

Lineup of Medford Republicans and Democrats runs for county commissioner seat

Incumbent Republican Dave Dotterer decided not to run for reelection

Three Medford Republicans and two Democrats have lined up to run for the Jackson County commissioner seat now held by Dave Dotterer.

The candidate filing deadline was March 12 to be eligible for the May 21 primary, which will determine which Republican and which Democrat face off in the November election.
Jackson County Commissioner Dave Dotterer

Dotterer, a Republican, has previously announced he won't run for reelection.

Medford Mayor Randy Sparacino, a former city police chief, was the first to file last year.

Sparacino will face fellow Republicans David Arrasmith, the Jackson County assessor, and Logan Leverette Vaughan, who describes his occupation as "Ambassador of HIS GRACE/SLAVE" in his candidacy filing. Arrasmith and Vaughan are both Medford residents.

Randy Sparacino, the Medford mayor, is running in the May 21 primary for a seat on the Jackson County Board of Commissioners. Incumbent and fellow Republican Dave Dotterer chose not to run for reelection.

Democrat Denise Krause, a consultant at Health Data Analytics LLC and chief petitioner for a trio of local ballot measures, is in the running against Rebecca Mueller, a pediatrician at the Providence Eagle Point Clinic. Krause lives in rural Jackson County near Ashland; Mueller lives in Medford.

Arrasmith was appointed county assessor in 2016, and ran for election in 2017 and again in 2020. He isn't running for assessor again.

Arrasmith said his experience gives him a better understanding of the need for more openness with the public, particularly when it comes to improving the county's sharing of documents.

"I want to be positive going forward," he said. "It's not my intent to be confrontational with the county administration."

David Arrasmith, a Republican and the Jackson County assessor, is running for a seat on the Jackson County Board of Commissioners in the May 21 primary.

Arrasmith said the commissioners do need to cultivate more of an open-door policy.

He said he's still weighing his support for three ballot measures that would expand the Jackson County Board of Commissioners from three to five members, make the position nonpartisan and reduce commissioners' salaries.

"I'm thinking, if I were the judge, the preponderance of the evidence weighs against the county and for the ballot (measures)," Arrasmith said.

On his candidate filing, Vaughan describes his prior occupational background as “saved @4 Full Revelation @39.”

He indicates his prior governmental experience as a “PCP of the Ghetto.” Vaughan, who was not immediately available for comment on Wednesday, is listed as a precinct committee person for the local Republican Party.

Rebecca Mueller commissioner election headshot

Rebecca Mueller, a Democrat, is running for a seat on the Jackson County Board of Commissioners in the May 21 primary.

Mueller has a background in the health care industry. She cites her prior governmental experience as a board of health member in Muscatine County in Iowa.

Mueller said she was considering running for a state position but said it became apparent that a county-focused role was more important to her.

“I am really supportive of the repeal of Measure 110,” which decriminalized the use of drugs. “I’ve been thinking about ways as a county to renew our focus on the resources available, not just the resources for (addiction) treatment, but the resources for law enforcement.”

She said the emotional toll on police who deal with people struggling with addiction has been considerable and the state didn’t heed the input from police when Measure 110 was passed.

While Mueller supports the repeal, she said the state needs to put more effort into addiction services before she can support the long-term goal of decriminalization.

Mueller said she favors the three ballot measures that would make the commissioner position nonpartisan, add seats to the Board of Commissioners and cut back commissioner pay.

Denise Krause, a Democrat, is running for a Jackson County commission seat in the May 21 primary. Krause is spearheading an effort to expand the county commission from three members to five and reduce commissioner salaries, which are the highest in Oregon.

Krause, the measures' chief petitioner, is on the Rogue Valley Transportation District board and on that organization’s budget committee. She previously ran for commissioner in 2022 and is a precinct person for the local Democratic Party.

“I would really appreciate the opportunity to represent all of the residents of Jackson County,” Krause said.

She said the ballot measures underscore her goal to make the commissioners more responsive to the residents of Jackson County.

“The commissioners don’t need to be bunkered down in their office,” she said. “They need to be out talking to their constituents.”

She has vowed to fulfill one of the ballot measures if she becomes commissioner by taking a reduced salary of \$75,000.

Jackson County commissioners currently earn between \$112,382.40 and \$143,416, plus benefits.

"Since I am urging more people to get involved, I decided to put my money where my mouth is and set an example," Krause said.