

County Commissioner Forum

April 13, 2022

Based on the questions asked, I have summarized the responses from each candidate, as best as I can. I have also gathered the individual responses into an overall picture of their views, as a “platform” statement.

I am using first names to identify each response. Each candidate had an opening statement, not included in this report. The questions were rotated down the line of candidates, so each had a turn to “go first”.

POSITION 1

Beth Wytoski

Kit Johnston

Harry Noah

Bob Luoto

POSITION 3

Doris Towery

Mary Starrett

David S Wall (not present)

Question 1: What does the County Commissioner do?

Doris - oversees budget, infrastructure, manage resources, work with city partners, listen to diverse perspectives

Beth - agree with Doris, effective listener, common ground + hard choices, forward thinking, infrastructure

Kit - Budget, HHS (\$48M), land use/YC Planning/Zoning, Responsible with \$\$, Communication

Harry - County staff is ok, opportunities to get Fed funds, work with the community to implement

Bob - Taxpayer dollars, count on county employees, safe roads, public safety

Mary - County is flexible vs State/Fed, responsible to the local people

Question 2: How will you work to heal a divided community?

Beth - nonpartisan office, experience with State of Oregon Majors, share with neighbors, find common ground

Kit - open lines of communication

Harry - slow down and listen, allow credit for ideas

Bob - “divisiveness is the reason I entered the campaign”, work with union/environmental groups

Mary - “collaboration has its place”, “we shouldn’t throw stones”

Doris - listen, folks need to feel heard, hard conversation to find common ground

Question 3: What is the most critical issue and what is your solution?

Kit - Transportation and traffic

Harry - fix infrastructure, homelessness

Bob - Roads, "where are we putting everybody", Redemption Centers

Mary - Foreclosures (17% of property tax > budget), Personnel costs, opioid addiction issues

Doris - infrastructure (water/waste water), Build Back Better \$\$, Regional cooperation

Beth - Planning, work with the cities, Master Plan

Question 4: How will support the Recovery Effort?

Harry - support the trades, teach people skills that are needed/mentorship

Bob - Tax incentives to spur business

Mary - (Rant about the "shut down"), Stop overreach

Doris - opportunity to support SEDCOR, improve bus transportation

Beth - invest in business, like Dayton Dollars, TLT (transient lodging tax)

Kit - (Rant about shut down and State control), Economic Development Center

Question 5: How would address the housing issues?

Bob - incentivize Section 8 housing, expand urban boundaries

Mary - (Rant about restrictive land use/Salem's fault, fees are prohibitive)

Doris - starts with houseless issues, pilot program to make % of every new build affordable

Beth - ADU's, zoning (esp Short term vacation homes), change code language, flip properties to densify population

Kit - employee housing, use Fairgrounds property more efficiently - convert to low income housing/mixed use, move Fairgrounds out into the county

Harry - land availability ie-DOT land, trade/exchange land

Question 6: How has a opposition view changed your mind?

Mary - EX: Marijauna farm issue, personal belief versus the law, what does the law allow? Must follow the law (!!)

Doris - EX: Land transit issue (in Eugene) for bus corridor, took 5 years but had a successful outcome

Beth - EX: Homeless issues with YCAP, "Hard to serve, hard to love"

Kit - EX: Westsider Trail, needed more communication up front, "a farmer who owns 50% of the land along the trail was never informed until the 11th hour" (!!)

Harry - raised to "make your own way", the issues are much more complicated

Bob - EX: forest, stream and land management to clean up the environment

Question 7: Where is the balance between city and county efforts?

Doris - proactive, support city efforts

Beth - need to support urban renewal districts, education and communication leaders

Kit - (Rant about the Newberg URD issue, county owned property by the river) Needs a vote by the county

Harry - "all in" support effort, industrial land versus farm land issues

Bob - complicated with boundary issues, promote business

Mary - People need more information, government doesn't have all the answers

Question 8: When your term ends, what will you have accomplished?

Beth - better parks, infrastructure, \$\$, county staff respect

Kit - Fairgrounds, arena and events center

Harry - "calm down the Hatfield/McCoy atmosphere", handle on the homeless

Bob - better roads, better public safety, "where do we put everybody"

Mary - Children/foster care, protect the addicts, drop in center

Doris - Advocate, obtain infrastructure \$\$, transportation, houseless residence issues

CLOSING STATEMENTS

Kit - Open communication, "I am ready and able to serve"

Harry - Happy Birthday to his wife!

Bob - Excited to be running , wants the county to be better

Mary - Fiscal restraint, wean off grants

Doris - "Well run government can be a force for good"

Beth - Running from a place of love, incredible county assets, experience nonpartisan politics