

Vernonia Candidates Questionnaire Responses

Vernonia's Voice sent a questionnaire to all candidates running for the positions of Vernonia Mayor and Vernonia City Council in the upcoming November 6, election. We hope their responses, published here unedited, will provide information to help local voters when they fill out their ballots.

Vernonia's Voice will host two upcoming "Meet the Candidates" political forums, at the Cabin in Vernonia (Scout Cabin), one with candidates for Columbia County Sheriff on Wednesday, October 10, and one with candidates for Vernonia Mayor and City Council on Thursday, October 11, both at 7:00 pm. We hope you will take time to attend these events, meet the candidates, and be an informed voter.

1. Please describe your background, qualifications, experience, leadership roles, and community involvement that make you a good candidate for the Vernonia Mayor/City Council position? Why are you running for this office?

Vernonia Mayor Candidates

Rick Hobart: Greetings to all Vernonia residents. My name is Rick Hobart. I have been a resident in the Vernonia community since 1973. My dedication to previous employers, my disciplined lifestyle, and my willingness to serve others, whether it be as a Lions Club member or school bus driver, help me to be a serious candidate for the Mayor of Vernonia. So folks, the time to cast your ballot is drawing near. Vote Rick Hobart for Mayor, and together we will begin a new year.

Jill Hult: I am running for Mayor of Vernonia because I believe I am capable of leading the Council and representing the interests of Vernonia's citizens in a way that considers all options and sides to issues and looks at the bigger, wider picture of what does the most good for the most people. I was raised in Vernonia and have only lived away for about 8 years in total. My paternal Great Grandfather, originally from Sweden, came to Vernonia in the very late 1890s; my maternal Grandfather, walked here from Texas in the Great Depression to find work and settled in Vernonia at 13 years of age, working in the Oregon American Mill and graduating from Vernonia High School as my mother, siblings, and I have. I value Vernonia's history and understand the need to preserve this legacy while keeping Vernonia mov-

ing forward to stay a viable and desired place to live. Along with my family history and understanding of the culture of Vernonia, I have also been involved in many things in Vernonia as a volunteer and worker. I was on the Jamboree Committee for about 7 years; Vernonia Community Learning Center Committee for about 3 years; I worked with the Flood Recovery operations for nearly 2 years; designed and conducted City Committee Training; have chaired the City Budget Committee for 2 years; and I currently sit on the Vernonia Council as one of your Council members. In relation to, but outside of the City of Vernonia, I am involved with Columbia County Economic Team and am a member of the newly formed Steering Committee for Columbia County Tourism. I hold a BA in Communications and Training and Development. I was also a participant in The Ford Family Leadership Program and Community Collaborations work here. Thank you and I appreciate your active voice through your vote.

David Sterner did not respond to this questionnaire.

Vernonia City Council Candidates

J.R. Allen: Hello Vernonia, my name is J.R. Allen and I'm running for Vernonia City Council. In 1979 my parents bought a small farm 2 miles south of Vernonia. I attended 6th grade with Mr. Batty at the helm. I worked at Sentry Market for Kelly Smith for three years before graduating in 1986. After graduation I went to work in the saw mill industry for about two years. In 1988 I went to work at Trojan Nuclear Plant and helped refuel it every spring working my way up to the lead shielding crew. I married the love of my life, Juli Hammerberg, in 1988 and we purchased a 1926 mill home and raised our family in Vernonia where we remain to this day. I now have 30 plus years of construction experience from concrete to high tech at Intel. I am currently working on various projects for Nike. I have always strived to be the best employee and go above and beyond. I believe my construction experience working for and with hundreds if not thousands of people will serve me and our town well. It takes a team of many different people to accomplish building and turning over a project to the owner. I feel the experience working with boots on the ground to the owner's representative will give me the foundation to work with Council and City Hall

to complete projects and finish set goals. I'm running for office to give back to the community we all call home. I'm currently involved in the Green Team helping our local landscaping. I also have volunteered to build two boys baseball dugouts from the ground up and really enjoy working with our youth and other community members. Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to working together for Vernonia.

Michael Seager: Born and raised in the Pacific Northwest, in a timber community much like Vernonia. After graduation from high school I was accepted in the U.S. Air Force where I served as part of a c-130 squadron overseas and in the U.S. While in the military I obtained my private pilot's license. In 1978 I left the military and started working at Boeing in Seattle and teaching flying.

In 1980 I purchased a successful cable TV business in Vernonia that provided a good service to our residents for 47 years. My children attended and graduated from Vernonia schools.

During those same years I was running a business and raising a family, I also volunteered in our community in various community programs, such as the Planning Commission, Airport Committee, and Vernonia Jamboree. For 30 years I have served in a volunteer (unpaid) capacity as the Vernonia Airport manager which on average expends 10 hours per week of my time.

Dale Webb: I am a life long Vernonian. I spent 13 years as a logger and 28 years working for Georgia Pacific at the Wau-na Mill in several converting operations. My expertise was operations optimization and training. I have sat on several boards, North Coast Game Association, Nehalem Watershed Council, Izaak Walton League, and was appointed to the Salmon Trout Advisory Committee by Governors Roberts and Kitzhaber and chaired the committee my final year. I have been a member of the Public Works Committee since 2010 by my recollection.

I have been active in city clean ups for a very long time and have recently donated many hours cleaning streets and city paths, the school parking lot and sidewalks, spreading bark dust at the school, and operating and maintaining the lake pump this year.

I am running for office because I see the need for a stabilizing presence on the Council. Despite what you may hear in the rumor mills, the City is running fairly smoothly and the job now is

VERNONIA'S
voice
reflecting the spirit of our community

Publisher and Managing Editor
Scott Laird
503-367-0098
scott@vernoniasvoice.com

Contributors
Superintendent Aaron Miller
Steve Whiteman

Photography
Jeana Gump
Scott Laird

Want to advertise?
Have an article?
Contact: scott@vernoniasvoice.com

One year subscriptions
(24 issues) \$35

Vernonia's Voice is published
on the 1st and 3rd Thursday
of each month.

Vernonia's Voice, LLC
PO Box 55
Vernonia, OR 97064
503-367-0098

to keep it that way. I believe with clear guidance to our City Administrator our City can continue down this path and continue to grow responsibly, while striving to increase our support of services to our taxpayers.

Richard Traver did not respond to this questionnaire.

2. Please describe how you see the role and responsibilities of the Vernonia City Council?

Rick Hobart: The City Council meets on a regular basis in an open forum to listen to and address the needs and concerns of all. They work alongside the City Administration and staff to ensure the safety and well-being of every citizen. They also develop a fiscal budget that enables all departments to function to the best of their abilities.

Jill Hult: As a current member of Council, I understand the governmental structure of the City. We have a 5 member Council that includes the Mayor. All members are elected by the citizens in a general election. In Vernonia, the Mayor is not the one that conducts the day-to-day operations of the City, rather the en-

continued on page 6



Happy Hour Mon-Fri 4-7

FULL dish SPORTS PACKAGE!

"BIKER FRIENDLY"

- Specialty hamburgers
- 8 Draft beers & mixed drinks
- 5 Craft beers on tap
- Pool tables & satellite TV
- Free Wi-fi
- Beer & Kegs to go

Sun - Thurs 11 AM - Midnight • Fri - Sat 11 AM - 2:30 AM
733 Bridge St, Vernonia • 503-429-9999

Cedar Side Inn



Taco Tuesday
from opening until 9pm
3 hardshell or 1 softshell \$4.25

Ladies' Night
every Thursday 6pm-close

• Free Pool • Free WiFi • Specialty Pizzas

Check our Facebook page for daily specials and upcoming events
756 Bridge Street, Vernonia 503-429-5841