

# Candidates Respond to Questionnaire for November 8, 2022 Election *continued from front page*

and always will. Of course, there is another more important reason why I find Vernonia so attractive and welcoming and it is the people who live here. I was just recently asked, “Why do you want to be mayor?” My answer was, “I like people.” I try to look for the best in people, as I pioneered the Citizen of the Month Recognition Award at the start of my first term in 2019. Presently the council members participate in the selection process, which heightens their own community involvement.

**Charlie Kibben** – My family has lived in our town for over 20 years. My son attended both the Mist and Vernonia schools. I enjoy hunting, fishing, and golf along with other outdoor activities. I also enjoy talking with people and learning new things. During quiet time you might find me reading a good book. I am a retired combat veteran having served over 34 years in the United States Army retiring at the rank of Colonel. Currently I run a small business in our town. My educational background is in management and leadership having achieved a Doctorate Degree in Management from the University of Phoenix. I have extensive experience in the management and administration of both large and small organizations in both the government and private sector. I presently serve as the President of the Vernonia Senior Center and am a past Commander of the American Legion in Vernonia.

**Dale Webb** – I grew up in Vernonia and have basically lived here my entire life. I graduated from Vernonia High School and attended college for two years. My career goal was to become a wildlife biologist, but I wasn’t the best student and surveying the pay scale for biologists, I turned back to the local woods which offered a stable job. I made my living locally, in the woods as a logger and then retiring from the Georgia Pacific paper mill after 28 years of service. My role at the mill for the last three years was basically being a trouble shooter, which I find is useful as a council person.

I have been a family man raising my son, daughter and two step-daughters in our town. I have a large extended family in town. Having a good sounding board throughout the community to draw from is important to me and I appreciate when people express their issues and concerns.

I am comfortable in the council role, having served two terms and chaired the Salmon Trout Advisory Board for the State of Oregon, being the chapter President of the Izaak Walton League of America, a board member of the North Coast Big-Game Association, and Public Works Committee member have given me the foundation to work effectively with others.

Being a lifetime Vernonian, I un-

derstand what makes our city so special and that is why I want your vote so that I can continue to protect those values into the future.

**Susan Wagner** – I moved to Vernonia from Colorado with my husband and then 5th grade daughter in summer 2006. We were drawn to Vernonia for its location, its people, and because we knew Vernonia would be a great place for our daughter to grow up.

I feel my broad background brings a diverse set of experience and knowledge to contribute to the Council. I’ve worked as a warehouse worker, cashier, secretary, paralegal, and law office manager. I was a special education aide, here in Vernonia as well as in Colorado. I showed up at City Hall to volunteer for Flood Recovery in December 2007, and then was hired by Community Action Team, a local non-profit, who was instrumental in Vernonia’s recovery. I continue to work for CAT assisting residents throughout Columbia, Clatsop and Tillamook counties, and still run my eBay home business, which I have since 1996.

I grew up in an outskirt of Los Angeles, but have lived in small communities since then, by choice.

I was on City Council from 2016-2020. I was on Planning Commission for 6 years prior to that. I was a member of the City of Vernonia Budget Committee for 9 years.

I firmly believe in investing in my community, financially and physically. I love being part of the solution, working with my neighbors, listening to my fellow community members.

I’ve always believed you can’t just say “someone should do something” but be willing to step up and be that someone.

## 2. What do you think are some positive things, or things that are going well in Vernonia? (250 word limit)

**Rick Hobart** – I believe the appearance of the downtown corridor has greatly improved as a result of grant funding, volunteer dedication, and stakeholders investing in their own businesses. Vernonia has become a community that attracts tourists related to many outdoor activities. Our local council worked well with both county and state officials in connecting the newly formed CZ Trail to the Banks-Linear Trail here in our own Anderson Park. Speaking of parks, our city staff, parks committee members, and volunteers have worked hard to improve and maintain our beautiful treasures.

**Charlie Kibben** – Our town is a great place to live. Having lived in other places

throughout the United States and abroad, you can’t beat Vernonia. The city has plenty of pluses. Great community events like Jamboree, Salmon Festival, and Christmas in Vernonia just to mention a few. The town has an exceptional library that provides for all ages. In addition, our town has exceptional support for Seniors through the Vernonia Senior Center and other great volunteers who serve through organizations like the Lions Club and American Legion. The people who care make our town a great place to live.

**Dale Webb** – I believe the values that I grew up with still continue today in Vernonia and that is what continues to make our town special. We still have a considerable volunteer base that creates that special magic around our town, we all need to support their good work.

In regards to the city government, the role of providing services to our residents is being well run. Our water and sewer systems are meeting our needs and we are carefully planning upgrades and expansions as the city grows. We have reserve accounts for both water and sewer funds and this will help avoid large rate jumps in the future.

Our police force is in a tough spot right now, but we are working on a plan for the future that should reduce the up and down staffing issue we have been plagued with for quite some time now.

Streets are a top priority of mine and while we have become ensnared by the ADA ramp debacle that is hitting every city in Oregon, we can see the daylight at the

end of the tunnel. A couple of more years of state grant funding should remove all poor condition streets in Vernonia.

I am working hard to bring back good forest stewardship to our city timberlands. We have close to 100 acres of timber producing lands and I aim to see those assets produce good returns to our citizens in the future. It will take wise management to do that.

**Susan Wagner** – The first time I came to Vernonia, I had been driving around for hours, through many communities, house hunting. I came up 47, over the last hill before town, and I suddenly felt like I’d taken a deep breath of fresh air and could relax because I’d come home. That is still the feeling I get every time I come over that rise.

I’m excited by the businesses in town, old and new. Some close, others open. It seems like there’s always a buzz around town. There are plenty of people milling around downtown, checking into the businesses, window shopping, and partaking in all that Vernonia has to offer.

I’m also pleased that we continue to see new homes being built. While it can be a little concerning when we see new construction, it means that our community is adding to its tax base. With continued moderate growth, Vernonia will continue to be a successful town.

Vernonia has a great core group of involved citizens who support the various fun events in town – like Salmon Festival, Jamboree and Christmas in Vernonia, as

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reflecting the spirit of our community

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