

# New candidate enters race for board seat

By Brian Baldwin  
News Editor

Will there be change in power or will Clackamas keep a long-time representative? Voters will decide in May to elect either student Marlo Smith or keep Chuck Clemans as the community's representative from Oregon City.

Smith announced her candidacy for the Board of Education at the March 9 meeting. She is running against Clemans for the Zone 4 seat of Oregon City. Papers have been filed with the county elections office, and now the race is on to see who will fill the position for the next four years.

The Clackamas Community College Board of Education votes on school business such as tuition increases, approving next year's budget and adopting policy for the college to follow.

"We establish policy as a board; we operate as a board, not individual members," said Clemans. "The individual members really don't have as much authority or power than someone off the street. The only way we can do anything is with an affirmative vote with the majority of the board. We do a lot to collect information, both formally and informally, and then the outcome of that happens at our board meetings."

According to Clemans, the board conducts all business publically with the exception of executive sessions. Executive sessions typically are for limited topics that the board cannot discuss in open session, such as labor negotiations or topics surrounding a student's medical files.

Marlo Smith is a political science student at CCC and plans to soon be at Portland State University. Smith says she is running to try and end corruption and unethical behavior that she sees in the current board as well as end certain events that are happening in the background of the college.

"The Board of Education currently does

not represent in an ethical manner," Smith said. "(An example is) their refusal to answer public queries during the period of time in which they were given. They refuse to give us direct answers at the time. Fiscal responsibility; it's completely irresponsible for them to ask for another bond when it's completely unnecessary for us to need it."

On Smith's campaign platform, she mentions that she will seek to make Clackamas a student-centered institution. She hopes to make the college tuition-free.

"The mission of the college promises the lowest possible tuition. We're not giving that right now. We can run this college tuition-free; it's a complete reality that we could do this by cutting bloated salaries," said Smith. "And that right there gives us all the money we would need to make this a tuition free college. There wouldn't even need to be student fees."

Smith believes that this idea will be very unpopular as the teachers' union receives higher dues from bigger salaries.

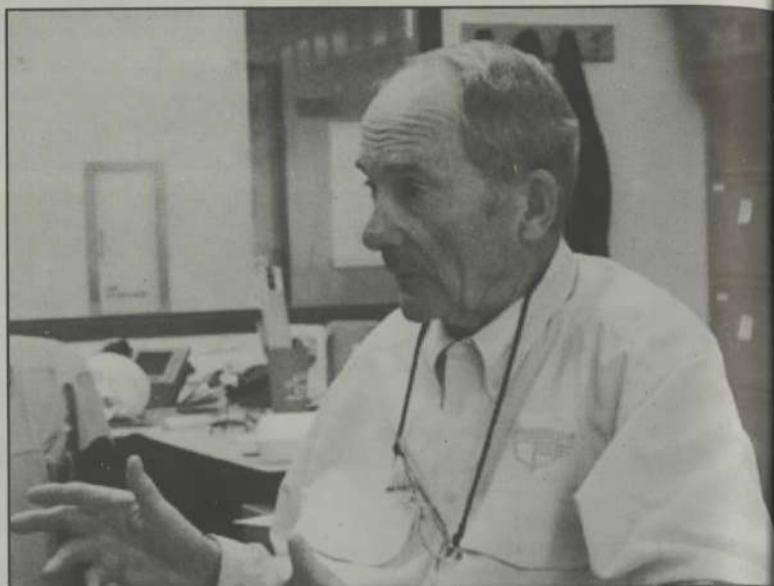
"The higher the salary the more dues they make, so obviously it's benefitting them but not the students or the community that supports the students and college," said Smith.

Another way that Smith is going to try to cut bloated salaries is to stop allowing professors and administrators to double dip.

"After they have retired and are collecting (Public Employees Retirement System) benefits they come back to work at a substantially lowered amount that they're making. But if they are already collecting PERS benefits they don't need to come back and take a job from someone who really needs that job," said Smith.

Smith feels that she is more than qualified to represent students on the Board of Education and still be a full-time student herself.

"I'm doing it already, and I'm a straight 'A' student. I don't see how the requirements of being a board member will be



Michael Bonn Clackamas

Chuck Clemans is a long-time member on the college's Board of Education. He is running for his third term against Marlo Smith.

any different than me being involved in the community, going to the board of education meetings and meeting with students and organizing this campaign," she said.

Smith admits that she isn't acquainted with every department but that will come to her through experience on the board. She also said that she has several experts advising her on subjects such as how to make CCC a tuition-free college and that she will absorb as much information as she can from them.

"You can't have change by electing the same people over and over again," she said. "This will be (Clemans') third term, and he's run things in the old school. You can't have change if people have the same mindset. If you want status quo, you'll elect Chuck Clemans. If you want change, you're going to elect me."

According to Smith, she is still trying to get in contact with Clemans to see if he is willing to participate in a debate to show the differences between their campaigns.

Clemans is a former superintendent of the Oregon City School District and has served on Clackamas' Board of Education for the past ten years. His involvement at Clackamas started in the 80s when he was contacted by the president of CCC. After he retired from Oregon City, he was recruited by then-college president John Kaiser for the school's foundation. He came onto the board in 2001 to fill a vacancy and has been reelected for the past eight years. Now he is running for his third term against one of the students he is representing at this college.

"I think it's great! I'm going to beat her, but I think she's going to get some good experience out of this. Maybe it'll help get some of the issues out there. Running unopposed ... is a luxury so having an opponent is fine with me," said Clemans.

Clemans feels that while he may not be the personal view of the everyday student himself, he understands the operations of the college.

"It's probably a matter of difference. I don't know it from the perspective of sitting in classes in this institution the way a student might. I'm sure I have a greater depth of understanding of this college's operations but I don't have that particular perspective of sitting day after day in classes," said Clemans.

So would that mean that he knows every problem or need that the college has?

"Not necessarily; I learn stuff all the time," he said. "I'm sure that there are needs out there that haven't been directed to me but I think the big needs, the broad brush stroke needs, I have a pretty good feel for. And I pride myself in the degree that I've been able to represent the college at the legislature."

One major issue that has been coming up during the monthly board meetings is community members trying to initiate in public dialogue and debate with the board. Clemans disagrees with that.

"We conduct our meetings in the public, but they are not town hall meetings; the public. There is a big distinction there. We're there to conduct business of the college. Now the public comments section is actually an optional item. I think they are a good idea but by no means are they required. My view of what the public comments portion of the meeting is for is to get information that we otherwise would receive," said Clemans.

"Whether or not someone is a student is not a factor; it's qualifications. Do they have the qualifications to do it irrespective of what their background is or what their outside of being a board member?"



Nathan Sturgess Clackamas Print

Marlo Smith (left), a new candidate running against Clemans, visits with Jenna Schrack, an ASG presidential hopeful. Smith is also a student at CCC.

## Voting dates to remember

April 26, 2011 - Deadline for voter registration.

April 29, 2011 - Local and in-state ballots mailed.

May 17, 2011 - Election day.

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