



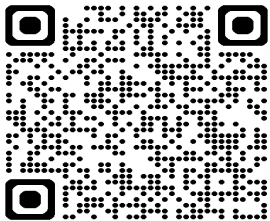
# Primary Election

May 19, 2026



## ATTENTION

This is the beginning of your county voters' pamphlet. The county portion of this joint voters' pamphlet is inserted in the center of the state portion. Each page of the county voters' pamphlet is clearly marked with a shaded bar on the outside edge. All information contained in the county portion of this pamphlet has been assembled and printed by Columbia County Elections



### Attention 注意事项 유의 사항 Внимание Atención Chú ý

Selected portions of this county voters' pamphlet are available in Simplified Chinese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese. These translations can be found online at [oregonvotes.gov/ColumbiaVP](https://oregonvotes.gov/ColumbiaVP)

本县选民手册的部分内容提供简体中文版本。可以访[oregonvotes.gov/ColumbiaVP](https://oregonvotes.gov/ColumbiaVP) 获取该译本。

카운티 유권자 팸플릿 내 선택된 부분은 한국어로 준비되어 있습니다. 번역은 온라인 [oregonvotes.gov/ColumbiaVP](https://oregonvotes.gov/ColumbiaVP)에서 찾아보실 수 있습니다.

Отдельные части брошюры избирателей этого округа доступны на русском языке. Эти переводы можно найти в Интернете по адресу [oregonvotes.gov/ColumbiaVP](https://oregonvotes.gov/ColumbiaVP)

Algunas secciones de este folleto para votantes del condado están disponibles en español. Estas traducciones están disponibles en línea en [oregonvotes.gov/ColumbiaVP](https://oregonvotes.gov/ColumbiaVP)

Các phần được chọn trong tập thông tin cử tri quận này có bản ngôn ngữ tiếng Việt. Bản dịch có thể xem trực tuyến tại [oregonvotes.gov/ColumbiaVP](https://oregonvotes.gov/ColumbiaVP)

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## Please Note

### **Not all the candidates or measures in the Voters' Pamphlet will be on your ballot.**

The content of your ballot is determined by your registration's residential address (This can be found on your return identification envelope near the signature line). Your official ballot will contain only the candidates and issues which apply to your residence.

If your residential address is incorrect, please update your registration.

### **Not all candidates submit information for the Voters' Pamphlet.**

As a result, there will be candidates on your ballot that are not in the English Voters' Pamphlet.

### **Columbia County Elections prints information as submitted.**

We do not correct spelling, punctuation, grammar, syntax, errors or inaccurate information.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

### **What If...?**

#### **What if I make a mistake on my ballot?**

If you make a mistake that cannot be corrected, call the Columbia County Elections Office (503) 397-7214 and request a replacement ballot. One will be mailed to you provided the request is received within time for mailing. Otherwise, you may pick up a replacement ballot in person.

#### **What if I don't vote on everything on the ballot?**

Your ballot will still be counted. If you choose not to vote for a particular office or measure, this is tallied as an "undervote" and the rest of the ballot will be counted as you intended.

#### **What if I don't sign my return envelope?**

You will be sent a notice in the mail that you have not signed your ballot. Follow the instructions on the notice to remedy your unsigned ballot and it will be counted. You must remedy your ballot by the 21<sup>st</sup> day after the election for it to be counted.

#### **What if I don't put my ballot into the secrecy sleeve?**

Your ballot will still be counted. The secrecy sleeve is purely optional.

#### **What if I don't receive my ballot?**

If you are a registered voter and don't receive your ballot after the following week that ballots are mailed out, call the Columbia County Elections Office at (503) 397-7214.



Dear Columbia County Voters,

The Columbia County Voters' Pamphlet is published to inform voters about the local candidates and measures you will find on your ballot. It is also an opportunity to share important information about the May 19, 2026, Primary Election.

- **Primary Election.** This election serves multiple purposes. All voters will be able to vote in applicable non-partisan offices. It also functions as the nominating election for major party candidates. The ballot you receive will have been tailored to reflect the party with which you were registered at registration cut off (April 28, 2026). If you are registered non-affiliated or a member of an Oregon minor political party, you will receive a non-partisan ballot.
- **Voters' pamphlet: The voters' pamphlet** provides information about local candidates and measures on your ballot. Not all candidates submit statements, so some may not appear in the pamphlet
- **Ballot mailing dates:** Ballots will be mailed countywide starting April 29<sup>th</sup> and should arrive at your mailbox between May 1 and May 10.
- **Voter no longer at your address:** If you receive a ballot for someone who no longer lives at your address, please take the following actions:
  - If they have moved, write "RETURN" on the envelope and place it in your mailbox.
  - If they have passed away, write "DECEASED" on the envelope and return it the same way.
- **Your vote matters!** Be sure to sign the attestation on your ballot return envelope and mail your ballot **at least 7 days before Election Day**. If it's Election Day or the day before, and you want to ensure your return is timely-postmarked, request one over the counter.
- **Ballot Drop Sites:** Official ballot drop sites are available as an alternative to mailing. Columbia County's drop sites are listed in the voters' pamphlet.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact Columbia County Elections at (503)397-7214 or email us at [elections@columbiacountyor.gov](mailto:elections@columbiacountyor.gov).

It is an honor and privilege to serve as your County Clerk.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Debbie Klug".

Debbie Klug  
Columbia County Clerk

# Columbia County

## Commissioner, Position 2



**Jonathan  
Barclay**

**OCCUPATION:** Assistant Director Of Engineering Ritz-Carlton

**OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND:** Construction; Hotel Maintenance

**EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:** Hillsboro High School; Portland Community College

**PRIOR GOVERNMENTAL EXPERIENCE:** Columbia County Planning Commissioner; Columbia 911 Communication District Budget Committee; Precinct Committee Person, Republican Party, Precinct 48

I'm Jonathan Barclay. I've spent the last 21 years in the construction and hotel industry fixing buildings and keeping things running. I moved to Deer Island in 2020 because I wanted quiet land, real people, and small functioning government. Now I'm running to fix what's broken in our county: roads that are crumbling, schools that need help, and budgets that actually work for the people.

I'll reduce the burden on the taxpayer by streamlining processes, cutting over-bloated government spending, and bringing real transparency-every dollar, out in the open. By accomplishing these things I believe we can reduce or eliminate property taxes that are a giant burden especially for fixed income individuals. I'm the guy who shows up early, works late, and listens. If you want a commissioner who treats this like a job-who has a reputation for getting things done and not taking no for an answer-I'm your guy. I don't do politics-I do results.

Vote Barclay. Let's get it done.

*(This information furnished by Jonathan Barclay)*

**The above information has not been verified for accuracy by the county. (ORS 251.335 (3b))**

# Columbia County

## Commissioner, Position 2



**Jerry  
Cole**

**OCCUPATION:** Mayor City of Rainier, Retired Firefighter / Fire Chief

**OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND:** Public Safety Professional, Firefighter, Paramedic, Division Chief, Fire Chief

**EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:** Rainier High School, Portland Community College - AAS; Oregon Health Sciences University - Paramedic

**PRIOR GOVERNMENTAL EXPERIENCE:** Mayor City of Rainier 2003 to current, Columbia 911 Board member 1999-2003, Rainier School District Budget Committee, Columbia County Local Public Safety Coordinating Council

**THIS ELECTION IS ABOUT WHERE COLUMBIA COUNTY GOES NEXT  
Vote Jerry Cole for Columbia County Commissioner Position 2**

I am running for County Commissioner to bring steady, common-sense leadership focused on economic development, public safety, and fiscal responsibility.

**EXPERIENCE THAT DELIVERS RESULTS**

For 23 years as Mayor of Rainier, Jerry Cole has worked to move the community forward.

- Balanced budgets and protected taxpayer dollars
- Support local businesses and family-wage jobs
- Made tough decisions when leadership required it

Jerry has spent his life serving when people need help the most. Accountability isn't just something he talks about; it's how he leads.

**SHARED VALUES**

Like many families in Columbia County, Jerry believes in hard work, personal responsibility, and looking out for our neighbors.

**OPPORTUNITY FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY**

Columbia County has real opportunities ahead. We can:

- Grow family-wage jobs
- Strengthen partnerships with local business
- Improve roads, infrastructure, and services
- Keep our communities safe and strong

We can support smart growth without losing what makes Columbia County special.

**RESPECT FOR TAXPAYERS**

Every tax dollar comes from someone who worked hard to earn it. Your county government should respect that.

That means:

- Careful planning
- Transparent responsible spending
- Common-sense leadership

Let's build an economy that keeps our kids here, supports working families, and protects the quality of life we value.

**I WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU**

Call me directly at **503-396-0683**. I answer my phone. Columbia County deserves leadership that shows up, stands firm, and delivers results. Jerry Cole is ready to go to work for Columbia County.

**VOTE JERRY COLE**  
[www.electJerryCole.com](http://www.electJerryCole.com)

*(This information furnished by Jerry Cole)*

**The above information has not been verified for accuracy by the county. (ORS 251.335 (3b))**

# Columbia County

## Commissioner, Position 2



**Kellie Jo  
Smith**

**OCCUPATION:** Columbia County Commissioner, Chair; Proprietor, Oregon Trail Lanes, Inc.

**OCCUPATIONAL BACKGROUND:** Columbia County Commissioner 2023-present. Oregon Trail Lanes, Third Generation Columbia County Family-Owned Business; Columbia County Sheriff's Office, Reserve Deputy; InRoads Credit Union/SHCFCU; Community Volunteer; Mother; Caregiver; Foster Parent

**EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:** AOC County College, Graduate; NACO Leadership Institute; Portland Community College, General Studies/Science Transfer; St. Helens High School, Diploma

**PRIOR GOVERNMENTAL EXPERIENCE:** Columbia County Commissioner, Chair; AOC Legislative Committee, AOC Investment Committee; NACO Human Services and Education Committee. St. Helens School District School Board Member 2013, 2017, & 2021; Board Chair; Budget, Facilities & Bond Committees.

I'm running for re-election as Columbia County Commissioner because the work we began together isn't finished. Over the past term, I have focused on listening to residents, resetting priorities, and making sure county decisions reflect the needs of the people who live and work here. As a small business owner and lifelong community member, I experience the same challenges many families and taxpayers face every day. That perspective keeps my work grounded and accountable.

My approach has always been simple: listen carefully, ask hard questions, and work toward practical solutions that benefit the whole community. I believe in responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars, transparent decision-making, and keeping our county focused on what matters most to residents. We have made important progress strengthening priorities and restoring focus, and I remain committed to continuing that work with determination, integrity, and a deep respect for the citizens of Columbia County.

kelliejoforcommissioner.com - facebook.com/  
kelliejoforcommissioner

*(This information furnished by Kellie Jo Smith)*

**The above information has not been verified for accuracy by the county. (ORS 251.335 (3b))**

## Voter Registration

### Qualifications to register to vote

To register to vote in Oregon, you must be:

- A U.S. citizen
- A resident of Oregon
- At least 16 years old

If you are not yet 18 years of age, you will not receive a ballot until an election occurs on or after your 18th birthday.

### How to register to vote

- **ONLINE.** Register to vote online at [www.oregonvotes.gov/myvote](http://www.oregonvotes.gov/myvote).
- **MANUALLY.** Complete an Oregon Voter Registration Card. Registration cards are available at any county elections office or at designated state agencies, including the Department of Motor Vehicles and some public assistance agencies.

### When to update your registration

Update your registration if your

- Residential address changes,
- Mailing address changes,
- Your name changes, or
- You wish to change political affiliation.

### Registration Deadline

A new registrant must register to vote by the 21st calendar day before an election to be eligible to vote in that election.

### Am I registered to vote?

If you are already registered or think you might be registered to vote, visit [oregonvotes.gov/myvote](http://oregonvotes.gov/myvote) to:

- check if you are registered to vote
- view your registration information
- update your voter registration
- find contact information for your county elections office

## Measure 5-311

### BALLOT TITLE

#### FEE FOR GENERAL FUND STAFFING, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

**QUESTION:** Should City adopt fee of \$24.00 per month charged on utility accounts to fund General Fund staffing, programs, services?

**SUMMARY:** Without increase in revenue, City will need to make significant reduction in service. With \$24.00 per month fee, City will still need to make some reduction to the below listed current services.

The proposed fee is charged per "equivalent dwelling unit" (EDU) on utility bill, starting July 1, 2026, expiring June 30, 2036, adjusted annually using CPI-U. Houses are one EDU; an apartment complex is based on number of apartments. An RV park is per hook up. An office is based on office space and meter.

Current General Fund services:

- City Hall: five (5) days / week
- Library: six (6) days / week
- Municipal Court: five (5) days / week
- Police: 24/7 coverage

Current General Fund Staffing:

- Police: 23, including thirteen (13) officers, four (4) sergeants, one (1) detective, one (1) lieutenant, one (1) Chief, three (3) administrative.
- Library: Six (6)
- Parks / Rec: Five and half (5.5)
- Community Development: Five (5)
- Administration: Ten and half (10.5), including City Administrator, City Recorder, HR, Finance, Communications, IT
- Municipal court: Two (2), excluding municipal judge, public defenders

### EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

#### Background

The City projects a budget shortfall for FY 26/27 in the amount of \$2,214,000 to maintain the current level of service provided by the General Fund for staffing, programs, and services. The general fund pays for staffing, programs and services of police, library, parks, recreation, community development, administration, information technology (IT), and municipal court.

The City of St. Helens is referring a ballot measure for voter approval of a ten-year General Services fee for the above listed general fund staffing, programs and services. Without additional revenue, the City will likely need to cut staffing, programs and services related to police, library, parks, recreation, community development, administration, information technology (IT), and municipal court.

#### What are the voters being asked to approve?

Voters are asked to approve a General Services Fee in the monthly amount of \$24.00 per equivalent dwelling unit (EDU), indexed annually.

A single family-residence is one EDU. A duplex with one meter is two EDU's. The number of EDU's in an apartment complex is calculated based on the total number of apartment units. The number of EDU's in an RV park is calculated per hook up. A commercial use is charged per office space, per meter, so that one office space with one meter is one EDU.

If approved by a majority of the city voters, the fee will be in place for ten (10) years, starting July 1, 2026, expiring June 30, 2036. After five years, the Budget Committee will review the fee and make a recommendation to City Council about its continuation. The proposed General Services Fee Ordinance 3322, adopting Chapter 13.34, can be found at the City of St. Helens website at: <https://sthelensoregon.gov/ordinances>.

The City will track General Services Fee collected and expended in a dedicated general ledger account and report that information quarterly to City Council in a public meeting. The General Services Fee will be used for police, library, parks, recreation, community development, information technology (IT), administration and municipal court staffing, programs and services. The City's annual audit will include review of the appropriate collection and use of the General Services Fees.

#### What happens if the voters do not approve the General Services Fee?

Without additional revenue, the staffing, programs and services for police, library, parks, recreation, community development, administration, information technology (IT), and municipal court will likely be reduced to ensure the City adopts a balanced budget required by law.

Submitted by:  
Ashley Wigod  
City Attorney, City of St. Helens

**NO ARGUMENTS FOR THIS MEASURE WERE FILED.**

# Measure 5-311 Arguments

## ARGUMENT AGAINST

For many people in St. Helens, the added water fee isn't just another line on the bill- it's the moment each month when they hold their breath and hope the total hasn't crept up again. Water is not optional. It's how we cook, clean, bathe, and keep our families healthy. When the city adds a fee to something that basic, it lands hardest on the people already feeling squeezed: seniors on fixed incomes, working families, renters, and anyone trying to keep up with rising costs.

What troubles many of us isn't only the fee itself, but how it was done. Instead of asking voters to approve a tax - something that requires transparency and public debate - the city chose a fee that can be raised quietly. Renters, who make up a large share of our community, pay the fee too, even though they don't get a vote in city elections. That disconnect leaves people feeling like decisions are being made to them, not with them.

Over time, relying on fees instead of voter approved funding shifts more and more of the burden onto the people least able to absorb it. It also weakens trust. A city should be upfront about what it needs and why. When residents feel blindsided, it damages the relationship between the community and the people elected to serve it.

A "yes" vote on this fee doesn't solve the underlying problem- it simply hands the bill to the next generation. Our kids and grandkids will still be paying for decisions they never got to vote on. St. Helens deserves a fair, open approach to funding essential services-one that respects every household and doesn't saddle the future with the city's past mistakes.

### **DEFEAT THIS BAD IDEA**

### **LET'S JOIN TOGETHER AND TELL THE CITY NO!**

Submitted by:  
Joe & Debi Corsiglia

## ARGUMENT AGAINST

Don't reward mismanagement of your money by handing over more of your money. A "no" vote sends the message to City Hall that we want them to do a better job managing our money. Why are library hours being cut and the City offices closed one day a week? The answer: Conflicts of interest. Our mayor admits to an actual conflict of interest regarding the police - yet she continues to control the narrative regarding police matters. The results? You pay more: 1) The police budget dominates all other City services; 2) This fiscal year the cost of police overtime is on pace to more than double the budget, 3) A State audit from 2024 exposed more than \$400,000 over budget for police expenses (the City is three months overdue turning in its actual expenses to the State for 2025); and 4) An expensive lawsuit against the city is in progress due to the Mayor's alleged retaliation against a budget reformer. The police budget was raised 108% over the last 7 years. The mayor wants this levy to be spent to further expand the police budget to add 2 more officers. According to the consultant hired by the City, our officer-to-citizen ratio is already one of the best in the State and our pay is among the highest in the State, and the expenses are due to scheduling. St. Helens had 24hr. patrol with 15 officers. Now we have 24. A City Councilor stated when considering this measure: "They just ask for more and more money. Over the years I've seen so much money pissed away in this town. I don't know what to do. I'm disgusted." [February 4, 2026 City Council Work Session.] Let's make proper management of our money the

number one priority of our elected officials. Passing this levy is equivalent to handing over a credit card for you to pay. Vote "no" on this water tax. Don't bow to the fear mongering.

Submitted by:  
Steve Toschi

The printing of these arguments does not constitute an endorsement by Columbia County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in the argument.

# Scappoose Public Library District

## Measure 5-308

### BALLOT TITLE

#### FIVE-YEAR LEVY TO MAINTAIN LIBRARY SERVICES

**QUESTION:** Shall Scappoose Public Library District maintain services by levying 10¢ per \$1,000 assessed value for five years, beginning July 2026? This measure may cause property taxes to increase by more than 3%.

**SUMMARY:** The levy would set a fixed rate of 10 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. In 2026, typical homeowners with an assessed value (not market value) of \$350,000 would pay about \$35 annually.

Currently, Scappoose Public Library District is funded by a permanent tax rate of 25.36 cents per \$1000 of assessed value. The District receives additional support through grants, gifts and sponsorships that are unpredictable. The District receives no operating support from the city or county and has not sought additional revenue since first established over 30 years ago. Since 2018, circulation has increased over 50% and facility use has increased over 25%.

This five-year levy would help maintain and provide:

- Current hours of operation and access to books and resources for lifelong learning for everyone in the community
- Children's reading events including weekly story times and summer reading
- Weekly and monthly adult events including Movies in the Park
- Expanded eBook collection available to Scappoose Library patrons exclusively

Estimated levy revenue each year:

2026	\$161,510
2027	\$166,355
2028	\$171,346
2029	\$176,486
2030	\$181,781

### EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The Scappoose Public Library District is an independent library district serving a population of over 12,000 in its taxing district which includes Scappoose and areas outside the city limits. Formerly the Scappoose City Library, the library district was created in 1986 after the Scappoose City Council voted to stop funding the library. The library currently receives no operating support from the city or county. Since 1997, the library has had a permanent tax rate of 25.36 cents per \$1,000 of assessed (not market) value which funds operations and activities.

This measure would establish a new five-year levy that would run from July 2026 through June 2031.

#### What would the levy accomplish?

Last year, the library circulated over 100,000 items to more than 6,900 registered borrowers. Circulation has nearly doubled in the past eight years. The Scappoose Public Library circulates more materials and has more activities and programs for children and adults than any other library in Columbia County. The library hosted over 18,000 participants at in-person events in 2024. The 2025 Summer Reading Program had over 700 children participate. Until now, the Library District has never asked the taxpayers for additional support.

The Scappoose Public Library is a community hub and a resource for children, teens, and adults of all ages.

This levy would help maintain services for all district residents including:

- Access to books, materials, and electronic formats for everyone in the community
- Children's reading events and afterschool activities
- Two children's storytimes a week
- Programming and services for families and adults
- Community programs like Movies in the Park
- Retention of library staff
- 51 open hours per week
- Expanded collection of electronic books and audiobooks.
- Public computers and Low-cost printing
- 24/7 Wi-Fi
- Low-cost public meeting room

#### How would this levy impact a homeowner's taxes?

This Levy would set a fixed rate of 10 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. A typical homeowner with an assessed value (not market value) of \$350,000 would see a tax increase of \$35 annually. Every property owner can find their assessed value for their property on their property tax statement.

#### What would happen if this levy does not pass?

The current Scappoose Library tax income does not cover all expenses. The library has increasingly paid for expenses through grants, gifts, and sponsorships which are declining. If this levy does not pass, reductions in library service will likely occur. These reductions could affect open hours, book purchases, community events, maintaining technology, and library programs. These reductions would likely begin in 2026. This local option levy would provide a reliable source of additional revenue for the library.

For more information, visit [scappooselibrary.org/levy](http://scappooselibrary.org/levy)

Submitted by:  
Jeffrey Weiss  
Director

**NO ARGUMENTS AGAINST THIS MEASURE WERE FILED.**

# Scappoose Public Library District

## Measure 5-308 Arguments

### ARGUMENT FOR

Please join us in voting **YES** on Measure 5-308.

This five-year levy would help **maintain the Library's current level of services** and our **quality of life** in Scappoose including:

- Hours of operation and staffing levels
- Access to books and materials for lifelong learning for everyone in the district
- Children's weekly story times and Summer Reading
- Programs for children, teens, and adults of all ages
- Community events including Movies in the Park
- A welcoming space for connection, resources, and gathering space

Scappoose City Council  
Mayor Joe Backus  
Heather Ashlock  
Wanda Bauer  
Kristi Bradley  
Mike Bradley  
George Dunkel  
Karl Fenstermaker  
Virginia Fenstermaker  
Curtis F. Francis  
Bart Grabhorn  
Janet Grabhorn  
David Graham  
Michelle Graham  
Megan Greisen  
Judy Haugen  
Sarah Havlik  
Jan Hildreth  
Jim Hoag  
Pat Hoag  
Jillian Howard  
Josette Hugo  
Adam Jobin  
Hannah Jobin  
Jolene Jonas

Karen Kessi  
Patrick Kessi  
Will Kessi  
Ronda Kienlen  
Carolyn King  
Gwynn Klodes  
Jeff Klebes  
Phil Lager  
Sanna Lager  
Joe Lewis  
Lisa Lewis  
Pete McHugh  
Sean McNabb  
Elizabeth Millager  
Elaine Nussbaum  
Angie Oehlert  
Annette Pixley  
Brian Pixley  
Beth Rajski  
Courtney Scott  
Marguerite C. Sweet  
Gail E. Sykes  
Nancy Ward  
Chris West  
Stephenie West

Submitted by:

Friends of the Scappoose Public Library

### ARGUMENT FOR

The Scappoose Public Library has **never requested an increase** in taxpayer revenue since its permanent tax rate was set back in 1997. This is NOT a case of government spending gone wild.

In fact, our library has achieved **tremendous growth in circulation and use** while practicing **careful fiscal management**. Without this increase, cuts are inevitable.

As an independent district, our library **receives no other taxpayer funding** from the City of Scappoose or Columbia County. Only two other library districts in the Oregon have lower tax rates.

The request is just 10 cents per \$1000 of **assessed** property value each year for five years. Assessed value (on a property tax statement) is NOT the same as market value (on a real estate app).

A levy like this is the **only way to provide additional funding** for our hard-working library.

Measure 5-308 is an **investment in our local community**. These funds will stay in Scappoose and be managed by our Library.

This library is an **efficient and effective local program**. The Scappoose Public Library:

- Circulates over 100,000 items per year to more than 6,900 registered borrowers
- Circulates 30% more than any other library in our county
- Provides dozens of programs for children, teens, and adults - more than 18,000 attendees per year!
- Serves more than 700 kids per year in the Summer Reading program
- Hosts large community events each year
- Offers an inexpensive gathering space
- Is a hub for information, learning, and connection
- Is open to everyone

Studies show - **well-funded libraries have economic value** in their communities - they provide a high ROI by supporting workforce development, small businesses, and local property values.

**Many people depend on the services that our library provides**. This is NOT a partisan issue. We must protect this valuable community resource and our quality of life in Scappoose.

Help **prevent cuts to circulation, programs, staff, and hours of operation**.

**Vote YES on Measure 5-308.**

Submitted by:

Karen Kessi and Virginia Fenstermaker

### ARGUMENT FOR

**Why vote YES on Measure 5-308?**

It's simple. The **money I save** by using the services of a sufficiently-funded library will **far exceed** what I will spend on the tax increase proposed by Measure 5-308. Our community will be **much richer** from this **modest investment**.

Besides borrowing books and e-books from our Library, I can:

- borrow a wide variety of specialty cooking, baking, or preserving equipment
- check-out a pass to visit a regional museum, garden, or exhibit
- reserve an inexpensive room for a meeting or party
- relax in a quiet corner
- attend a board game night for adults
- ask someone to supervise a test I need to take
- research my family tree
- browse dozens of different magazines
- swap some seeds for my garden
- attend a ukulele jam session
- join one of three different book clubs or a writing group
- learn another language
- borrow a jigsaw puzzle for a rainy day
- bring my little ones to a weekly music & movement class
- find wholesome activities for my tweens or teens
- watch a DVD because I don't want to pay for six streaming services
- get help finding information I need.

If I am new to town, have children, live alone, like to save money, want to learn something new, or am ANYONE else, I

The printing of these arguments does not constitute an endorsement by Columbia County, nor does the county warrant the accuracy or truth of any statement made in the argument.

# Scappoose Library District

## Measure 5-308 Arguments

am stopping by the Scappoose Public Library. It's the living room of our community! If you haven't stopped by recently, check it out (library humor)!

This is one government entity that gives us a **BIG return** on our tax dollars **without the waste and overreach!** They haven't asked for anything since their permanent rate was set back in 1997! This is **NOT a money grab.**

The Library is **transparent** about what this tax increase will cost us, and the Director will answer your questions clearly. Find out more, and then **VOTE YES on Measure 5-308!**

Submitted by:  
Friends of the Scappoose Public Library

### ARGUMENT FOR

Please join us in **voting YES on Measure 5-308**, the five-year levy for the Scappoose Public Library.

#### The Scappoose Public Library provides:

- opportunities for lifelong learning for all our residents
- endless hours of entertainment
- information and resources
- a welcoming space that is open to everyone
- community connection
- enhanced quality of life

**For families with young children like ours**, the library has been our constant companion in the education of our children. Music & Movement class, weekly story times, Summer Reading, learning kits, after-school activities, a large collection of books for all stages - all of these (and more!) are available to kids at the Scappoose Public library.

The library also **helps us connect with our community.** The exceptional staff provides an array of popular programs for all ages and some tremendous community-wide events. Earth Day and Movies in the Park are just two great ways the library has stepped up to provide fun gatherings for our whole town to enjoy. In fact, over the last eight years, the Library's program attendance has nearly tripled!

The Library is well-run, and its finances are managed carefully. Simply put, operating costs are now beyond what Library staff can squeeze out of 1997's permanent tax rate. **The Library needs this five-year levy to continue to offer what it does currently.**

We save more money using the Library regularly than this levy will cost us! Considering what the price of a movie ticket, the latest board game, special cooking equipment, or a new book would cost, this levy is a great investment!

Even if you are not a regular library user, consider **what the library does for the town as a whole** - for our property values, for our overall livability, for an educated work force, for a happier population.

A vote for Measure 5-308 is a vote for learning, for connection, and for Scappoose.

Liza Gerardo  
Jimmie Gerardo  
Andy Maggi

Rachel Mills  
Thomas Hopkins  
Jacqueline Hopkins

Submitted by:  
Liza Gerardo

### ARGUMENT FOR

We are voting **YES on Measure 5-308** so that Scappoose Library can continue its current level of services and avoid cuts to hours, book budgets, technology services, and the community programs that benefit people of all ages.

The library has operated on a permanent tax rate of 25.36 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value since 1997. With skyrocketing home prices, why does the library need an increase? The permanent tax rate is levied on **ASSESSED** value, not actual value. Back in the 1990s, Oregon voters passed a constitutional amendment that limits increase in assessed value to 3% per year. This law has kept assessed values low compared to real market values and squeezed property-tax-funded budgets. As a result, Scappoose Library's current level of funding does not keep up with the rising costs of its programs and staff.

The library has not asked for additional tax revenue for decades. Meanwhile, in just the past nine years, circulation has doubled and program attendance has tripled. The library gets no money from the city or county. Outside resources such as grants and gifts are dwindling.

The library is a precious resource in our community. It provides both physical books and periodicals and free access to electronic formats including audio books on the Libby app. It is our community hub. Where else are people of all ages welcome, not just to read books, newspapers and magazines but also use a public computer, access Wi-Fi, study in a quiet space, take a class, join an afterschool activity, participate in reading programs and book clubs, use a low-cost meeting room, or simply take a breather while someone reads to the kids during storytime? What place better supports lifelong learning, available to all, together with healthy socialization in a safe environment?

**Please vote YES on Measure 5-308** so that Scappoose Library can continue to provide these wonderful resources and not be forced to make cuts in services.

Submitted by:  
Laurie and Jeff Mapes

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# Columbia County 911 Communications

## Measure 5-310

### BALLOT TITLE

#### LOCAL OPTION LEVY FOR 9-1-1 EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

**QUESTION:** Shall Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District establish a five-year emergency communications services levy at \$0.29 per \$1,000 assessed value beginning FY2026-2027? This measure may cause property taxes to increase more than three percent.

**SUMMARY:** This measure proposes a five-year local option levy to fund Columbia 9-1-1 emergency communications countywide. Voters previously approved operating levies for these services in 1998, 2003, 2008, 2013, and 2018. The most recent levy expired in 2024. When first approved, the levy rate was higher and later reduced after five years, remaining at the lower rate for twenty years. This proposal establishes a levy at that same lower rate.

Columbia 9-1-1 is the sole activation point for critical incident response in Columbia County. Levy funds would supplement ongoing operations, including 9-1-1 call handling and dispatching for all cities and unincorporated areas. Funding would maintain the public safety radio system serving 16 fire, emergency medical and law enforcement agencies, and providing interoperability with Oregon State Police and Oregon Forestry Department.

The proposed rate is \$0.29 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. For a home with an assessed value of \$300,000, the annual cost would be approximately \$87. Estimated revenues are \$2,144,925 in 2026; \$2,240,255 in 2027; \$2,339,821 in 2028; \$2,443,813 in 2029; and \$2,552,427 in 2030. Total levy of \$10,914,819.

### EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

**What the measure would do:** This measure would create a new five-year property tax levy at the same rate used in recent years. If approved, this levy would allow the Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District (the "District") to continue providing emergency communications services at the current level.

This levy would replace the levy that expired in 2024. This levy is proposed at the same rate approved by voters in 2003, 2008, 2013, and 2018. The rate is slightly lower than the rate originally approved by voters in 1998.

#### **About the District's services:**

The District is the sole 9-1-1 call answering and dispatch center for the 16 public safety agencies based in Columbia County, including every fire, emergency medical, and law enforcement agency for all cities and unincorporated areas of the County. "Dispatch" means receiving emergency calls and sending appropriate responders.

The District manages around 70,311 calls annually and maintains the communication systems used by first responders.

The District also provides technology coordination with the Oregon State Police and Oregon Department of Forestry.

How levy funds would be used: If approved, levy funds will support operations and maintenance of 9-1-1 communications, including:

- 24-hour staffing of the dispatch center,
- Training for dispatchers,
- Operation and maintenance of the countywide radio and data communications system used by first responders (police, fire, and medical).

#### **Levy rate and example cost:**

- **Rate:** The proposed rate is 29 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value.
- **Example:** For a home valued at \$300,000, this means about \$87 per year, or \$7.25 per month. "Assessed value" is the value the county uses to calculate property taxes, which may differ from market value.

#### **Other District funding (not part of this measure):**

- **Permanent Tax Base:** There is a permanent tax base rate of 25.54 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value that is not on the ballot and not included in the levy. For a \$300,000 home, this is about \$77 per year, or \$6.50 per month. If the levy is approved, the levy and tax base combined would cost approximately \$164 per year, or \$13.75 per month for a \$300,000 home.
- **Additional Funding:** The District also receives state and federal grants to enhance emergency communication systems and support up-to-date services, including location services for wireless calls, text-to-9-1-1 capabilities, emergency public notification systems, and related radio and data communications infrastructure.

#### **Citizen Representation and Accountability:**

The District is governed by a five-member Board of Directors elected from different geographic zones in the county. The Board is advised by a statutory Advisory Committee composed of the county sheriff and the chief of each law enforcement agency, fire district, and emergency medical service in the county. The Board also appoints five citizen members, one from each zone, to serve with the Board on the District's Budget Committee.

Submitted by:  
Jeremy Hipes  
Executive Director

# Columbia County 911 Communications

## Measure 5-310 Arguments

### ARGUMENT FOR

**Protect Columbia County: Save 9-1-1  
VOTE YES ON MEASURE 5-310**

**Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District is our county's only emergency dispatch center**, answering more than 85,000 calls in 2025. Over 20,000 were from residents, and 97% of the time these calls were answered in under 10 seconds.

Every fire engine, ambulance, and law enforcement officer in the county is dispatched through this one center, serving all 16 public safety agencies across every city and rural area. There is no backup. There is no alternative.

**Measure 5-310 is not a new tax.** It reestablishes the same levy rate voters approved in 2003, 2008, 2013, and 2018: \$0.29 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

**Call volume has doubled.** Emergency calls for service have more than doubled in the past 10 years. The need is growing, not shrinking.

**We heard from you.** When the Levy narrowly failed in 2024, 53% of the District's operating budget disappeared. Columbia 9-1-1 has been drawing down reserves to stay operational. Those reserves will not last.

**Same rate, better spending.** While the need is greater than ever, your 9-1-1 board voted to go back to you—the taxpayers—and ask for the same rate as we have always had. We're tightening our belts, but without the Levy, emergency funds will be depleted. Staff will be let go. 9-1-1 calls will go unanswered for longer. Systems will eventually break down with no path to replacement.

**New leadership. Real results.** Last year, the District hired a new Executive Director with a proven record of reform. He immediately negotiated a vital radio system upgrade for only \$250,000—hundreds of thousands of dollars below estimates.

We will continue to find ways to streamline our service while maintaining the highest quality standards. But we need your help.

**Vote YES on Measure 5-310 to Protect Columbia County!  
Return your ballot by May 19th.**

Learn more at [www.ProtectColumbiaCounty.com](http://www.ProtectColumbiaCounty.com).

Submitted by:  
Mark Pacheco, Co-Chair  
Friends of Columbia 9-1-1

### ARGUMENT FOR

**When the call comes in, there is no time for failure.**

We are the firefighters, paramedics, dispatchers, and law enforcement officers who respond to calls for help. Every shift, we depend on the Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District to tell us where to go, help us be prepared when we arrive, keep us connected to each other, and get us home safe. We trust that system with our lives. You trust it with yours.

**That system needs this levy to survive.**

Columbia 9-1-1 is the only county emergency dispatch center. It coordinates 16 agencies—fire, EMS, and law enforcement—across every city and every mile of rural road. No one else does this.

**To keep you safe, we need a working, integrated communications system.**

First responders need to be in real-time communication with dispatch and amongst ourselves when in the field. When any communication link does not work, your life is at risk, and our lives are at risk. And with the Levy gone, so goes most of the District budget—meaning essential upgrades could never happen, equipment could fail, and staff will likely be let go.

We know family budgets are tight, which is why the District is not asking to increase the levy despite call volume rapidly rising. However, if 53% of the operating budget is lost and reserves are depleted, our ability to efficiently and effectively keep you safe could be in jeopardy.

**Help us protect you: vote YES on Measure 5-310.**

Our safety, and yours, depends on it.

Service Provider Endorsements:

Columbia County Fire Defense Board  
St. Helens Professional Firefighters Local 3215  
St. Helens Police Officers Association  
Columbia 9-1-1 Dispatchers Association  
Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District Board  
Vernonia Emergency Volunteer Association  
Mist-Birkenfeld Rural Fire Protection District Board  
Mist-Birkenfeld R.F.P.D. Volunteer Association  
Clatskanie Rural Fire Protection District Board  
Clatskanie Volunteer Firefighters Association  
Local 1660 Scappoose & Clatskanie Fire  
Clatskanie City Council  
Columbia City City Council  
Columbia 9-1-1 Advisory Committee

Submitted by:  
Rich Newman, Co-Chair  
Friends of Columbia 9-1-1

### ARGUMENT FOR

**Vote YES! on Measure 5-310.**

We live across all corners of Columbia County, with different jobs, politics, and opinions. But we agree on this: when someone calls 9-1-1 they deserve an answer. Every time. Without fail.

**We are voting yes because** emergency calls for service have more than doubled in the past 10 years. Yet, 97% of these calls are still answered in under 10 seconds.

**We are voting yes because** this level of quality cannot continue with District losing more than half its budget without the levy.

**We are voting yes because** we see the real improvements that the Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District has implemented recently to spend our money wisely.

**Steven Reed, Ret. Circuit Court Judge, St. Helens:**

"I have worked with 911 for years and am a volunteer on the Budget Committee. I understand its value in keeping this area safe in any kind of emergency."

**Kathy Engel, Clatskanie:**

"911 is an essential need in our County. We have a new director who is pledging a longterm stay and a board and advisory committee willing and ready to improve and update the operations of C911. I encourage all voters to join me in voting YES on the 911 Levy!"

**Shelley Hennessy, Vernonia:**

"As a past member of emergency services paid and volunteer employee it is imperative to support this organization if we want to keep the same level of services that we are used to."

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# Columbia County 911 Communications

## Measure 5-310 Arguments

### Mark Pacheco, St. Helens. New C911 Board Member:

“This levy helps ensure the system stays up to date, fully staffed, and ready when it’s needed most. Too much is at stake. This is about keeping a critical service strong for our families, neighbors, and first responders.”

### Rick Hobart, Mayor, Vernonia:

“I hope the voters pass this all-important Levy this time around. We need to support our emergency communications services and vote YES to SAVE 911. We can do this Columbia County.”

Quotations are sourced from [www.protectcolumbiacounty.com](http://www.protectcolumbiacounty.com).

Submitted by:

Sally J Jones

Friends of Columbia 9-1-1

## ARGUMENT FOR

**COLUMBIA COUNTY VOTERS, TAXPAYERS, AND  
COMMUNITY LEADERS AGREE:  
VOTE YES ON MEASURE 5-310 BY MAY 19.**

Constance Budge	Steve Weller	Paul Langner
Pam Pulliam	Brian Burrig	Kathy Engel
Pam Powell	Dahnrae Duran	Zachary Smith
Stacy Cole	Angela R. Christensen	Marlo Cochran
Terry Moss	Brian Tiani	Donavon & Elsa Wooley
JoAnn Blodgett	Rick Hobart	Bruce Holsey
Greg Moore	Jamie Davidson	Ethan Brocker
Margaret Barton-Ross	Debra Gurlen	Nick Brown
Chip Waisanen	Phil & Deborah Hazen	First Response Book
Brian DuBois	John & Catherine Ridenour	Keeping LLC
Todd & Maryjo Beck	Jeff Flatt	Louis & Sally Jones
Lindsay Nokovic	Tess Thorp	Michal Nichols
Margaret Magruder	Steve & Kathy Sharek	Jeremy & Tabatha Hipes
Louis Lavine	Rob Anderson	Joe Kirkland
Nathaniel Hughes	Regan Zielinski	Dustin Starr
Shelley Hennessy	Diana Karthaus	Kirk & Cheryl Blecha
Mathew Traini	Joseph Thorp	Michael & Kathleen Simek
Rebecca Hering	Craig Granger	Richard Newman
Mark Pacheco	Devlin Perez	Greg Brody
Jim Carpenter	Robert Keyser	Tamsel Tack
Ron Youngberg	Ellen Lager	Brianna Brogli
Elizabeth Winegar	Paige Hipes	Andrew Mustola
Ann Berg	Jolene Botchie	Steve Reed

**And many more ...**

Learn more about why Columbia County supports Measure 5-310 at [www.ProtectColumbiaCounty.com](http://www.ProtectColumbiaCounty.com)

Submitted by:

Sally Jones

Friends of Columbia 9-1-1

## ARGUMENT AGAINST

### Vote “NO” on 5-310

As a taxpayer and **elected board member** of the Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District (C911CD), **I voted “NO”** to asking taxpayers for more taxes.

- The C911CD receives a permanent tax rate from our property taxes without this option levy tax, plus they receive state funding. **This will be a NEW tax on property tax bills**, not a “renewal”.

- Some years, the C911CD has carried over more than a million dollars, per year, from the general fund to “reserve” funds. If they can carry over that much money every year, they are asking taxpayers for too much. Within the past 2 years, the balance of their reserve fund has reached more than \$5 million dollars and is currently over \$3.7 million.
- The C911CD has been operating with less than 14 dispatchers for years with a 9-1-1 call answer time under 5-seconds. The current budget used is inflated in multiple areas. For example, the budget funds 17-dispatchers. The claim an option levy is needed for about 50% of C911CD funding is disingenuous because it relies on **inflated, avoidable expenses and significant waste** that can be dramatically reduced or eliminated, without reducing service.
- Millions of dollars in waste have occurred: Hiring political consultant(s), failing to use proper state required competitive bidding, gifting public funds for an iPad for a retiring board member, purchasing very expensive software never used, inappropriate and unnecessary use of expensive attorneys, and so much other **waste of tax dollars**.
- I agree with reforming 9-1-1 and **placing it under the County government** vs. the current Special District. Hundreds of thousands of tax dollars can be saved with a County 9-1-1 model. There are only 3 Special District 9-1-1 centers in Oregon. 13 are ran by counties and 18 ran by city governments. **It’s time for change**.
- The two board members who let millions of dollars in waste occur are currently the president and vice president of the Board.

[www.No5-310.com](http://www.No5-310.com)

Submitted by:

Tyler Miller

## ARGUMENT AGAINST

The Columbia County Republican Central Committee is urging a NO vote on the Local Option Levy for Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District.

While we strongly support our first responders, including our 911 Operators, we feel that the board administration of Columbia 911 has failed them and that public safety should be a number one priority for our local government.

The Columbia 911 budget for 2025-26 is over \$10.5 million with over \$5.4 million of that budget allocated as “Capital Outlay.” In the 2024-25 budget, that number was over \$5.4 million. That translates to over 50% of their budget in the current year. Even with over \$11 million budgeted towards capital outlay in just the last 2 years, the Columbia 911 radio systems are still inadequate.

The problem is that levies are for operations, not capital projects. The taxpayers have been paying Columbia 911 a levy for years that has funded them at a considerably higher level than their actual operating budget. This has allowed them to set aside their tax base funds for capital projects yet this has not resulted in better and full coverage for our first responders.

We believe that Columbia 911 should do the right thing. Do the work, get a bond measure out there that actually gets the job done and provides a system that our police and fire can count on.

Submitted by:

Columbia County Republican Central Committee

Traci L Brumbles, Chair

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# Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District

## Measure 5-309

### BALLOT TITLE

#### FIVE YEAR LOCAL OPTION LEVY FOR FIRE OPERATIONS

QUESTION: Shall district levy \$2.02 per \$1,000 of assessed value for 5 years beginning 2026-2027 for staffing and equipment? This measure may cause property taxes to increase more than three percent.

SUMMARY: Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District (VRFPD) currently has a local option levy in place of \$1.24/\$1,000 of assessed value. VRFPD is seeking to replace the current levy with a new levy of \$2.02 /\$1,000 for an increase of \$0.78/\$1,000. If this levy is approved, the prior levy will be is retired.

Revenue raised from the levy will be used to cover increased operating costs; such as to replace inoperable breathing apparatus refill station, transition part-time Fire Chief position back to full-time, add part-time Firefighter/EMT's to increase DAYTIME staffing to two Firefighter/EMT's when volunteers are typically unavailable, increase training budget, construct a small training structure on district property, and increase VRFPD's ability to save money for replacing vehicles and equipment at end of service life.

Estimate of tax INCREASE for a home assessed at \$200,000: \$156 per year or \$13 per month.

Average assessed valuation of homes within VRFPD is \$156,205.

Estimate of the tax to be raised:  
\$714,024 in 2026-2027, \$735,445 in 2027-2028, \$757,508 in 2028-2029,  
\$780,233 in 2029-2030, \$803,640 in 2030-2031

volunteer responders are often unavailable due to work commitments.

- Replacing outdated Fire & Rescue equipment.
- Replacing aging wildland personal protective equipment (PPE), some of which is more than 30 years old, to improve firefighter safety during wildfire response.
- Increasing the training budget
- Constructing a small training structure on district property

The estimated tax increase for a home with an assessed value of \$200,000 would be approximately \$156 per year, or \$13 per month. The average assessed value of homes within the district is \$156,205, meaning the estimated cost for many households may be lower than the example provided. Assessed value is not the same as market value. You can find your assessed value by looking at your Columbia County Tax Statement.

The estimated amount of revenue from the levy each year is:

- \$714,024 in 2026-2027 (approximately \$438,312 - current levy amount and \$275,712 - proposed levy increase)
- \$735,445 in 2027-2028 (approximately \$451,461 - current levy amount and \$283,984 - proposed levy increase)
- \$757,508 in 2028-2029 (approximately \$465,005 - current levy amount and \$292,503 - proposed levy increase)
- \$780,233 in 2029-2030 (approximately \$478,955 - current levy amount and \$301,278 - proposed levy increase)
- \$803,640 in 2030-2031 (approximately \$493,324 - current levy amount and \$310,316 - proposed levy increase)

Approval of this measure would allow the district to replace the existing levy with the proposed levy rate and use the funds for the purposes described above.

Submitted by:  
Greg Brody  
Fire Chief

### EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District currently operates under a voter-approved local option levy of \$1.24 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. This measure asks voters to replace the existing levy with a new levy of \$2.02 per \$1,000 of assessed value, an increase of \$0.78 per \$1,000. If approved, the current levy would be retired and replaced by the new levy. Combined with the district's permanent tax rate, the total tax rate would be approximately \$2.97 per \$1,000 of assessed value, which is identical to, or less than, other fire districts in Columbia County that provide 24-hour staffing.

With the final payment of the water tender purchased through the vehicle bond approved by voters in 2017, the estimated \$0.18 per \$1,000 of assessed value currently collected for that bond will no longer be assessed to district taxpayers. Therefore, the net tax increase from this levy lift would be approximately \$0.60 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Revenue generated by the proposed levy would be used to maintain and improve fire and emergency medical services within the district. Funds would help address rising operational costs and support several service improvements, including:

- Replacing an inoperable breathing apparatus refill station, which is necessary to refill air tanks used by firefighters during emergency response.
- Increasing the Fire Chief position by 13 hours per week, transitioning the role from part-time back to full-time.
- Adding approximately 30 hours per week of additional coverage by part-time Firefighter/EMTs to help increase daytime staffing to two Firefighter/EMTs, when

**NO ARGUMENTS AGAINST THIS MEASURE WERE FILED.**

# Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District

## Measure 5-309 Arguments

### ARGUMENT FOR

As a public safety professional in Columbia County for over 30 years, I fully endorse Measure 5-309 in support of the Vernonia Fire Levy.

Why is it important? It will fund vital parts of Vernonia Fire District's operations, that currently exceed the district's budget capacity. The district plans to utilize the levy funds to do the following:

- Adding 30 hours of daytime Firefighter/EMT staffing per week, which is needed while volunteers are working their regular jobs.
- Returns the Fire Chief position from part-time to full-time, adding 13 hours more per week.
- Purchase a breathing apparatus fill station to replace the current one which is over 30 years old and has been inoperable for over 4 years. This unit will fill the brand-new federal grant funded SCBA cylinders.
- Replace wildland firefighting Personal Protective Equipment- some of which is over 30 years old.
- Convert a district one-ton pickup to a "brush truck" to increase rapid response to threatening wild land fires.
- Purchase firefighting equipment to fully outfit a second used fire engine recently obtained by the district.
- Build a small training facility using cost-saving shipping containers, rather than an actual structure.
- Build a small storage building.

Vernonia Fire has been an outstanding steward of taxpayer money. Much has been accomplished over the past 18 months by leveraging grants, obtaining donations and being awarded scholarships. In that period, over \$500,000 has been offset by district staff working diligently to find alternate funding mechanisms. The state grant funded fire station seismic upgrade/ remodel was completed for \$100,000 UNDER budget. This is an excellent indicator of a public body exercising careful spending.

VFD has the lowest permanent tax rate of all fire districts in Columbia County, yet still operates 24/7 staffing with one firefighter on duty 24 hours a day, one 40-hour daytime firefighter and one part-time chief. An additional 43 hours per week of daytime coverage would be obtained with the levy passage.

Vote yes on Measure 5-309

Submitted by:  
Greg Brody

### ARGUMENT FOR

Having served as the former Fire Chief of Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District, I have over 49 years of service as both a volunteer and paid staff as well as Director on the Board. The District has always looked for ways to supplement our budget to meet the needs of the staff and volunteers. Over the decades many options have been sought and utilized to fill shortfalls. Grants, fund raisers, donations, surplus equipment from outside agencies, are just a few of the means to accomplish this.

We have reached a point where we must come to our citizens and ask for some financial help. Measure 5-309 will give the district the means to continue to provide the service currently in place. It will also provide the ability to upgrade aging equipment, provide additional personnel to staff the station and improve overall response.

Also included in this will be an upgrade in safety for staff and personnel, with replacing outdated equipment. SAFETY being of major concern to reduce liability issues from old equipment that can and has failed.

Having been a part of the fire service as both a volunteer, paid staff, and district board director, I see the dedication our fire staff give to provide you the citizens the best service possible. On my worst day when I need either an ambulance or a fire engine, with adequate staffing, I want to be assured that I will be getting the best. Voting yes on Measure 5-309 will give me even more reassurance of that when I need them most.

I have had the Fire Service in my blood since I was a young boy and have watched and worked with many family members who have been involved in the same line of concern for people. I am voting YES on Measure 5-309, because I care about the citizens of Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District.

Submitted by:  
Steve Weller

### ARGUMENT FOR

I'm supporting Measure 5-309 to ensure the people who respond when our community needs them most have the ability to serve us with the best possible chance of success. I volunteered with the VRFD for almost a year, but had to resign due to personal reasons. During my time there, I witnessed their dedication and commitment firsthand. This is our opportunity to support them.

Firefighters do more than respond to calls. They help train the next generation through the Fire Science class at Vernonia High School, giving students real-world skills, mentorship, and a path into public service. Programs like this strengthen our community and build the future of emergency response.

The district also works to prevent emergencies before they happen through its smoke alarm installation program. Ensuring homes have working smoke alarms is a simple but powerful way firefighters protect lives.

Currently, firefighters cannot refill the air packs they rely on in dangerous situations, nor can they train on realistic emergency scenarios. This levy will provide resources to correct both, including a cost-effective training structure like the one at the new fire station on Highway 26 near Manning.

This levy will also increase daytime staffing to two firefighters when volunteers are typically at work. This boost allows the district to respond with significantly more capability if someone calls 911, improving safety and emergency outcomes for everyone in our community.

I want to know that if I, a loved one, or a member of our community needs help, firefighters are on duty and ready to respond. The levy helps maintain reliable response capabilities so help arrives quickly when every minute counts.

If approved, this levy will keep the tax rate the same as-or lower than-other Columbia County agencies with 24-hour staffing. Measure 5-309 ensures the Vernonia Fire District can continue providing fast emergency response, life-saving programs, and essential community support. A "Yes" vote is an investment in safety, preparedness, and the strength of our community.

Submitted by:  
Kris Knutson

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# CHECK YOUR BALLOT

Completely fill in the oval next to your choices.


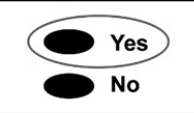


## Check for overvotes.

If you vote for more candidates than allowed for an office or if you vote both 'Yes' and 'No' on a measure, it is called an overvote. Your vote will not count for that candidate or measure.

If you make a mistake or change your mind while marking your ballot, you may request a replacement ballot from the Elections office or you may make your changes to your ballot on hand.

If you make changes to your ballot choices, make your choice obvious. Election workers will inspect each ballot to make sure your intent is understood, and that your ballot is counted correctly.

Examples of how to make your intent clear are below.

You do not have to vote in all contests. Your other votes will still count.

You cannot change your vote once you have mailed or dropped off your ballot.

Contact Columbia County Elections to ask for help if:

- you make a mistake
- your ballot is damaged
- your ballot is lost
- or for any other reason.

Columbia County Elections (503) 397-7214  
[elections@columbiacountyor.gov](mailto:elections@columbiacountyor.gov)

# COLUMBIA COUNTY BALLOT DROP SITE LOCATIONS

24-Hour drop-off is available at all locations.

## Columbia County Courthouse

230 Strand St, St Helens

## Scappoose City Hall

33568 E. Columbia Ave

## Clatskanie Library

11 Lillich St, Clatskanie

## Rainier City Hall

106 B St West, Rainier

## Vernonia Public Library

701 Weed Ave, Vernonia

## Mist-Birkenfeld RFPD

12525 Oregon Highway 202, Mist



PLEASE RECYCLE THIS  
INFORMATION BOOKLET

END OF COLUMBIA COUNTY VOTERS' PAMPHLET

REMEMBER TO CHECK BOTH SIDES OF YOUR BALLOT.