

On CBS 42 Saturday 3 p.m.: Texas vs. Texas Tech

Austin police, fire, EMS make city council endorsements



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[Austin City Council Endorsements](#)

Austin police, paramedics and firefighters all agree on who they are supporting for Austin's three city council spots up this year.

While the election isn't until May 10, the three organizations already released their endorsements. It was the first time these three branches of public safety have collectively decided who they support.

Police, fire and EMS say in Place 1, incumbent Lee Leffingwell is the man for the job.

In Place 4, they support newcomer Cid Galindo, who is running for the seat about to be vacated by Mayor Pro Tem Betty Dunkerley.

But the real surprise came in Place 3. Rather than supporting incumbent Jennifer Kim, they support her challenger Randi Shade.

Kim won the support of firefighters back in the last election. They endorsed her, but now they and the police and paramedics say Kim's three year term has not been to their satisfaction.

They say she does not have a good enough working relationship with her colleagues on the council to be a good candidate. So they decided to support her challenger, Randi Shade.

"I could characterize her performance, from the firefighters' perspectives, as a lack of access and a lack of ability to build coalitions with her fellow council members," Mike Bewley with the Association of Professional Firefighters said.

Kim says the reason she's not getting support is because firefighters asked for a \$3 million increase to their retirement plans and she can't in good faith vote for that.

"I cannot in good conscience support an increase in their pension when it's at the expense of our regular city employees. We have to watch our spending. We are facing another budget shortfall and we need to be careful about that," Kim said.

Police, firefighters and EMS are getting ready to go through a complex negotiating process with the city.

When the endorsed candidates were asked if they had promised pay raises in return for these endorsements, the answer from all of them was a resounding 'no.'

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