters Union might consider endorsing a yet unannounced candidate for mayor, Forquer responded that the union would give thought to anybody at this point.

...Oregon AFL-CIO political endorsements

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6732; and Fire Fighter locals from Tualatin Valley, Newberg, Forest Grove, Cornelius, Scappoose, Clatskanie, and Washington County District 2.

United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555, an affiliate of the Change to Win labor federation, endorsed Bonamici, as did the independent Oregon Education Association. Local 555 represents approximately 2,000 members in the 1st District.

At the Dec. 16 COPE meeting, the Oregon AFL-CIO issued an early endorsement for Avakian, who now is running for re-election as labor commissioner. Avakian is being challenged by Republican State Sen. Bruce Starr. The labor commissioner's post is non-

partisan, so if any candidate captures over 50 percent of the vote in the May primary, they will be declared the winner and will not be on the November general election ballot.

COPE delegates also voted to endorse the re-election of Secretary of State Kate Brown. The endorsement was contingent upon her completing a satisfactory questionnaire, which all political candidates are asked to do.

Additionally, the Oregon AFL-CIO endorsed Jennifer Williamson for an open seat in House District 36, and Ben Unger in House District 29. Both are Democrats. HD 36 is being vacated by Mary Nolan, a Democrat running for Portland City Council. HD 29 is held by first-term Republican Katie Eyre.

Another Democrat, Katie Riley, also has filed for the race. She lost to Eyre in 2010.

Delegates unanimously opposed Initiative Petition 3, which currently is gathering signatures in order to qualify for the November 2012 ballot. The anti-union initiative seeks to bar public employers from collecting union dues if any part goes toward political activities. Dubbed "paycheck deception" by labor, delegates amended the motion to include any initiatives involving paycheck deception, as several versions have been filed with the secretary of state.

The AFL-CIO will consider more endorsements when it meets again in early March.

IN MEMORIAM

MELVIN "PETE" OSCAR PETERSON, a former president and union rep for Bakers Local 364, passed away Dec. 5 — 16 days shy of his 84th birthday.



Peterson worked at Nabisco in Portland for 36 years and was a 62-year member of Local 364.

He took a break from his bakery job for two years (1950-52) to serve in the Army during the Korean Conflict.

He left Nabisco in 1985 to go to work for the union. He retired in 1989.

Peterson served as president of the local for 20 years.

Peterson was born in Genesee Township, Minnesota on Dec. 21, 1927.

He married Gladys Madeline Babcock in 1972. The couple was married for 30 years and traveled around the world. They had no children. She passed away May 2, 2002.

Peterson left portions of his estate to Doernbecher Children's Hospital, Providence Child Center, Ronald McDonald House, and Guide Dogs for the Blind, Inc.

Funeral arrangements were handled by Gateway Little Chapel of the Chimes.

Minimum wage goes up in Oregon, Washington

Oregon's minimum wage increased by 30 cents to \$8.80 an hour on New Year's Day, while in the state of Washington, minimum pay jumped by 37 cents to \$9.04 an hour.

Oregon and Washington are among 10 states that peg the wage floor to inflation. The others are Vermont, Ohio, Nevada, Montana, Missouri, Florida, Colorado, and Arizona.

According to the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries, the 30-cent increase in Oregon mirrors a 3.77 percent increase as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the previous 12 months. CPI, published by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, is a measure of the average change in prices over time for a fixed "market basket" of goods and services, such as food, shelter, medical care, transportation fares, and other goods and services people purchase for day-to-day living.

"Safeguarding the wages of low-in-

come workers is especially critical in a tough economy," said Oregon Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian. "Oregon's economy will not rebound if we allow 144,538 minimum wage earners to fall behind inflation."

Washington's minimum wage rate is the highest in the nation. However, a few cities have their own laws covering minimum pay. For instance, San Francisco's minimum wage increased to \$10.24 an hour on Jan. 1, making it the first city in the nation to top a \$10 minimum wage.

New hourly wage rates for 2012 are: \$8.46 in Vermont; \$7.70 in Ohio; \$7.65 in Montana; \$7.67 in Florida; \$7.64 in Colorado; \$7.65 in Arizona; and \$8.25 in Nevada for those without employer-provided health insurance, \$7.25 with insurance provided. Missouri opted for no change this year and will remain at \$7.25 an hour.

The federal minimum wage is \$7.25.



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