

Official Addresses Voter Registration Confusion *continued from front page*

County. “Every complaint I receive, I take seriously and I investigate it,” says Clack.

He says this year, he found one instance where a voter’s registration card, signed prior to the year 2000, showed the voter registered as a Democrat, but the County had them as unaffiliated. The voter had never noticed it in over 20 years. “It was a user error on our part,” said Clack, but that was the only complaint Clack says he could substantiate as a clerk error. Clack says he did not log the number of complaints he received this year, but that it was “significant.”

Oregon’s Motor Voter program took effect in January 2016, and modernized voter registration in Oregon by providing a secure, simple, and convenient way for more Oregonians to become registered voters. Under the old system, most Oregonians needed to take a separate step to register to vote at the DMV after obtaining or renewing their driver license. Motor Voter makes voter registration automatic, shifting from an opt-in process to an opt-out process. After a qualifying interaction (when an unregistered voter over 16 years old, an Oregon resident, and a U.S. citizen visits the DMV to apply for, renew, or replace

an Oregon drivers’ license, ID card, or permit) at the DMV, eligible Oregonians receive a mailing from the Oregon Elections Division explaining their options for registering to vote:

- Do nothing. You will be registered to vote as a nonaffiliated voter (not a member of a political party).
- Choose a political party by returning the card. Joining a political party allows you to vote in its primary elections.
- Use the card to opt-out and decline to register to vote.

Clack says people who do not respond to the mailing from the Oregon Elections Division and end up registered as unaffiliated, are often the people who file complaints with his office. “If the Secretary of State’s office does not receive that mailer, then by default people are registered as unaffiliated, the state does not choose a party for them.”

Clack says all Columbia County ballots that are returned go through a validation and acceptance process, with signatures hand-checked against the signature card on file for the voter. If the signature does not match those voters receive a letter which prompts the voter to update their signature sample. They have two weeks after the election to provide an updated signature that matches

for the ballot to be counted. He said in the last election 75 ballots were rejected because the signature did not match.

Clack said if voters do not feel comfortable using Vote-By-Mail, they can request a replacement ballot, pick it up at the County Office, fill it out there, and vote in person.

Clack says Motor Voter has increased voter registration figures in Columbia County. When he took over as Election Manager in 2016 there were about 30,000 registered voters; this last election it was just over 39,000. “Voter turnout, by percentage, has dropped because we now have a higher denominator, but those numbers are now starting to increase. People want to get involved in the process, but they just don’t understand how the registration works.”

Oregon Republican Secretary of State Bev Clarno’s office, which oversees voter registration, also dismissed claims that voter’s registration had been changed without their consent. “We don’t change party unless requested by the voter,” said spokesperson Andrea Chiapella in an Oregonian article looking into the issue. “So even if they were inactive for a time, it would not revert to (non-partisan) for any reason other than the voter requesting that change.” In

fact, Clarno’s office recently took a further step and alerted social media companies about the spreading of misinformation about voter registration issues on their platforms, including the Facebook group “My Party Was Changed in Oregon.”

For the May 2020 election 12,235 of Columbia County voters were registered as Democrats, 10,474 as Republicans, and 16,488 were unaffiliated. The County had a 48.26% participation rate in this election, with Democratic voters returning 41.18% of their ballots, Republicans returning 35.13%, and only 23.69% of unaffiliated voters’ ballots returned. Expect to see a much higher turnout in the 2020 general election in November; in the 2016 November election 78.73% of Columbia County voters participated.

Clack did say that he has received numerous requests to change voter’s party registration. Between the Friday prior to the election and when we spoke to him on May 28, Clack said about 250 voters in Columbia County changed their affiliation.

“It’s really just an education issue,” says Clack. He suggests that voters who have questions about their registration go to Secretary of State’s webpage <https://sos.oregon.gov/voting/Pages/myvote.aspx?lang=en> to see how they are registered, and change their affiliation if they would like to.

If you have concerns about your ballot contact Columbia County Elections Manager at (503) 397-8445 or email donald.clack@columbiacountyor.gov.

FORM LB-1 NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING

A public meeting of the Columbia SWCD will be held on 06/17/20 at 3:30 a.m. at SWCD Office p.m.
(Governing body) (Date)

35285 Millard Road St. Helens, Oregon. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the budget for the
(Location)

fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020 as approved by the Columbia SWCD Budget Committee. A summary of
(Municipal corporation)

the budget is presented below. A copy of the budget may be inspected or obtained at 35285 Millard Road St. Helens 97051
(Street address)

between the hours of 8:30 a.m., and 4:30 p.m., or online at www.columbiaswcd.com This
budget is for an annual; biennial budget period. This budget was prepared on a basis of accounting that is: the same as; different than the preceding year. If different, the major changes and their effect on the budget are:

Contact Telephone number E-mail
Nathan Herr, District Manager (503) 433-3205 nathan.herr@columbiaswcd.com

FINANCIAL SUMMARY—RESOURCES			
TOTAL OF ALL FUNDS	Actual Amounts 20_18 -20_19	Adopted Budget This Year: 20_19 -20_20	Approved Budget Next Year: 20_20 -20_21
1. Beginning Fund Balance/Net Working Capital	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00
2. Fees, Licenses, Permits, Fines, Assessments & Other Service Charges	0.00	0.00	0.00
3. Federal, State & all Other Grants, Gifts, Allocations & Donations	1,325,852.00	1,869,319.00	1,578,615.00
4. Revenue from Bonds & Other Debt	0.00	0.00	0.00
5. Interfund Transfers/Internal Service Reimbursements	0.00	0.00	0.00
6. All Other Resources Except Current Year Property Taxes	71,894.00	71,894.00	53,894.00
7. Current Year Property Taxes Estimated to be Received	480,000.00	525,363.00	541,244.00
8. Total Resources—add lines 1 through 7	2,077,746.00	2,666,576.00	2,373,753.00

FINANCIAL SUMMARY—REQUIREMENTS BY OBJECT CLASSIFICATION			
	20_18 -20_19	20_19 -20_20	20_20 -20_21
9. Personnel Services	530,372.00	545,950.00	506,781.00
10. Materials and Services	1,042,374.00	1,645,626.00	1,391,972.00
11. Capital Outlay	110,000.00	80,000.00	80,000.00
12. Debt Service	120,000.00	120,000.00	120,000.00
13. Interfund Transfers	0.00	0.00	0.00
14. Contingencies	100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00
15. Special Payments	0.00	0.00	0.00
16. Unappropriated Ending Balance and Reserved for Future Expenditure	175,000.00	175,000.00	175,000.00
17. Total Requirements—add lines 9 through 16	2,077,746.00	2,666,576.00	2,373,753.00

FINANCIAL SUMMARY—REQUIREMENTS AND FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT EMPLOYEES (FTE) BY ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT OR PROGRAM*			
Name of Organizational Unit or Program FTE for Unit or Program	20_18 -20_19	20_19 -20_20	20_20 -20_21
Name District Operations	220,140.00	219,874.00	267,179.00
FTE	3	3	3.5
Name Field Operations	310,232.00	326,076.00	239,602.00
FTE	4	4	3
Name			
FTE			
Name			
FTE			

150-504-073-2 (Rev. 10-01-19) Form LB-1 (continued on next page)

Not Allocated to Organizational Unit or Program

PROPERTY TAX LEVIES			
	Rate or Amount Imposed	Rate or Amount Imposed	Rate or Amount Approved
Permanent Rate Levy (Rate Limit \$0.10 Per \$1000)	\$0.10/per \$1,000	\$0.10/per \$1,000	\$0.10/per \$1,000
Local Option Levy			
Levy for General Obligation Bonds			

STATEMENT OF INDEBTEDNESS		
Long Term Debt	Estimated Debt Outstanding on July 1	Estimated Debt Authorized, but not Incurred on July 1
General Obligation Bonds		
Other Bonds		
Other Borrowings	145,138.00	
Total	145,138.00	

*If more space is needed to complete any section of this form, use the space below or add sheets.

150-504-073-2 (Rev. 10-01-19) Form LB-1 (continued from previous page)

Vernonia’s Voice is published on the 1st and 3rd Thursday. Look for our next issue on June 18.

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