



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®

BALCH SPRINGS 2023

NON PARTISAN

VOTERS GUIDE

EARLY VOTING • APRIL 24, 2023 – MAY 2, 2023

ELECTION DAY • MAY 6, 2023 • POLLS OPEN 7 AM TO 7 PM

BE A TEXAS VOTER

About This *Voters Guide*

This printed *Voters Guide* lists items that will be on the ballot for the May 6 election, which includes races for Balch Springs mayor and city councilmembers. Candidate responses are presented as submitted without editing. This *Voters Guide* is funded and published by the League of Women Voters of Dallas which does not support or oppose any political party or candidate.

Vote411.org & LWVDallas.org

You may also see all items on your ballot on-line at Vote411.org.
The LWV Dallas website at www.lwvdallas.org has a wealth of practical information for voters.

Eligibility for Voting

You must be a citizen of the United State, registered to vote in the county of your residence 30 days prior to election day, and must be at least 18 years old on election day. You cannot vote if you have been declared by a court exercising probate jurisdiction to be totally mentally incapacitated or partially mentally incapacitated without the right to vote or are a convicted felon who has not completed your sentence, probation and/or parole.

Polling Place Times & Dates

Monday April 24 – Friday April 28	8AM to 5PM
Saturday April 29	8AM to 5PM
Sunday April 30	12PM to 6PM
Monday May 1 & Tuesday May 2	7AM to 7PM
Saturday May 6 (ELECTION DAY)	7AM to 7PM

Polling Place Locations

Voters registered in Dallas County may vote in person at any of the Dallas County polling locations during early voting and on election day ("Dallas County Votes Anywhere"). For addresses of locations open during early voting and those open on election day, see www.DallasCountyVotes.org or call 469.627.8683.

Early Vote by Mail (Absentee)

Because of changes enacted by the state legislature in 2021, it is important that voters applying for mail ballots not use application forms issued before 2022. The new forms and also mail ballot envelopes ask voters to provide additional identification. We recommend voters provide BOTH a Texas Driver's License or Texas Personal Identification Number AND the last four digits of their social security number on the new application form and ballot envelopes.

You are eligible to vote early by mail if you are registered and:

- 65 years of age or older on Election Day
- Out of the county during the entire election including early voting
- Sick or Disabled
- Confined in jail but eligible to vote.

People voting by mail due to disability or age may use a single application to request ballots by mail for all elections in a calendar year. To do so, simply mark "Annual Application" on your application for a ballot by mail. **This option must be renewed every year.**

Once you have received and marked your ballot it can be returned.

- If hand delivered or if delivered by a common or contract carrier without a delivery receipt, it must be **RECEIVED** by the early voting clerk by **7 p.m. on election day**.
- If mailed and postmarked by 7 p.m. on election day or delivered by common or contract carrier and accompanied by a delivery receipt showing the voter submitted the ballot for delivery by 7 p.m. on election day, it must **ARRIVE** by **5 p.m. on the next business day after election day**.

Track your mail ballot at www.DallasCountyVotes.org.

Other Information

For more information on any of these topics or on provisional voting, limited ballots, photo ID, military or overseas voting, health protocols or any other voting topic see www.lwvdallas.org or www.DallasCountyVotes.org or call 469.627.8683.

A runoff election, if any is needed, will be held **Saturday June 10**.

Helpful Information

Websites

Dallas County Elections Department
Texas Secretary of State
League of Women Voters of Dallas
League of Women Voters of Texas

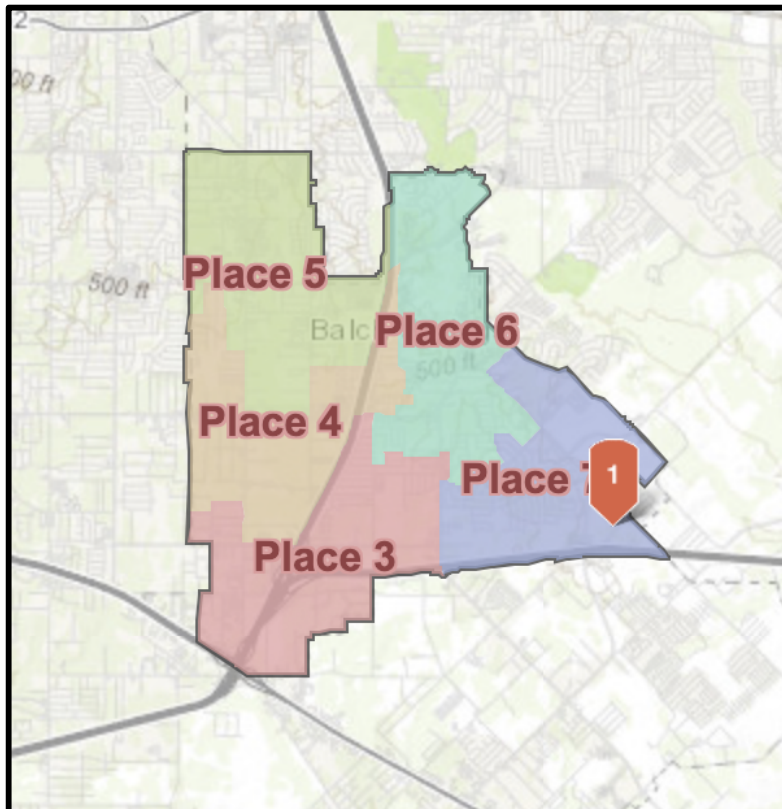
DallasCountyVotes.org
VoteTexas.gov
LWVDallas.org
LWVTexas.org

Telephone Numbers

Dallas County Elections Department
Texas Secretary of State - Elections Division
League of Women Voters of Dallas
League of Women Voters of Texas

(469)627-8683
(800)252-8683
(214) 688-4125
(512)472-1100

MAP SHOWING BALCH SPRINGS SINGLE MEMBER COUNCIL DISTRICTS



BALCH SPRINGS CITY COUNCIL

The City operates under a "Council-Manager" system where the City Council sets the policies and budget, and the City Manager is responsible for City operations. The City Council appoints the City Manager. The City Council consists of the mayor and 6 City Council members, 5 of whom shall be elected from single member Districts and 2 of whom (Mayor and Place 2) shall be elected at large.

All elected positions serve two-year terms and none shall serve more than three consecutive terms. Four of the council members shall be elected in odd numbered years (Mayor and Places 3, 5 and 7) and 3 of the council members shall be elected in even numbered years (Places 2, 4 and 6). All positions serve a 2-year term. If no candidate receives at least 50% of the vote, there will be a runoff election.

BALCH SPRINGS MAYOR

WANDA MACK ADAMS



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Website: vote4wa2023.com.godaddysites.com

Campaign Phone: 9725149149

Education: Bachelor Business Administration

Occupation: Substitute Teacher

Q: WHY RUNNING: What qualifies you to be an effective City Council member?

A: Staff needs a real sense of direction of where the city council is going and their standing with the city charter directives. The citizens are asking for new changes in leadership due to no changes in street infrastructure repairs or city maintenance. Additionally, a portion of the governing body's behavior toward staff during city council meetings and in the community is not always professional, and this must stop. As a former city council member for six years, I attended various TML training to learn the duties and responsibilities of a city official. Our primary responsibility is to listen and act on citizens' and staff's issues.

Q: HOUSING: Do you believe there is a need for increased safe, quality, affordable housing in your community? Are there other housing issues? What do you recommend?

A: Yes. The factors influencing the desirability of Balch Springs as a place to live are the availability of the type of housing needed and the quality of the existing neighborhoods. With the growth of our senior citizen population, we must consider those accommodations that will cater to their safety and well-being, whether it's modifying the physical appearance of their home or the laws that will enforce the rules and regulations of the terms of their contract when it comes to property violations. Our veterans need housing that will accommodate their needs according to their income. We must focus on the demographic changes in our city.

Q: LICENSING AND PERMITTING PROCESS: How do you rate your city's licensing and permitting process? Do you recommend changes?

A: According to the Code Enforcement Department, the Licensing and Permit process has a 9 out of 10 rating with customer satisfaction. They have a systematic check and balance process that monitors the issuance of permits for building, house renovations, extending driveways or patios, adding new fences, etc. They carefully examine contractors' license status that wants to render service to communities. According to the city manager, the turnaround time for issuing permits is rapid due to staff availability. The code enforcement staff is mindful of the need to close expired permits promptly, which is a top priority. I have no recommendation.

Q: PUBLIC SAFETY STAFFING: What changes, if any, would you support to attract and retain public safety personnel?

A: There needs to be major compromising when negotiating contract terms with meet and confer for our Police and Fire Department and the other departments that fall under the umbrella of Public Safety. Balch Springs cannot compete with the surrounding cities for employee benefits packages and wages. Balch Springs can only be compared to those cities comparable to our city. Our homeowner's population is much smaller, causing less revenue intake than our surrounding cities. As a result, we have fewer businesses generating lower sales tax revenue. I support what the city manager and the director of human resources suggest for employee research.

Q: TIMING OF ELECTIONS: Would you support moving the city's election from May to November of odd numbered years? Why or why not?

A: I don't have any comments on this topic. I'm unaware of the rationale behind this transitional change of election date.

Q: CHALLENGE/OPPORTUNITY: What is the city's greatest challenge and opportunity over the next several years?

A: One of the challenges is to balance the city's budget equality. We currently have a \$1.2 million shortfall that is causing the city budget to be unbalanced. Citizens have been informed that staff is diligently searching for a cause for this significant shortfall in the city's budget for 2023. Also, getting the entire city council on board to acquire a sizeable bond for our major infrastructure repairs will be another challenge. We need to capitalize on the build-up of the Beltline I-20 corridor with commercial businesses that will eventually produce rooftops. We need dining restaurants, a theater, large-scale retail, and high-end hotels.

CARRIE F GORDON



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Campaign Phone: 214-335-4691

Education: B.A., Political Science; M.A., Political Economy; and Ph.D., Administration & Management

Occupation: Retired

Q: WHY RUNNING: What qualifies you to be an effective City Council member?

A: Serving my community has and continues to be rewarding, which I have done since the late 90s. Having served as Mayor for almost 5.5 terms (2009-2015, 2020 and 2021 to date), over 30 years of experience in Urban Planning (Housing and Zoning), and working with City boards and commissions and neighborhood groups, I possess the skills necessary to be effective as the Mayor.

Q: HOUSING: Do you believe there is a need for increased safe, quality, affordable housing in your community? Are there other housing issues? What do you recommend?

A: Most definitely. Given the level of economic development and its impact on growth taking place in our region, housing and transportation are on the radar. We have 'highly creative' development activity taking place in the northeast quadrant of the city. In fact, the cities of Balch Springs and Mesquite partnered to address issues related to traffic mitigation, drainage, land assemblage, and so on. We too are offering affordable housing with an array of choices for homebuyers and renters. I will work to create a Multifamily Housing Inspection Program to ensure that safe, quality, and affordable housing is offered in existing neighborhoods.

Q: LICENSING AND PERMITTING PROCESS: How do you rate your city's licensing and permitting process? Do you recommend changes?

A: After returning to local government as Mayor in 2020, the process had improved tremendously. The development community continues to rave about working with City staff during the licensing and permitting process. Having had a career in local government and serving as a Zoning Consultant, I understand working with "user-friendly City staff". No changes are recommended at this time.

Q: PUBLIC SAFETY STAFFING: What changes, if any, would you support to attract and retain public safety personnel?

A: The City of Balch Springs, as with many cities, is heavily recruiting for Firefighters and Police Officers. Our City Council recently adopted a Compensation Study and now completing an Efficiency Study to ascertain salaries and benefits needed to recruit and retain Public Safety staff. Through Meet & Confer negotiations, we successfully packaged Police and Firefighters Association agreements to benefit all parties.

Q: TIMING OF ELECTIONS: Would you support moving the city's election from May to November of odd numbered years? Why or why not?

A: Historically, the May election has been the option of choice by our citizens (based on Charter Review recommendations over the years). I would be open for discussion on this topic with the Council and the Charter Review Commission. Yes, voter participation is high during the November election; however, when there are a number of propositions on the ballot and candidates running for office...too much information might be too much!

Q: CHALLENGE/OPPORTUNITY: What is the city's greatest challenge and opportunity over the next several years?

A: The greatest challenge is to address infrastructure needs (e.g., street improvements, drainage and aging infrastructure of city facilities) and to hire and retain City staff! Educating our citizens and property owners will be key! As we plan wisely for future growth and development, it is imperative that we comply with the City Charter as it relates to staffing for Police Officers and Firefighters, respectively.

BALCH SPRINGS CITY COUNCIL PL 3

Paula Garcia: Unopposed

BALCH SPRINGS CITY COUNCIL PL 5

Cheri Whitley, Johnny Red Cloud Cox: No response

BALCH SPRINGS CITY COUNCIL PL 7

MARIE TEDEI



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Website: [marietedeiforbalchsprings.com](https://www.marietedeiforbalchsprings.com)

Campaign Phone: 214-235-3641

Education: Some College

Occupation: Owner/Operator Local Urban Farm

Q: WHY RUNNING: What qualifies you to be an effective City Council member?

A: It has been an absolute honor to serve my community since June of 2021. My record shows that I have been effective in my first term, working with my colleagues to make good on several of my initial goals, such as initiating new funding for the redevelopment of our freeway landscapes, raising the min wage for all City employees to \$15/hr, and improving the communications with our citizens. I plan to continue to forge ahead in my next term, striving to reach more of Council's goals for the citizens of Balch Springs. I've worked to establish some good relationships with folks who can help us, as we all thrive when we work together.

Q: HOUSING: Do you believe there is a need for increased safe, quality, affordable housing in your community? Are there other housing issues? What do you recommend?

A: I see the need for redevelopment and restorative work on many of our affordable multi-family properties. I hope to sit down with leaders from other communities where they have effective programs to form a hybrid program for Balch Springs. Anonymous for the renter, so they do not fear eviction, yet holds landlords accountable to provide safe, equitable living conditions. Additionally, I'd like to see affordable single-family homes for sale built to increase younger folks ability to get established, build equity, and get closer to achieving their slice of the American Dream.

Q: LICENSING AND PERMITTING PROCESS: How do you rate your city's licensing and permitting process? Do you recommend changes?

A: Through my personal experience thus far as a home owner, our process is fine. Most of the developers have reported a smooth process, as well. However, some of the cases I've been made aware of by citizens do tell me that we've got some work to do. in the area of the training process, and re-training for seasoned employees, to ensure correct application of the ordinances related to what does or does not require a permit, the follow up on permits issued. We are also working hard to enforce illegal gambling issue where special use permits are being abused and bad players are taking advantage of some of our citizens.

Q: PUBLIC SAFETY STAFFING: What changes, if any, would you support to attract and retain public safety personnel?

A: I called for a full and equitable salary compensation study to be done, including for civil services. Once it was completed, the process of re-negotiating with our public safety associations had a current foundation on which to begin. While of our neighboring cities, we may not be able to pay the most, we are to the point where most members of both associations agreed the City had done the best we could afford to do at this time. Additionally, working to stabilize the leadership is helping. We also need to pass a bond package to accommodate the growing staff needed to continue to provide the best public safety services for our citizens.

Q: TIMING OF ELECTIONS: Would you support moving the city's election from May to November of odd numbered years? Why or why not?

A: Since we hold elections each year for the various positions based on even/odd years, a change to our charter would have to be voted on by the citizens. Keeping them separate from the main fall elections allows for a better opportunity to focus on our local issues.

Q: CHALLENGE/OPPORTUNITY: What is the city's greatest challenge and opportunity over the next several years?

A: Our city's revenue, from property and sales tax, has increased steadily with the continued growth we are enjoying in the southeast sector of Dallas County. I think the challenge is to focus on the needs of the citizens based on recent (and long standing) requests for family oriented and higher end commercial development, as well as balance and prioritize the infrastructure needs with a bond package that will NOT cause a need to raise the tax rate. With additional commercial development, increasing a steady sales tax revenue flow, we might even be able to look at another slight lowering of the property tax rate in the future.

YEMI SALAU



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Campaign Email: info@yemisalau.com

Website: yemisalau.com

Education: Electrical engineering BA

Occupation: Project Manager

Q: WHY RUNNING: What qualifies you to be an effective City Council member?

A: With over 10 years of leadership experience managing Federal projects with the US Army (LMP), US Navy (NAVSUP), and other Fortune 500 companies, I have extensive experience as a project manager. Additionally, I have been a resident of Balch Springs for more than 14 years and have served on various committees and boards, including Vice President for Economic Development Board Type B, board member for Spring Ridge HOA, former Commissioner for the City Charter review board, and member of Keep Balch Springs Beautiful. Moreover, I have provided 15+ years of volunteer service for various nonprofits and charities, and my efforts have been recognized.

Q: HOUSING: Do you believe there is a need for increased safe, quality, affordable housing in your community? Are there other housing issues? What do you recommend?

A: It is my belief that all residents residing in District 7 should have access to quality housing. Currently, our district has a balance of both single-family residential and apartment-style buildings. However, we require more job opportunities and additional parks to benefit our children directly. As Vice President of Economic Development Type B, I have been actively advocating for comprehensive park improvements and amenities. Moreover, I believe it is essential to increase neighborhood patrols by the police, introduce additional street lighting, and promote more neighborhood watch programs. If elected, I plan to create a program.

Q: LICENSING AND PERMITTING PROCESS: How do you rate your city's licensing and permitting process? Do you recommend changes?

A: Continuous improvement is crucial to prevent stagnation and ensure the city remains relevant in the ever-evolving landscape. I firmly believe that it is our responsibility as a council to prioritize initiatives that promote innovation, enhance efficiency, and facilitate growth. Furthermore, like many other cities, we are currently facing a staff shortage. It is essential to take immediate action to attract the most skilled and talented workforce possible to fill these gaps. As a council member, I believe that it is our responsibility to take an active role in promoting the city and showcasing its potential-to-potential employees.

Q: PUBLIC SAFETY STAFFING: What changes, if any, would you support to attract and retain public safety personnel?

A: Ensuring public safety is a collective responsibility that involves not only the public officers but also homeowners and other members of the community. As such, it is imperative that we make public safety a top priority in the city. To achieve this, we must prioritize the attraction and retention of the best talent to maintain a highly skilled workforce capable of addressing evolving demands and challenges. This entails creating a strong brand image for the city that highlights its unique attributes and offers competitive salaries and benefits packages to potential employees. Investing in training and development programs is also crucial.

Q: TIMING OF ELECTIONS: Would you support moving the city's election from May to November of odd numbered years? Why or why not?

A: I understand that there are pros and cons to moving the election date, and I believe that this decision should be left up to each individual community to determine what works best for them. It is essential to consider the unique circumstances and needs of each locality and make informed decisions that benefit the community as a whole. Moreover, it is crucial to ensure that partisan politics do not create divisions in the community, the same way they have negatively impacted national politics. We should strive to maintain a non-partisan approach to local elections, as they are the most critical elections that directly impact our daily lives.

Q: CHALLENGE/OPPORTUNITY: What is the city's greatest challenge and opportunity over the next several years?

A: The city of Balch Springs is faced with both challenges and opportunities, and this is what drives my motivation to run for office. I have outlined a seven-point agenda on my campaign website (<http://www.Yemisalau.com>) that addresses some of these challenges and seeks to leverage them as opportunities for growth and development. Firstly, we need to address the issue of skyrocketing property need to prioritize safer neighborhoods by working collaboratively with law enforcement agencies and implementing community policing programs.



What Is the League of Women Voters' Mission?

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

What Does the League Do Now?

The League of Women Voters is a peoples' organization that has fought since 1920 to improve our government and engage all Americans in the decisions that impact their lives. We operate at national, state and local levels through more than 800 state and local Leagues, in all 50 states as well in DC, the Virgin Islands and Hong Kong. We never endorse or oppose political parties or candidates, but we are political.

Formed from the movement that secured the right to vote for women, the centerpiece of the League's efforts remain to expand participation and give a voice to all Americans. We do this at all three levels of government, engaging in both broad educational efforts as well as advocacy. Our issues are grounded in our respected history of making democracy work for all Americans.

Why Should I Support the League of Women Voters?

The League is different from many organizations in that what it accomplishes comes directly from the involvement of its members. It is a **grassroots organization** providing every member with opportunities to learn and educate others about government, and take action on public policy. We walk our talk: we believe that we need everyone to participate in order for our community to be strong, safe and vibrant. Whether you contribute your time, your money, or both you can feel confident that your investment in democracy goes further in the League.

Groups of League members meet to discuss topics in a respectful setting. They learn effective techniques for public discussion, how to advocate on specific policies, and what the issues beneath the rhetoric are. Our study and consensus process ensures that we are fully informed on issues before we take a stand. We also host public forums and debates which are well known for being fair, transparent and civil. This approach has earned the League a global reputation for integrity and thoroughness.

Your participation in League will expose you to a breadth of experiences and issues that will not only inform you but create greater possibilities for civic engagement than you might imagine. You can spend as much or as little time as you wish. Whether you aspire to leadership or are keen to follow the lead of experienced members, the League will excite, use, and nurture your civic curiosity, ideals, or desire for action. We offer our members webinars, conference calls, workshops, other events and mentorship opportunities throughout the year, at the local, regional, state and national levels.

- * Attend an event on our calendar
- * Contact us to get involved