

District 3 Commission seat attracts four hopefuls

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent
Friday, 11 March 2016 09:58



Campaign season officially launches

Four candidates have filed for the District 3 McKinley County Board of Commissioners seat currently held by outgoing commissioner Tony Tanner.

Tanner recently announced at a commission meeting that he would not be seeking another term.

McKinley County Bureau of Elections Director Rick Palochak said the ballot order is as follows: David Dallago, Bill Lee, Johnny Greene, Jr, and Gerald O'Hara.

Dallago is an engineer and contractor who operates the Dallago Corporation, and a former commissioner whose contracting jobs with the county while holding a county seat brought forth concerns over conflicts of interest, and forth a special audit by the former Office of the State

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Auditor Hector Balderas.

While discrepancies were noted, former Attorney General Gary King dismissed the case.

Lee is the McKinley County Manager and a former executive director at the Gallup-McKinley County Chamber of Commerce. He said that if he should win the seat that he would resign from the \$90,000 a year county manager job.

“It would be a conflict of interest,” Lee said of working both jobs. “I’d step down from the county manager job if I won the District 3 election.”

Greene was fire chief for two years and worked at the city in various capacities at the fire department for the better part of a decade before retiring three years ago. Now the owner of a graphic design and embroidery shop, a dry cleaners and a laundry facility, Greene said he’d like to see more done in certain areas.

“There are some things that we can improve on,” Greene said.

For starters, he would concentrate on keeping taxes at a minimum. He also said improving road conditions and rectifying the ongoing fiscal problems at the Na’nizhoozhi, Inc. would be priorities should he come away a winner.

O’Hara is a retired Bureau of Indian Affairs administrator. Originally from Philadelphia, he is also active in recycling efforts around McKinley County.

McKinley County Commissioners earn just more than \$19,000 a year.

Also filing Tuesday were candidates for McKinley County Clerk and McKinley County Treasurer.

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Jackie Sloan and Vanessa Begaye-Lee filed for the County Clerk seat currently held by Harriett Becenti. Becenti filed to run again.

Incumbent Ernest Becenti, Jr., is running unopposed for County Treasurer. Everyone who filed Tuesday for county seats is a Democrat. Both the clerk and treasurer jobs pay an average of \$48,000 annually.

In the race for McKinley County District Attorney of the 11th Judicial District, newcomer Bernadine Martin is challenging incumbent Karl Gillson.

McKinley County Senate District 3 incumbent John Pinto is facing Willis Nez. McKinley County Senate District 4 incumbent George K. Munoz faces two candidates – Felisha Adams and Jordon L. Johnson. State Representative District 5 incumbent Doreen W. Johnson will face off against Kevin M. Mitchell, the current Gallup McKinley County Schools board vice president.

State Representative District 9 Patricia “Patty” A. Lundstrom runs again, unopposed.

The New Mexico primary election is June 7, and the general election is Nov. 8.

***By Bernie Dotson
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