

# Candidates for Columbia County Commissioner answer questions

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benefit the county. They need to set an example as far as leadership and stay in communication with the citizens and the community.



Judith Taylor

**4. Do you think the incumbents are meeting those responsibilities?**

Heimuller (D) – I think for the most part they are very focused on policy and work very well together lately. There used to be a lot more 2-1 votes. On the Columbia 9-1-1 Communications District board we debate, respect and support the decisions

that are made.

Moon (D) – To this point, I don't know. For the last four years I've had so much going on in Rainier, where I'm on the city council, that I haven't had time to look closely at the activities of the commissioners.

Sykes (D) – I think they do the best they can with funding down and consistent funding cuts. Each commissioner has characteristics that make a contribution to the county; Rita has always been available to the public, Earl's background in education is an asset and Tony has done a good job for the county with economic development.

Taylor (D) – I think sometimes the commission may stay in a comfort zone, but I hope to be able to bring new energy and help in a collaborative effort.

Dorschler (R) – I'm sure they are and they will need to work together on the economy.

Luttrell (R) – I don't know the current commissioners now. I think Rita has been listening. I have not seen Tony or Earl much so I can't say.

what we have and do the best job we can.



Terry Luttrell

**6. Nehalem Valley feels it gets little in the way of county services. What would you do to change this perception?**

Heimuller (D) – Number one, I am a Columbia County resident. My family has been here since the mid-1880s. A job created in Vernonia is a job for all of us in the county. I have recognized that students and commuters need transportation so we (Columbia County Rider) started applying for grants and added those morning, evening, plus now mid-day rides to Washington County, plus flex routes Tuesday and Thursday to St. Helens via Scappoose. It feels like Vernonia gets ignored. I will ignore nobody in this county, I'll be on the road to advocate for every need up here.

Moon (D) – I have been in Vernonia, I've been to Birkenfeld. I want to come to town and talk to people. Commissioners have to be out there to talk to people. Sykes (D) – It's important to understand what the needs are. One example is PCC (Portland Community College). We pay in but don't get services locally, but when we do, the classes don't get filled. If there are gaps in county services locally we need to figure out how to remedy the gaps.

Taylor (D) – By building better communication, listening to concerns. It's wonderful how the people there have managed to pull it together as a community. I would listen, follow-up, show up. We really need to get broadband throughout the county, and better use of technology, for information sharing.

Dorschler (R) – Be sure I'm hearing what they want. Whatever they see as their vision, we should help them create the atmosphere and with new schools and a safe environment and that businesses will want to come to Vernonia. I hope to see that community thrive again.

Luttrell (R) – We cannot forget the valley is part of our county and we need to do everything we can to help them feel included. I lived in Vernonia so I know something of this.

**7. Anything you'd like to tell our readers (plans, directions, etc.)?**

Heimuller (D) – I'd like to say that as far as I'm concerned Columbia County is my home and I will work together with all folks, port, cities, and PUDs to make this a good place for jobs to come.

Moon (D) – I want to look into senior citizens and veterans to be sure they are being handled appropriately and fairly. I met with some vets the other day and I heard that Joseph Pyle is way overworked and needs some help.

Sykes (D) – I have watched Vernonia's transition; downtown improvements, Vernonia Community Learning Center, then flooding happened and everyone survived (though with repercussions). But prospects are bright for the future and there are a lot of good things happening there, like the new schools, and I'd like to help that progress.

Taylor (D) – I'm passionate about the way we can thrive, so we can work in our communities, raise our families, access services. With enough people to care and step up to the plate, we can make it happen.

Dorschler (R) – If I'm elected commissioner, I will work

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Glenn Dorschler

**5. What improvements or changes would you like to see in county government?**

Heimuller (D) – It's so important that the budget be transparent so people can trust government, it has to be clear. I really

want to get the budget to the place where it can be understood. I would like to be able to show anyone exactly where the money comes from and where it goes. As county government we're all working for the good of every citizen in the county and we should share the resources to meet the needs.

Moon (D) – I would like to see funding for the Columbia County Sheriff's Office, a safe community, and secure jobs. If problems come up, I find it intriguing, I like finding answers. I don't like someone taking advantage of someone else.

Sykes (D) – Use of technology. There are some great tools available now to help the county-wide decisions; such as website polling. That doesn't replace other tools, though. It's important that folks participate in government. Sometimes it's seen as a barrier to involve more people in the process and it can slow down the process, but it gives you better results that will be more acceptable.

Taylor (D) – More connections, more listening to constituents and citizens...practical public policy...measurable goals.

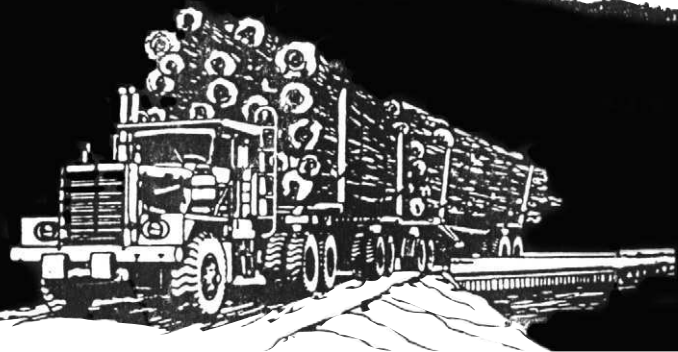
Dorschler (R) – What I would do is be out, meet with leaders in each city. I think the commissioners and the county should be behind every city with jobs, hope and public safety. I would be on the job 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, I would always be on-call.

Luttrell (R) – There needs to be permanent funding for the Columbia County Sheriff's Department. I'd like to see that the people we have do a quality job. We need to take

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