

Good news for building trades unions in May 16 election

Two labor-backed school bond measures approved by voters in the May 16 Special District elections will add nearly \$1 billion in construction work to the area over the next few years. That's music to the ears of construction unions.

The biggie is a \$790 million school bond at **Portland Public Schools**. Voters papproved **Measure 26-193** by a margin of 61 to 39 percent. The money raised will pay to rebuild Lincoln High School and Kellogg Middle School; to retrofit Benson and Madison high schools; to repair or replace deteriorating school roofs; replace old water pipes and fixtures; to remove or encapsulate exposed lead paint and asbestos; improve building foundations and ventilation to decrease radon exposure; upgrade fire alarm and sprinkler systems; and improve accessibility for people with disabilities at every school in the district.

In **Lake Oswego**, voters narrowly passed **Measure 3-515**. The measure will raise \$187 million to rebuild Lakeridge Junior High, perform maintenance re-

pairs, and implement safety and security upgrades on existing schools. It passed 50.72 to 49.28 percent.

The construction work will fall under the "little" Davis-Bacon Act, which means contractors will pay prevailing wages and benefits. That's a plus for union-signatory contractors, who will be more likely to out-compete nonunion contractors and secure much of the work, since they already pay at or above the prevailing wage rates set by the state.

The projects are broad in scope, too, touching nearly every union craft, said Willy Myers, executive secretary-treasurer of the Columbia Pacific Building and Construction Trades Council (CPBCTC).

A third bond measure backed by the building trades and other labor groups wasn't as fortunate. A \$75 million **Mt. Hood Community College (MHCC) bond** was defeated 55 to 45 percent. MHCC hasn't been able to pass a bond since 1974.

In other election results:

Two candidates for **Portland**

School Board endorsed by the Northwest Oregon Labor Council were victorious. **Rita Moore** won in Zone 4, and **Scott Bailey** won in Zone 5. Both candidates also had support of the Portland Association of Teachers and the Portland Federation of School Professionals Local 111.

Another Portland School Board candidate — **Julia Brim Edwards** — also was elected. She was endorsed by the CP-BCTC.

Rob Wagner ran unopposed for **Lake Oswego School Board** Position 2. Wagner, a former employee of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), is associate vice president of college advancement at Portland Community College. He was endorsed by NOLC, Portland Community College Local 2277-AFT, and PCC Local 3922-AFT.

Ana Del Rocio won a three-way race for **David Douglas School Board**, Position 1. She captured nearly 42 percent of the vote against incumbent Cheryl Scarcelli Ancheta, who

finished with 27 percent. Del Rocio was endorsed by NOLC, United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 555, and the Oregon School Employees Association.

Retired Oregon AFSCME Council 75 lobbyist **Mary Botkin** was re-elected to the **Multnomah Education Special District**, with strong support from organized labor. She captured nearly 90 percent of the vote against her opponent.

Annette Mattson was elected to the **MHCC Board of Directors**, Zone 4, with broad support from organized labor. She captured nearly 80 percent of the vote.

Moses Ross finished third in a three-way race for **Portland Community College Board of Directors**, Zone 5. He was supported by NOLC and CPBCTC. The winner, **Valdez Bravo**, a Democratic Party activist, had endorsements from PCC Local 2277-AFT and PCC Local 3922-AFT. Bravo won with

nearly 62 percent of the vote.

Ballot Measure 26-189, referred by Portland City Council to amend the City Charter to increase the independence of the Auditors Department, won handily. There was no opposition to the measure.

In the **Gresham-Barlow School District**, labor-endorsed **Jason Dugan**, a member of IBEW Local 48, was unsuccessful in a three-way race for School Board, Position 4, at-large. Blake Petersen won with 50.5 percent of the vote.

In **Parkrose School District**, NOLC-endorsed **Kori Basquez** lost her bid for School Board, Position 4.

Overall, voter turnout was low. In Multnomah County, only 31.34 percent of 503,345 eligible voters cast ballots. In Clackamas County, 19.55 percent of 271,779 registered voters voted. And in Washington County, 21 percent of 342,046 eligible voters turned in ballots.

LERA to discuss 'Grand Bargain'

The Oregon state budget is facing a \$1.6 billion shortfall. Without new revenue, core state services like health care and education are facing steep cuts. A "Grand Bargain" compromise is coming together in Salem that could create new revenue while trimming PERS benefits. The Oregon chapter of the Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA) will take a peek behind the curtain of the "Grand Bargain" Thursday, June 8, at the Two World Trade Center, 121 SW Salmon St., Portland.

Speakers will include Joe Baessler, political director of Oregon AFSCME, and Trent Lutz, assistant executive director for the Center for Public Affairs, Oregon Education Association.

The discussion is part of the

Oregon LERA Breakfast series. Cost is \$25 for LERA members and \$40 for non-members, but includes a one-year LERA membership.

Breakfast starts at 7:30 a.m. The program will be from 8 to 9:30 a.m. For more information, or to register, go to www.oregonlera.com.

Unionist to head House Progressive Caucus

WASHINGTON, D.C. (PAI)—Members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus in the Republican-controlled U.S. House have elected union member Mark Pocan (D-Wisc.) as their new co-chair. Pocan owns a print shop in Madison that is signatory with Painters Local 770.

"With the Trump Administration attacking both the values we hold dear and the programs which provide vital services to people across the country, it is my goal to help make the Congressional Progressive Caucus the voice of the resistance," Pocan said.

Pocan said he will continue to fight for "kitchen table issues" and put forward pragmatic, progressive policies to combat Donald Trump and House Speaker Paul Ryan's "radical agenda."

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