

ADAIR: Sisters Country resident will be on the May 17 ballot

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the usual reserved and introverted image of accountants, as she exudes an entirely different personality.

During the 2018 general election she learned that her grandfather had been an Umatilla County commissioner.

“I guess being a commissioner is in my genes,” she said.

It took some number of years before she competed in political life, but she has long been politically active, including two years as chair of Deschutes County Republicans.

The Nugget asked Adair’s thoughts on the grassroots movement to make Deschutes County commissioners non-partisan. It was the only time in the conversation where she demurred on a subject. Otherwise she was energetic in discussing her role as commissioner and at times passionate in talking about her favorite projects or goals.

She is most proud of her work and lobbying in securing two more Deschutes County Circuit Court judges, and helping jumpstart the recently completed Veterans Village project for homeless veterans.

“And not raising county property taxes,” she said.

If reelected Adair intends to push for an unused portion of Deer Ridge Correctional Institute to be turned into a psychiatric hospital. The prison is located in Jefferson County. Initially her goal was

to see a new facility increase the county’s psychiatric bed capacity, then saw potential in Deer Ridge after touring the facility in August.

Thus far, with the filing date for candidacy a few weeks away, Adair’s Position 3 has also drawn a filing from Morgan Schmidt, a Democrat and youth pastor.

Adair often gets into the weeds of an issue and can be relentless in pursuing a solution or change such as the long-festering parking problem at Smith Rock, which attracts nearly one million annual visitors. Her advocacy for even seemingly small issues is part of her “brand.”

She likes to think that she is pragmatic and collegial.

“Raising three boys and horses has been good training ground for serving as a commissioner,” she said.

Her list of current memberships and affiliations is reflective of her hands-on approach to problem solving. Locally she has served on the Sisters Vision Implementation Team and Sisters Park & Recreation District Budget Committee.

Over the years she has

coordinated various fundraising projects, serving in leadership roles ranging from schools to hospitals. Her advocacy for small business often takes her to stores, coffee shops, restaurants, and mom-and-pop businesses where she finds she can relate.

“I had my first job when I was 5,” she said. “Working a ranch has given me a lot of respect for the little guys, the family-owned businesses that make up so much of the Deschutes County economy.”

Workforce housing, an issue that is oft discussed in Sisters, is one that Adair has added to her list of problems to solve.

The position held by Commissioner Tony DeBone, a Republican, is also up for election. He is being challenged in the May Republican primary by Tom McManus, a retired health and safety consultant, and Scott Stuart, an insurance agent associated with the People’s Rights organization. The winner will face Oliver Tatom, a Democrat and primary care clinic manager.

The primary election is May 17 in Oregon.



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Patti Adair keeps in touch with her country roots. She is running for reelection to the Deschutes County Board of Commissioners.

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