

Cascade County Candidate Line Up In June 2026 Primary

WRITTEN BY
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If you believe it is too early to start talking about your June, 2026 Primary, you may be assisting Democrat, Republicans In Name Only (RINO) and Liberals overcome the Republican party of Cascade County.

In three (3) short months it will be time for County candidates to file for seats. Democrats and RINOs have already begun recruiting candidates to infiltrate the Republican brand. Authentic conservative Republicans are behind the proverbial 8-ball.

Here's a glimpse at how soon deadlines will be upon us:

January 2026	County candidate official filing opens. Candidates can officially start campaigning.
March 2026	Close of candidate filing for County candidates
April 2026	Deadline for write-in candidates who missed the March filing date. County Central Committees submit lists of electors to serve as Election Judges in the upcoming Primary
May 2026	Close of voter registration
June 2026	PRIMARY ELECTION, First Tuesday in June

The below chart shows sample

Cascade County who have indicated they are running for vacant seats. Some County incumbents are not confirmed, but are named for reference. At this point, there are two seats that will Primary this June 2026. Vote Wisely.

Republicans In Cascade County

ahead in 2026. Knowing your candidates is going to be all too important in electing true conservatives of your Republican party. The race to claim the coveted "R" has already begun.

moving from the Democrat party and turning RED. The stamp of "R" was provided by a self-penned press-release. Just as was so with your County Sheriff, Jesse Slaughter, in 2022 and your County Clerk of Courts, Tina Henry in 2024.

Central Committee meetings to receive support, acknowledgement, nor endorsement as a Republicans. Perhaps none of them has even read the Republican Party Platform to know how differently a Republican represents constituents versus representation by a Democrat. There seems to be no vetting process outlined to become a Republican candidate.

This is a distraction for voters, intended to keep them from making a judgment.

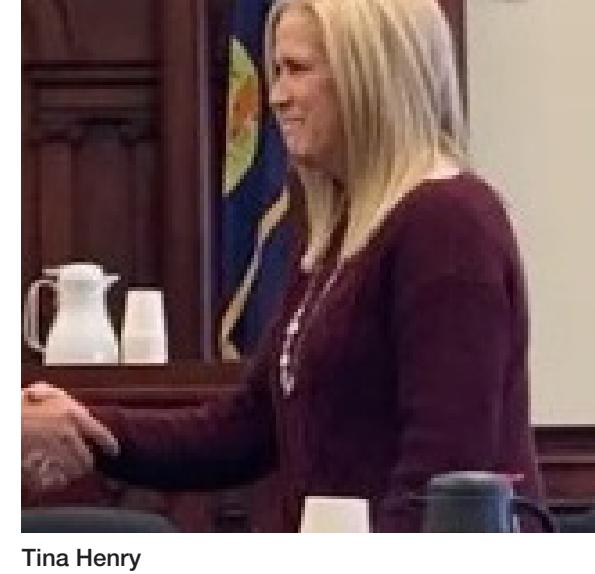
behind their name. Think about it . . . does the coveted “R” magically change the behavior, thinking and management skills of an elected official? Did it change the Cascade County Sheriff’s performance? Did it change the County Clerk of Courts performance? All are actually Democrats using the “R” behind their names to secure votes.

rather than seek the integrity of the candidate that claims it.

The magic wand has been waved but, does

Eyes on the Ball Cascade County. This is a political distraction. Don't be distracted by the *whoopla* surrounding announcements of politicians *moving to the other side*. If residents of Cascade County believe a new County Attorney is in order, changing the letter behind the same name is not the answer!

Is This Individual A Known Conservative?		YES	NO
COUNTY LEVEL SEATS IN 2026			
Cascade County Commissioner, District 2	Tom Lynch		✓
County Attorney	Josh Racki – incumbent		✓
County Sheriff	Jesse Slaughter – incumbent		✓
County Treasurer	Diane Heikkila – incumbent	✓	
County Clerk & Recorder	Sandra Merchant – incumbent	✓	
Public Administrator	Gerald Boland - incumbent		✓
Justice Court Judge	Eric Bailey - incumbent	✓	
Justice Court Judge	Steve Fagenstrom – incumbent		✓
STATE SEAT IN CASCADE COUNTY			
HD 20 (Cascade County)	Tony Rosales	✓	
HD 21 (Cascade County)	Trevor Funseth	✓	
HD 21 (Cascade County)	Eric Peterson		✓
HD 22 (Cascade County)	Kevin Leatherbarrow	✓	
HD 23 (Cascade County)	Eric Tilleman – incumbent		✓
HD 24 (Cascade County)	Steve Fitzpatrick - incumbent		✓
HD 25 (Cascade County)	Steve Gist - incumbent	✓	
HD 26 (Cascade County)	Russ Miner - incumbent		✓
SD 10 (Cascade County)	Jessica Dyrdahl	✓	
SD 10 (Cascade County)	Melissa Nikolakakos		✓
SD 11 (Cascade County)	George Nikolakakos		✓
SD 12 (Cascade County)	Wendy McKamey		✓
Public Service Commission, District 1	Jeff Pattison	✓	
Public Service Commission, District 1	Jeremy Trebas	✓	
STATE SEATS IN SURROUNDING AREAS			
HD 17 (Teton/Lewis & Clark Counties)	Justin Cleveland	✓	
HD 17 (Teton/ Lewis & Clark Counties)	Stephen LaPraim		✓
HD 18 (Teton/Lewis&Clark/Pondera/Toole Counties)	James Coombs	✓	
HD 78 (Broadwater/Cascade/Fergus/Gallatin/Judith Basin/Meagher/Sweetgrass/Wheatland Counties)	Randyn Gregg	✓	
SD 9 (Lewis & Clark/Pondera/Toole/Teton Counties)	Zack Wirth	✓	
SD 9 (Lewis & Clark/Pondera/Toole/Teton Counties)	Llew Jones		✓
SD 42 (Lewis & Clark County)	Nick Lancett	✓	



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Legislature

murder of Michael Hanson that occurred in February of 2023. They highlight their analysis to the public by podcasts produced under the name “The Cascade Effect”, found at the website of the same name. This website also describes their awareness campaign as, “A true-crime anthology podcast investigating corruption and negligence of law enforcement in Cascade County, Montana, a county that is known for its heavy-handed police work as well as the incarceration and harassment of innocent civilians.”

Three Cascade County Libertarians are

Legislature seats in June of 2026. As of now, Kevin Leatherbarrow and Tony Rosales have no Republican opponents for the June, 2026 Primary. However, Libertarian Jessica Dyrdahl challenges known “Republican In Name Only”, Melissa Nikolakakos for the SD10 seat in the upcoming June 2026 Primary election. Melissa and her husband, George Nikolakakos, live in Cascade County. They took out conservative Republicans for their legislative seats in the Primary of June, 2024 and both voted mostly Democrat values in the 2025 legislative session.

**Establishment Recruited Candidates**

Jessica DyrdaHL – SD10



Kevin Leatherbarrow – HD22



Tony Rosales – HD20

Running as Republicans

You may or may not know that your County Commissioners are elected to 6 year terms. These terms are staggered amongst the 3 County Commissioner Districts. So, every 2 years, one of the Districts is on the ballot for election. In 2026, District 2, Commissioner Jim Larson's seat, is up for election. Candidates running for this seat must reside within the County Commissioner District 2. Thus far, there is not a solid Republican stepping up to the plate.

However, there is a candidate already recruited by current "Democrat gone Republican" county officials. Tom Lynch has been with the Great Falls Police Department for nearly 2 decades and soon looks to retirement. While his father, of the same name, belonged to the Great Falls chapter of the Pachyderm Club, this candidate gives no clear messaging of operating within conservative values and associates with the wrong team. Lynch has not been active with Cascade County Republican GOP Central Committee or the Great Falls Chapter



Tom Lynch

Precinct	Elected Committeeman	Elected Committeewoman
19A	Jon Fisher	Becky Anderson
19B	Roger Hagan	Lynn DeRoche
19C	Mike Ranieri	Isabelle Barnard
20A	Rudy Tankink	Stacy Hermiller
20B	Beau Bilbrey	Desarae Valentine
20C	Lorrin Darby	Stacie Landon
21A	Eric Peterson	Cheryl Scheer
21B	Lee McCafferty	Jenna McCafferty
21C	Richard Czech	Karen Czech
21D	Mason Walker	Sally Tucker
22A	Jeremy Rutledge	Michaela Shepard
22B	Shawn Meissner	Desma Meissner
22C		
23A	Bryan Blair	Brenda Blair
23B	Kirk Hindoien	Rebecca Kunkel
23C	Steve Fitzpatrick	Julie Fitzpatrick
24A	Patrick Coley	Rita Staley
24B	Michael Flaherty	Darlene Meddock
24C	Brian Hoven	Barbara Hoven
25A	Kurt Wiggers	Dee Dee Rains
25B	Blue Corneliusen	Lola Sheldon-Galloway
25C	Bill Ferrin	Linda Madsen
25D	Eric Tilleman	Wendy McKamey
26A	Mark Winters	Brooke Winters
26B	George Nikolakakos	Melissa Nikolakakos
78	Thad Stinson	Cindy Keaster

Pachyderm Club. Expect this candidate to be backed by out-of-state money and to fall in line with the establishment machine if elected.

Another distraction that has been practiced to seal the deal when the general public looks to identify true conservative candidates is past military and/or law enforcement roles. These two factors truly hold no water when proving morals and integrity. Don't be fooled by labeling – it doesn't work with the "R" brand and it also does not work with military and law enforcement association.

52 Cascade County Republican Central Committee Precinct Captains

Do you know what a Precinct Committeeman or Precinct Committeewoman is? They are also known as Precinct Captains. Do you know they are elected every 2 years?

These precinct level elected representatives are *the most important elected official in the county*, yet that fact seems to be the biggest kept secret. Keeping this secret has accelerated infiltration into the Republican party of Cascade County. Precincts are comprised of about 2500 people each so there are two representatives for 2500 people as a whole.

In the hierarchy, or family tree of politics, the roots are the local Precinct Captain. Precinct Captains are elected as representatives to your County Republican Central Committee, which is tasked with identifying and promoting candidates to get them elected as local leaders.

Branching up from the county level is the Montana Grand Old Party (MT GOP), or the Montana Republican Party, that is tasked with promoting the election of a Republican governor, legislators and judges. The branches furthest from the roots are the Republican National Committee (RNC) that works to get a Republican president and congressional members elected.

Precinct Captains are the embodiment of true bottom-up government! Something Cascade County has not truly practiced in decades.

Cascade County has 26 precincts. In the past, registered voters would vote in their individual precincts. It worked very well. Perhaps it is time to return to that concept? The population of Cascade County in 1960 was 73,418 people. Today, it is approximately 84,000 people. That is not exactly a population explosion for the area, yet election returns in those days were far more rapid and more secure than they are now. There were also no huge lines that voters had to endure for hours just to perform their civic duty. This was the case of the 2024 county Federal election.

Find out what precinct you live in. Find your precinct number on your voter registration card or call the County Election Office at 406-454-6803. Support the conservative Republican candidate running in your precinct because that is where local government begins.

Each precinct elects 2 representatives (Precinct Captains), one male and one female, to promote the Republican Party Platform amongst the Republicans in that precinct, to identify and organize support for strong Republican candidates in local elections, and to act as the communication liaisons for everything Republican taking place in Cascade County. As a representative on the County Republican Central Committee, Precinct Captains take information to the Republicans in their precinct and bring communications from precinct level Republicans to the Cascade County Central Committee.

Because the Precinct Captains are elected positions, they must run for the office and are elected or reelected in June of each even numbered year. This is why it is critical for citizens to vote in *Primary Elections* and why *Primary Elections* are essential to a healthy conservative Republican presence in Cascade County.

Remember, the precinct is your neighborhood. It is the preference of citizens in the neighborhood to elect a Precinct Captain who lives in their precinct. When you see Precinct Captains' names on your ballot, you should know when they are true conservative Republicans or infiltrators to the party, allowing you to **vote wisely**.

A list of your current Cascade County Precinct Captains is provided below. Be aware that the current Cascade County Republican Central Committee is infiltrated by RINOS, democrats and other forms of liberals. As a citizen in a precinct, you elected this group. Unfortunately, if you did not participate in the Primary Elections, you contributed to electing the wrong people through your inactions. As implied earlier, Cascade County Republicans have to become educated on bottom-up government systems and begin practicing them *now!*

