

SW Washington Labor Council makes endorsements for August primary

Five candidates square off for chair of Clark County Board of Councilors

VANCOUVER, Wash.— The Southwest Washington Central Labor Council issued its endorsements for the Aug. 4 primary. Washington is a “Top 2” state, which means the two candidates with the most votes, no matter what political party they belong to, will advance to the November general election.

The labor council supports **Mike Dalesandro** for chair of the **Clark County Board of Councilors**. Dalesandro is a Democrat running against four Republicans, including incumbent chair David Madore and two sitting councilors—Tom Mielke and Jeanne Stewart. The other candidate is Marc Boldt, a former county commissioner who was defeated by Madore in 2012.

Last year Clark County voters passed a home rule charter, which reorganized county government, turned commissioners

into councilors, and expanded the County Council from three to five representatives. The first step into full implementation of the charter occurs in this election cycle. The new structure created four districts in Clark County where voters in each district will elect their own representative to the council, plus a new “chair” position that is elected county-wide.

Madore’s and Mielke’s terms don’t expire until 2016, and Stewart’s ends in 2019, so all three will retain their council seats if they lose the chair campaign.

Multi-millionaire Madore is a rookie politician who spent about \$314,000 of his own money to unseat Boldt, the incumbent. Since taking office, he has targeted organized labor. Earlier this year Madore proposed a right-to-work ordinance. The backlash from the community was fierce, and the proposal was dropped.

Dalesandro, 34, is a Battle Ground city councilor. He works as a supply chain analyst

at Boise Paper in Vancouver.

Five candidates have filed for the **Clark County Council, District 2**, seat. The district, created under the new charter, stretches from Felida through Ridgefield and La Center to the northwest county border.

The Southwest Washington Central Labor Council has endorsed Ridgefield resident **Chuck Green** for the post.

Green is the project manager for C-Tran’s Bus Rapid Transit Project, and was Clark County’s transportation program manager from 1992 to 1998. He is a strong proponent of replacing the Interstate 5 bridge, calling it “by far our region’s highest priority.”

One of his opponents is Mary Benton, the wife of controversial state Sen. Don Benton (R-Vancouver)—a Clark County employee.

Madore and Mielke hired Don Benton as the county’s director of environmental services in a backroom deal that eventually cost the county \$250,000 to avoid a lawsuit. The lawsuit al-

leged Clark County violated state and federal civil rights laws and its own hiring practices when the two commissioners hired Benton, who has no experience in environmental matters.

At **Vancouver City Council**, the labor federation endorsed the re-election of **Bart Hansen** to Position 4, and the election of **Ty Stober** for Position 5, and **George Francisco** for Position 6.

Hansen and Francisco have only one opponent, so they will automatically advance to the general election in November. Hansen was appointed in January 2010 to fill the vacant position created by the election of Tim Leavitt to mayor. He was elected to the post outright in November 2010, and re-elected in November 2011. Hansen is the office services manager at Clark Public Utilities. Francisco, 74, is an insurance company owner trying to unseat incumbent Bill Turlay. Francisco served on the Vancouver City Charter Review Commission in

2014, but otherwise has never run for elective office.

[The 2014 Charter Review Committee recommended five changes for the charter that the City Council voted to place on the ballot for the Nov. 3, 2015 General Election.]

Stober is among three candidates running for an open seat in Position 5. A small business owner in the clean energy sector, Stober is a longtime neighborhood and community activist who served on the 2014 City Charter Review Commission.

Stober also has endorsements from IBEW Local 48, AF-SCME Local 307, Laborers Local 335, and United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555.

In **Battle Ground**, the Labor Council is backing **Candy Bonneville** in her bid to unseat incumbent City Councilor Phil Johnson in Position No. 7. Since only two candidates are in the race, both automatically advance to the general election. Bonneville is active in the Clark County Democratic Party.

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