

# FORUM

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Below are excerpts of how the candidates responded to some of the evening's questions:

**Regarding support for raising Cottage Grove's fuel tax and a possible bond to fund street repairs:**

Lancaster: I would vote for the tax to increase, but I think it should come down to what the people want.

Roberts: I think the tax should be a little bit higher. We have 29 miles of bad road in Cottage Grove, and doubling the tax will still not be enough. We're going to have to bond for the bigger road projects.

Slay: I approve of both, but the gas tax isn't going to solve everything. A bond is necessary.

DelSol: It makes sense to tax drivers and apply the revenue directly to what the tax is related to, but it still looks like we're going to have to take out bonds.

Cimburke: I hear the concerns that people don't want to pay for something they're not using, but at the same time, that's how taxes work. I want all the roads in my city to be drivable and to stay that way.

Adams: I'm not too sure about raising the gas tax. Cresswell has gas that's already a whole lot cheaper, so what's to say I'm not just going to fill up in Cresswell.

Ehler: I'm fully in support of raising the gas tax, but I think it could be raised a little bit more. I'm not so much in favor of a bond because it only taxes homeowners; it's not spread out equally. But I would support a bond if it had to be done.

**Regarding ways to help the public be more engaged in city government:**

Roberts: There's nothing wrong with the way we do things. Members of the public can come right to the meetings, and their freedom of speech can be heard. Get involved — that's how I got started. It's hard to get up to a podium, but once you get over it, you'll be fine.

Slay: We do our best to make people comfortable, but we have rules to follow too. Sometimes, it takes everything in me to keep my mouth shut, but those are the rules.

DelSol: I hear from a lot of people who feel like they're not heard, like the city overruns them. Not everybody is ready to come to the podium, and not everybody can, so I would like to see more methods. Perhaps a website for discussion of city issues, and maybe more town hall sort of meetings so people can talk about the issues in a less formal setting.

Cimburke: Transparency is what I'm going for, and I think Cottage Grove government has

a pretty good track record. If we're up here making decisions about the citizenry and we don't want them to know, we probably shouldn't be making those decisions.

Adams: I would kind of like to see a comment box where citizens can drop 'em in the box and have their questions asked if they're unable to ask in such a public forum. It's easy to get nervous, to misplace words and feel intimidated.

Ehler: Anybody that knows me knows that I'm easy to talk to, and I listen. We have to. And I give feedback when necessary. If you need to talk, I'm more than willing to listen.

Lancaster: I've been out trying to make contacts with the people already, going out to local businesses. And I'm always open to scheduling meetings with the people.

**Regarding the need to respond to recent acts of theft and violence in Cottage Grove:**

DelSol: The kind of crime we're seeing is a symptom of a bigger American economic and cultural state... Youth is the biggest tragedy — there's a lack of attention, of opportunities and engaging activities. You have to offer an alternative that the youth can get involved in.

Cimburke: People are really angry about their stuff being stolen, and I get it. I'm angry

about it too and want to change some things. Councilor Slay tried to start a neighborhood watch program. I'm in support of something like that, as long as it's not a band of citizens with pitchforks.

Adams: A big part of it is paying attention to your neighborhood. If you see somebody loitering, give the police a call. We need to try to do a better job taking care of each other...and lock your bikes up.

Ehler: We need to work with the police to identify the areas where most of this stuff is going on. We need to hold these people responsible — make 'em clean it, repaint it.

Lancaster: Citizens being able to be secure themselves would be a big step. And we could look into more detective training so police are not just there to show up and are able to track people down.

Roberts: We've got quite a crime problem; there's been a lot of property crime. We need to give Chief Shepherd a chance to get some of his new ideas up and running. The Police Department is the biggest thing we've got going in terms of our budget, but they could still use more money.

Slay: It's hard to get a community program going without community involvement. It's a huge hindrance. There has to be a collaborative effort between the city and its citizens.

# OFFBEAT

Continued from page 4A

wasn't high on the court's priority list; in that violent age, getting shot in a gun duel barely even counted as a killing, and it was only because of the victim's young age that it was being investigated at all. Predictably, it was decided that the case was really California's after all, and California having already decided that it was Oregon's, that was effectively an end to the case.

Only, of course, it wasn't really the end.

The real end would come three months later. Henry Laws'

two sons were out in a pasture near their cabin, butchering a steer. They had a quarter of beef hanging on a tree near a wagon to haul it, and both of them were standing in the wagon cutting up the meat when the rimrock above and behind them started crackling with rifle fire.

Lee Laws went down like a stone, shot through the heart. Joe Laws, the younger brother, took cover behind the wagon; atop the rimrock he could see the horsemen, masks over their faces, Winchesters at their shoulders. "You would shoot a boy, you cowards!" he screamed

at them.

Bullets were flying all around him, breaking spokes off the wagon wheels and kicking up puffs of dirt by his feet. Then one of them shattered his leg.

After that, the masked riders rode away. A third boy, also named Henry Laws (probably a third brother, although that isn't clear) hurried out of the cabin and brought the badly crippled Joe in to do what he could.

Joe, as you will have guessed from the message on the tombstone, subsequently died of his injuries. Their father, Henry C. Laws, heard about the murders

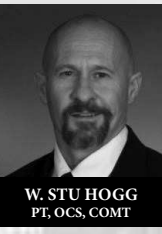
during a trip to Ashland for supplies, when he stopped at a settlement along the way. He sent word for his family to join him there, and they shook the dust of their old homestead from their feet — never returning again.

As for the Calavans, they apparently left the area as well; nothing further is heard about them.

But someone must have remained behind who cared about the Laws boys enough to carve that dramatic epitaph on their shared headstone.

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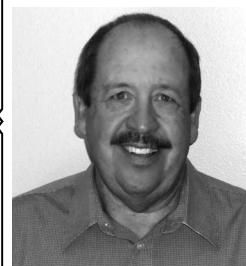
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The City of Cottage Grove Planning Commission has two vacancies to this volunteer body. The Commissioners are appointed by the City Council. The Planning Commission meets twice a month on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday evenings. Incumbents are eligible to reapply. People interested in applying for these positions need to complete an Planning Commission application available at the Community Development Department at City Hall or online at: [www.cottagegrove.org/pc](http://www.cottagegrove.org/pc). The deadline for receiving applications is **October 21<sup>st</sup> at 5 pm**. For further information please contact the Community Development Department at 942-3340.

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