

# District 23: Candidates sound off at debate

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She added people should keep in mind that farmers are competing in a regional, national and global scale. That makes cost increases like sick leave and higher wages a competitive disadvantage.

"They can't adjust rates and stay competitive," she said. "We have to protect our farmers by keeping legislation like that from happening."

Nearman said local farmers don't need more regulation — and he believes more is coming on pesticides — because of the unique relationships they have with each other.

"This is a culture where they talk to each other and they work things out by themselves," he said. "That's a great thing."

He added he's trying to keep property taxes low and protect small businesses from higher labor costs.

"Small businesses don't really need that much from government," Nearman said. "They just need to be left alone and they will flourish on their own."

As to the minimum wage, Jones and Nearman don't see that issue in the same light either. They both oppose it, but now that it has passed, Nearman isn't certain legal challenges to it or efforts to repeal it will be successful.

He added even if one of those strategies worked, the issue would return with a ballot measure eventually, probably seeking \$15 per hour across the board.

"There's not much we can do from the state legislature," he said.

Nearman found a silver lining in what he considers a bad policy, noting that government employees will now be more expensive so there will be fewer of them.

Jones hopes to see a change in the balance of the legislature and would be the first in line to repeal the bill.

"That would be my choice," she said. "Get rid of it. It hurts everybody and I'm sorry that this went through. I'm sorry that we have leaders that see this as a solution to anything."

Jones and Nearman both are strong advocates for education reform, but come from different perspectives.

Nearman believes school choice benefits families and holds schools accountable.

"That's the best thing that we can do to give parents and students the ability to put their kids in whatever school they want," he said.

Jones likes school choice, but doesn't see that alone improving Oregon low graduation rates, which rank near the bottom nationally. She prefers having students take fewer assessments and

**Beth Jones**  
Age: 39.  
Hometown: Dallas.  
Position sought: State Representative of House District 23.



**Employment:** Founder and Director of Bambinos, non-profit.  
Education: Corban University; Bachelor of Science in psychology/family studies.  
**Prior government service:**  
• Dallas City Council: 2011-2014, including the following committees: Budget, Economic Development, Public Safety, Public

Works, Administration, Building and Grounds, Urban Renewal.

• Polk County Commission for Children and Families Board Member: 2011/12.

• Oregon Army National Guard Family Readiness Group Leader: 2011/12, 2014/15.

• Dallas Area Chamber of Commerce Public Policy Committee: 2015-present.

• Senate District 12 volunteer during the 2015/16 legislative sessions.

**Campaign website:** www.BethJonesHD23.com.  
Campaign phone: 503-508-6043.

Source: Beth Jones.

**Mike Nearman**  
Position sought: State Representative of House District 23.

**Employment:** State repre-

sentative; software engineer.

**Prior government experience:** State representative; Central School District Budget Committee.

**Campaign website:** http://www.nearman4oregon.org/.

Source: Oregon Primary Election Voters' Pamphlet.

Editor's note: Nearman did not return an election questionnaire by deadline. The questionnaire was sent via email to his campaign website twice, on April 27 and Sunday and two messages were left at his legislative office requesting its return.

allowing teachers more freedom in selecting curriculum. "Let the teachers do what

they were trained to do," she said. "It will make them more excited about teaching. It will

make the kids more excited about learning and the graduation rate will be higher."

# Wheeler, Taylor vie for Polk County commissioner

By Jolene Guzman

The Itemizer-Observer

POLK COUNTY — Incumbent Polk County Commissioner Jennifer Wheeler believes she has more work to do in the office she has held for five years.

Her opponent, Terrence Taylor, said she's made mistakes in office and would like to use decades of experience in private industry to correct them.

Voters will choose which direction they prefer when they vote for Polk County Commissioner Position No. 1 in the May primary.

Recently the county has started a number of initiatives to help people with mental health issues avoid being ensnared in the criminal justice system, assist people experiencing home-

**Jennifer Wheeler**  
Age: 62.  
Hometown: Independence.  
Position sought: Polk County Board of Commissioners, position No. 1.  
District boundaries: Polk County (county-wide office).



**Education:** Central High School; bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Western Oregon State College (now WOU).  
**Occupation:** Polk County Commissioner.  
**Prior government experience:** Polk County Commissioner, appointed in 2011 to the present.

**Campaign website:** www.jenniferwheelerforcommissioner.com.  
**Campaign phone:** 503-838-3678.

**Terrence Taylor**  
Age: 65.  
Hometown: West Salem.  
Position sought: Position No. 1.  
District boundaries: Polk County.  
Education: Computer science ECPI, a California trade school; Bachelor of Science in business management from Concordia University.



**Prior government experience:** Ran for House District 20 and served on the Stockton School District Board.  
**Occupation:** computer software developer; project manager for programs for national and international companies in technology and bio-medical industries.

**Campaign website:** taylor4polk.com.  
**Campaign phone:** 971-208-8856.

lessness and youth who are in the juvenile justice system.

"If you can take one person and keep that one per-

son from cycling through the criminal justice system and get that person the help they need, it's a win-win," Wheeler said. "The person is productive and the criminal justice system saves money because they are not dealing with behavioral health issues."

Wheeler, who is involved in each of those initiatives, is hopeful those programs will have a positive impact on the people and agencies involved. A county veterans' service officer is on the way, too, given formal budget approval in June.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

The West Valley Housing Authority (WVHA) is hereby inviting the public to review and/or provide comment on our Public Housing Annual Plan and Capital Fund Plans. Copies of the proposed plans will be available for review as of May 4, 2016 and can be obtained from our website at [www.wvpha.org](http://www.wvpha.org) or any of the WVHA's offices (main office address listed below).

Comments will be received up through the public comment review hearing to take place on June 20, 2016 at 11:00 a.m. at 204 SW Walnut Ave., Dallas, OR 97338. Written comments on the plan may be mailed to the attention of Executive Director, West Valley Housing Authority, 204 SW Walnut Ave., Dallas, OR 97338 or emailed to [wvpha@wvpha.org](mailto:wvpha@wvpha.org).

The meeting location is wheel-chair accessible. Call (503) 623-8387 during business hours if other accommodations are required.

(May 4, 2016)

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**NEW BRANCH MANAGER**

First Community Credit Union is pleased to introduce Christy Wildman as the new Branch Manager at its branch located at 372 E Ellendale Avenue, Dallas, Oregon.

Ms. Wildman began her career with First Community 8 years ago as a Financial Service Associate. "I feel privileged to live and work in the city I proudly call home," says Ms. Wildman, "and I look forward to continue serving the wonderful people of this community."

"Ms. Wildman is a valuable member of our team and this promotion is meant to recognize her for the exceptional contribution she makes," stated David Elmer, President/CEO.

First Community is committed to offering its employees rewarding careers with meaningful opportunities for advancement. For a list of current openings, visit [myfirstccu.org](http://myfirstccu.org).

**first community credit union**

**BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION**

**Noble Oaks II land acquisition would protect Willamette Valley habitat for fish and wildlife**

The Bonneville Power Administration intends to fund the purchase of approximately 195 acres of riparian, wetlands and off-channel habitat along the North Santiam River near the town of Stayton in Polk County, Ore. When the purchase is complete, The Nature Conservancy will own and manage the property for fish and wildlife conservation purposes. BPA will receive a conservation easement to ensure that the habitat values on the property are always protected.

Funding this land purchase partially fulfills commitments made by BPA in the 2010 Willamette River Basin Memorandum of Agreement Regarding Wildlife Habitat Protection and Enhancement between the State of Oregon and the Bonneville Power Administration. This is part of ongoing efforts to mitigate for the impacts to fish and wildlife from the construction and operation of federal flood control and hydroelectric facilities in the Willamette River Basin. These properties will provide long-lasting fish and wildlife benefits and will become one of a growing network of conservation lands in the Willamette Valley.

The Nature Conservancy will develop a management plan to guide the protection and enhancement of habitat on the property. BPA and ODFW will review the plan for consistency with the conservation purposes of the land acquisition. A letter describing the proposed purchase, a map and information describing environmental review requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act are available at [www.efw.bpa.gov](http://www.efw.bpa.gov).

For more information, contact BPA project manager Hannah Dondy-Kaplan at 503-230-4071 or [hadondy-kaplan@bpa.gov](mailto:hadondy-kaplan@bpa.gov). You can also call 800-622-4519 toll free.