

Dave Toler

1. Please describe why you are seeking the position of County Commissioner.

After serving one term, I am acutely aware that this position is primarily a County manager position. This is particularly true after significant changes in the administrative structure that was implemented by a previous Board in 2005-2006. At that time, much of the administrative authority in the area of contracts and hiring was transferred from department managers to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). Since then, the vast majority of contracts and intergovernmental agreements that fund our county services are administered directly by the BCC.

In my first term, our County returned public safety to levels not seen in nearly 10 years. We have established record financial reserves and Standard & Poors improved the County's credit rating to an A+, the highest level in recent history. I led the efforts to create nearly 100 new jobs in 2009 and re-open the entire library system. We are moving in a positive direction and there is much yet to be done including long term stable funding for public safety and addressing the unprotected fire service area of our County. I think I am the most qualified candidate to continue along this path.

2. If elected, do you have any specific things you would like to accomplish during your term as Commissioner?

Yes, there are several very critical issues. First, a huge mental health court decision orders that Josephine County bring back mental health services to within the County. This is a legal response to poor decisions made by a past BCC in 2006. The issue is extremely complex with Options, Oregon, and the County involved with existing contracts in jeopardy etc. I have been charged by the BCC to handle this issue and it will take many months to do so. I am working to land a biomass product manufacturer to Josephine County, attract funding to remove Dimmick Towers ( a blight on our city), create more jobs, and achieve stable funding for public safety once and for all.

3. Please provide us with a listing of your prior community and civic involvement in Grants Pass or the County (or other communities).

Rogue Gateway Rotary

The Job Council, Board of Directors

Rogue Valley Council of Governments, Board of Directors

Three Rivers School Board, 1997-2007

Siskiyou Community Health Center, Board of Director, 1994-97

Illinois Valley Community Response Team- 1994-97

4. Please tell us your understanding of the role of Economic Development and what you believe should occur with Economic Development during your term.

The private sector is - and always should be- the primary engine of our local economy. There are two supportive roles that local government can provide to help ensure our local economy is strong. First, we must ensure our business community that basic services are reliable and reasonably priced. We cannot attract and retain family wage jobs unless we have a dependable public safety system, a good transportation system, basic services such as public health and libraries, and perhaps most importantly, a local government that genuinely cares about business development in our community.

Secondly, we do receive approximately \$300,000-\$400,000 a year in economic development funds. In 2009, we utilized \$85,000 for four companies, secured an additional \$3.5 Million in private and public funds and created nearly 100 new jobs in our community. Since these funds are limited, we must ensure they are used effectively to create the most jobs possible. In addition, we significantly increased our Economic Development position that is contracted with SOREDI and that is paying off for our community.

5. What role do you believe Tourism promotion and the Tourism program should play in Josephine County over the next four years?

Tourism will continue to play a large role in our local economy. We need to move toward better collaboration with regional partners in Southern Oregon to attract people to our region. We need to form a more proactive partnership with federal land managers to open up areas to better tourism services and infrastructure. Tourism can provide much more than tourist jobs, it can attract better educated people with higher disposable incomes to move here as retirees, professionals, or small business owners.

6. How do you perceive growth and the impacts of growth on the county. Please describe for us your position on county growth.

Located just north of the largest state in the US, growth is inevitable in Josephine County. What we do as a community can help determine the quality of that growth. I believe it is preferable to emphasize attracting people with middle to higher incomes because the economic impact of that kind of growth can be much more positive for the local economy. The efforts of Evergreen Federal in showcasing public art is just one example of how we can create a community that people of more disposable income find attractive. We have so many natural assets including the rivers and forests. With an effective effort, we can create a place that will ensure quality growth for many years to come.

7. Please let us know your position on the funding of the Sheriff's office. During my first term, we have achieved the best support for our Sheriff that we have seen in nearly 10 years. For the first time in nearly a decade, we have 24 hour phone coverage, jail capacity above 50%, and patrols increased for 20 hours a day. Is our public safety system fully funded? No, but it is at least at levels adequate enough to address the brunt of our public safety issues.

8. Do you believe taxes and fees in the county are too high, too low, or about right, and to what extent do you believe these should be changed? Josephine County citizens pay the lowest tax rate for County services of any other county in Oregon. Any lowering of that rate would be extremely irresponsible. As long as we receive at least 80% of the federal O&C funding, we have no real need to increase taxes. Please see #10 below for more explanation otherwise.

9. What is your position on the formation of a county fire district for those uncovered areas of the county?

The current situation in this unprotected area of the county is simply unacceptable. Before my first term is over, I expect that the County will implement minimum standards for providers. This will address the more egregious situations that are occurring. However, I still believe that in the long run, a fire district is the only way to ensure long term reliable fire service for this area.

10. What county funding mechanism do you propose for county government when O & C money ends in 2012?

While I believe that full O&C payments are unlikely after 2012, I do think there is good reason to believe we will continue to see partial funding. The current funding package ramps down to 70% this next fiscal year and 40% for 2011-12. Our Congressional delegates note that the ramp down for us reflects an inverse increase in funding for other counties across the nation who have never received significant funding from this source. Therefore, the "O&C payments" as we know them will gain new political allies in Congress – albeit at a lower level for us. When we combine 40% O&C payments with some increase in forest activity, I believe there is a viable possibility to secure between 50%-70% of O&C payments. This means that the citizens will face a much lower burden in the future. One thing is certain, our county is in strong financial shape today and we do not need to raise any new taxes if federal funding continues at current levels.

11. Please provide us with any other information you believe makes you the best candidate for the County Commissioner.

It is critical that the business community understands the job description for a Josephine County Commissioner. Our primary task is to manage County services- that is how I spend 90% of my time. When a city manager candidate is interviewed for the job, we don't even bother to ask what political affiliation they are. We want to know what management skills they possess, what they have actually accomplished using those skills, and what their references have to say about their performance. It only makes sense that the business community look at this county manager position in a similar light. You will be glad you did.

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