Notice of Measure Election

SEL 801

rev 01/14: ORS 250.035, 250.041, 250.175, 254.103, 254.465

County

Notice

Date of Notice	Name of County or Counties	Date of Election
3.1914	Columbia County	5.20.14

The following is the final ballot title of the measure to be submitted to the county's voters.

Final Ballot Title Notice of receipt of ballot title has been published and the ballot title challenge process has been completed.

Caption 10 words which reasonably identifies the subject of the measure

Three-Year Local Option Levy for Jail Operations

Question 20 words which plainly phrases the chief purpose of the measure

Shall Columbia County levy $0.5797/$1000.00 of assessed value for three years beginning in 2014-2015 for jail operations? This measure may cause property taxes to increase more than three percent.

Summary 175 words which concisely and impartially summarizes the measure and its major effect

In 1998, County voters approved construction of a new jail with a 255 bed capacity without corresponding operating funds. The County General Fund and bed rentals have supported Jail operations for 13 years.

The cost to supervise, feed, clothe and provide health care for a larger inmate population is now known to be substantially more than the costs to run the old Jail, has Increased each year, and is a major expense in the jail budget.

The County General Fund has experienced a significant decrease in the last several years and can no longer sufficiently support jail operations. This decrease has led to reducing bed capacity to 25 local inmates, which is down from 65 last year. The continued operation of the Jail in any capacity is dependent upon Federal bed rentals.

The proposed levy would restore 75 beds, for a total of 100 local beds, fund six additional corrections deputies and one supervisory position, and provide constitutionally required food, clothing, management and health care to inmates.

The estimated money raised will be $2,287.572 in FY 2015, $2,356,199 in FY 2016, and $2,426,885 in FY 2017, for an estimated total levy of $7,070,656.

Explanatory Statement 500 words that impartially explains the measure and its effect, if required attach to this form

If the county is producing a voters' pamphlet an explanatory statement must be submitted for any measure referred by the county governing body and if required by local ordinance, for any initiative or referendum.

Measure Type	County producing voters' pamphlet		Local ordinance requiring submission		Explanatory statement required	
■ Referral	■ Yes	☐ No	Not applicable		■ Yes	☐ No
☐ Initiative	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Yes	☐ No
☐ Referendum	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ Yes	☐ No

Authorized County Official Not required to be notarized

→ By signing this document, I hereby state that I am authorized by the county to submit this Notice of Measure Election and I certify that notice of receipt of ballot title has been published and the ballot title challenge process for this measure completed.

Name	Title	Work Phone
Anthony Hyde	Chair, Board of County Commissioners	503-397-4322

3.19.14

Signature | **Date Signed**

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT FOR COUNTY VOTERS' PAMPHLET

Ballot Title Caption: Three-Year Local Option Levy for Jail Operations

Measure Number: _____ Word Total (500 Maximum): 494

If passed, the jail operating levy will provide funding to continue operation of the County Jail. If the measure does not pass the County Jail will close by June 30, 2014. The proposed levy would be for a maximum of .5797 cents per thousand. A property owner with assessed value of $100,000 would pay $57.97 per year for three years.

The operating funds will be used to hire corrections deputies and one supervisory employee to manage jail operations in a manner that is safe and secure for employees and inmates. The operating funds will also be used to provide constitutionally required care of inmates including food, clothing and health care. The use of operating funds will be overseen by a citizen oversight committee established by the County.

The County's old Courthouse jail was built in 1969 and was designed to hold a maximum of 39 prisoners. Because of overcrowding, inmates were often released before arraignment and sentenced prisoners were released before sentences were served. Conditions in the jail were substandard and the County was at risk of being sued.

In 1998, County voters approved a bond levy to build the current Jail, designed to house up to 255 inmates. While the cost to run the new larger jail was assumed to be substantially more than the cost to run the old Courthouse Jail, the County did not immediately request an operating levy for the new Jail. Rather, the County raised revenue by renting unfilled jail beds and increasing County general fund support. Currently, bed rental revenue makes up more than half of the revenue needed to run the Jail. However, the bed rental revenue is not dependable because the federal government will not guarantee it will rent any beds.

Available general fund support for the Jail has decreased in the last several years due to a decline in the County's second largest source of unrestricted funding; the O&C Forest payments, which dropped by 70% from $2,000,000 in 2008 to $600,000 in 2014 with no funding budgeted for 2015. Budgeted unrestricted general fund resources have decreased by one-third since 2005 from $13.2 million to $8.7 in 2014. The Jail has also experienced increased operating costs in personnel categories given health insurance premium increases and pension costs.

In 2011, due to the decrease in general fund support and increased personnel and operations costs at the Jail, the County reduced the maximum number of inmates to be housed at the Jail from 255 to 150, including 65 local beds. In 2013, due to the additional decrease in available general fund support and increased personnel and operations costs at the Jail, the County further reduced the maximum number of inmates to be housed at

the Jail from 150 to 110, including 25 local beds. The County has laid off nine jail staff members since 2011. If passed, the County projects it will be able to again house 100 local inmates and hire sufficient staff to safely manage inmates.

Person responsible for the content of the Explanatory Statement:

Anthony Hyde, Chair, Board of Commissioners
(TYPED)

X _____
(SIGNED)

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Name of the Governing Body person represents

RES 023 (1/10/94)