

Incumbent Sonya Fischer appears ready to accept defeat in Clackamas County Commission race against challenger Ben West

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Incumbent Clackamas County Commissioner Sonya Fischer called challenger Ben West on Sunday to congratulate him on his apparent victory in the close and expensive race for her seat on the powerful county board.

But when reached by phone Monday afternoon, Fischer said she thinks there's still an outside chance she could retain her seat. The Oregonian/OregonLive has not declared a winner in the race. Partial results tallied as of 3 p.m. Monday showed West leading by 1,569 votes in the Position 5 race, with 50.4% of the vote to 49.4% for Fischer.

There may still be as many as 30,000 uncounted votes in Clackamas County, based on estimates provided by the county last week, although Clerk Sherry Hall declined to provide an update Monday afternoon on how many votes remain to be counted. The county plans to release updated results again Monday night.

But after the county's most recent update Saturday night showed her still trailing West, Fischer released a concession statement thanking her supporters. West then claimed victory on Twitter on Sunday.

Fischer told The Oregonian/OregonLive Monday she presumes she lost her bid for reelection but that the race remains "very close."

"A miracle could happen and I could have to retract my congratulations to him," Fischer said.

The race between Fischer and West was the most expensive in county history. Fischer spent more than \$399,000 this year in an attempt to hold onto her seat and fend off West, who spent \$276,000, according to campaign finance records.

The race was one of two pivotal contests for the county commission this year. In the Position 2 race, long-time incumbent Paul Savas handily defeated challenger Libra Forde. Forde, a nonprofit leader and member of the North Clackamas school board, would have been the county's first Black commissioner.

If West's lead holds, he will be part of Republicans' 4-1 control of the county commission. Martha Schrader, who was not up for reelection, would be the commission's only Democratic member.