

## Hood River News

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## Filing Time

March 19 deadline nears to  
enlist for Special Districts ballot

**S**tan Benson of Hood River quietly exited the Hood River County Planning Commission this week after 25 years of service. Benson deserves thanks for a quarter-century of service in what is largely a thankless role.

Communities rely on people serving in appointed positions, such as Planning Commissions for cities and the county, and in elected ones, ranging from county-wide jurisdictions such as Transportation, Library or Parks, to location-specific bodies such as water and fire districts.

The filing deadline is approaching for a busy ballot on the May 19 Special Districts election.

It's a long list, with plenty of opportunities for anyone interested in trying their hand at public service. Does anyone expect a typical board member to last for 25 years? It's unusual, though not rare, but credit goes to anyone who serves with dedication for a term or two in these volunteer positions.

The filing period ends March 19 for the Special District election. Potential candidates can find the filing form on the Hood River County Elections website, hoodriver.co.us/elections. All applications must be in the Elections office no later than 5 p.m. on March 19. For details contact the Hood River County Elections office at 541-386-1442.

Here is the complete list of open positions scheduled for the May 19 ballot:

### HRC Transportation District

Director 1 — unexpired 2-year term  
Directors — three 4-year terms

### HRC School District

Position 1 — 4 year term  
Position 3 — 4 year term  
Position 5 — 4 year term

### Parkdale RFD

Directors — three 4 year terms

### Westside RFD

Directors — three 4 year terms

### Wy'East RFD

Directors — two 4 year terms

### Crystal Springs Water District

Commissioners — three 4 year terms

### Ice Fountain Water District

Commissioners — two 4 year terms

### HRC Library District

Board Members — two 4 year terms

### HRV Parks and Recreation

Board Members — three 4 year terms

### Port of Cascade Locks

Commissioners — three 4 year terms

### Port of Hood River

Commissioners — two 4 year terms

### Odell Sanitary District

Director — one 4 year term

### Parkdale Sanitary District

Director — one 4 year term

Directors — two 2 year unexpired terms

## WHERE TO WRITE

**President** — Barack Obama, White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington D.C., 20500  
E-mail: president@whitehouse.gov

**U.S. Senators** — Sen. Jeff Merkley, 313 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510, phone 202-224-3753  
Sen. Ron Wyden, Dirksen Senate Office Building 221, Washington, D.C., phone 202-224-5244

**2nd Congressional District Representative** — Greg Walden, 14 N. Central Ave., Suite 112, Medford, OR 97504. Phone: 541-776-4646; E-mail: www.walden.house.gov/contactgreg

**Governor** — Kate Brown, 254 State Capitol, Salem, OR 97310. Phone: 503-378-3111; E-mail: www.governor.state.or.us/email.htm

## Our readers write

### It goes both ways

Thanks to our capitalist economy and the Supreme Court's ruling in Citizens United, the Koch Brothers can spend hundreds of millions of private and corporate dollars to affect elections and push their agenda for the Keystone Pipeline and unrestricted petroleum exploration.

Bill Gates, perhaps one of the greatest innovators of our generation, is choosing to use the privately-earned wealth he achieved through our capitalist economy to fund an education agenda whose purpose is the betterment of our children, culture, and economy.

Man, what a jerk.

Steve Kaplan  
Hood River

### Boiling Frogs

I always thought that was a funny story, the one about the boiling frog — put a frog in boiling water, he'll jump out, but if you put him in cold water that is slowly heated, he will be cooked to death. And scientists have shown this to be true. That poor, foolish frog!

Ooooh, wait a minute, that sounds familiar. Scientist tell us that planet is warming, that the result will be catastrophic. Feel the heat?

So long salmon . . . birds . . . water . . . our children's future . . .

Of course, Greg Walden could turn down the burner. It's as simple as people speaking up. Demanding he take action. Like introducing a bill that charges a carbon fee at its source and passing the revenue to us (see citizensclimatelobby.org).

But that froggy feeling is good — the warmth is so soothing . . . I can't be bothered, it's too complicated, Greg's my friend, it's a big conspiracy . . . Bubble, bubble . . .

Lawrence Jones  
Hood River

### Increase oil train reporting

The Hood River News needs to up its journalism game with its oil train reporting. There is no bigger threat to our way of life right now; an oil train derailing would do to our economy what the BP spill did to the Gulf Coast. Re the story in the Feb. 21 issue:

Headline says the issue is "heating up again." This implies it had cooled off. The only thing that cooled off was the HRN's attention to the threat.

The story's second graph: "... last

week Oregon Public Broadcasting reported..." That's basically the story, that OPB did a story. It should have been the HRN's story to break, not OPB last week.

It was over the discovery that Union Pacific is running 7 to 10 mile-long trains full of tar sands oil through the Gorge. Apparently, shockingly, neither the railroad nor the oil companies are required to inform the states of Oregon or Washington when these trains are coming that might have a "propensity to explode during derailment." That's Bakken crude from North Dakota, which is also coming through.

Tar sands oil from Canada sinks, to remain a black toxic blob in the river forever. The HRN says the OPB report doesn't say how many of these trains are coming through. "Spill planners" for the states, according to the story, didn't know there has been an increase since November.

Somebody knows how many of these trains are coming through, and whether they are carrying explosive oil or toxic goo. The Hood River News needs to chase these questions. It's the issue of our time, and the newspaper needs to lead.

Sam Moses  
White Salmon

### Reform chemical safety

The need for chemical safety reform is growing increasingly urgent. Most chemicals have never been tested for possible health impacts, even as research shows that babies in the womb typically carry dozens of toxic chemicals and pollutants in their bodies.

We have outdated legislation at the federal level (TSCA, the Toxic Substances Control Act), and industry spends untold millions yearly to prevent updating. TSCA makes it so difficult to prove harm from a chemical that, since it was passed in 1976, companies have only had to test about 3 percent of the 85,000 chemicals available for commercial use.

Because of this failure at the federal level, it is up to individual states to pass legislation to protect the public.

Children are known to be especially vulnerable to the adverse effect of chemical exposures, yet they have exposures to both known and unknown toxicants in everyday products they play with, chew on, bathe with and sleep on.

The value of prevention should be obvious. It is far wiser and less expensive to prevent exposure to unsafe chemicals and air pollution than to have to treat the serious health problems that they can cause.

For all of these reasons, I'm enthusiastic about a bill recently introduced in the Oregon Legislature to better regulate toxic chemicals to which children are exposed. Toxics Disclosure for Healthy Kids Act (SB478) would require manufacturers to disclose chemicals of concern in children's products and to phase out the use of toxic chemicals in certain products.

We all want what's best for Oregon kids. I know Mark Johnson and Chuck Childsen do too, and I urge them to protect kids' health by passing SB 478.

Bonnie New (MD, MPH)  
Hood River

### Nestlé and water

This letter is a continuation of the letters from David Michalek's and Ryland Moore's views on Nestlé's construction of their water plant in Oregon in the local area. If you look up the word "nestle," it means "to lie in an inconspicuous manner." We just pronounce it "ness-lee."

So the name of the company itself raises suspicions for me. I took a look on the label of one of their water bottles a short time ago. It said on there that they bottle water from a "municipal" in California.

That is just a fancy way of saying they bottle "city water" there and sell it.

Individuals are not companies, and fall under even more laws. Let's not get things out of context. Nestlé is a giant corporation. They are not just under Oregon laws; they are an international company. My humble opinion is to be cautious about allowing a giant like Nestlé to come in and bring their international ways with them. However, if I remember correctly, the construction of this plant is more about JOBS than anything else. Maybe I am wrong?

Mike Teems Jr.  
Mt. Hood-Parkdale

### A non-solution

A response is needed to the article on Feb. 25, "Charge for that carbon." Two students asked for a fee to businesses, releasing carbons into the atmosphere. They want a carbon tax for the State of Oregon.

But the truth is that the sun is the main driver of climate, not man nor carbon dioxide.

Such a tax would be a non-solution for non-problem.

Don Rose, MD  
Hood River



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