



VOTER GUIDE
FOR THE
APRIL 5, 2022 ELECTION

Columbia Mayor
Columbia City Council Wards 3 & 4
Columbia School Board
Ballot Issues

League of Women Voters of Columbia-Boone County
lwvcbc@gmail.com, <http://lwvcbc.org/>

CANDIDATES FOR COLUMBIA MAYOR

Randy Minchew

David Seamon

Barbara Buffaloe

Tanya Heath

Maria Oropallo (candidate withdrew from
the race on March 11, 2022)

Candidate for Columbia Mayor – Randy Minchew

Name: Randy Minchew

Qualifications for Office: 40 years small business owner, 30 years of public service to local non profits. Member of Columbia Chamber of Commerce, Home Builders Association.

Website/ Facebook page for Candidate: www.minchewformayor.com / [hMps://www.facebook.com/minchewformayor](https://www.facebook.com/minchewformayor)

Questions and Answers:

1. What do you view as the responsibilities of the Mayor's office? To be the head of the City council and to act as Chief Executive Officer of the City; to preside over council meetings; to provide leadership to council; to represent the municipality at official functions; to carry out the duties of the Head of Council; to represent the municipality at official functions; to perform duties of a member of council; to be the Chief Ambassador for our City and to represent us in matters with State and Federal governments.

What do you think qualifies you to take on these responsibilities? I served on local boards and as President of several Boards and I understand the role of chairing the meetings. I have provided leaders employees of my businesses and committee members of the boards that I have chaired for the last 40 years. I provide leadership to my adult children in their lives as well as a host of people whom I mentor in our community.

What do you see as the top 2-3 issues facing the City of Columbia? • Trash, Public Safety, homelessness/housing. **Why?** I see this as the top 3 because these are the top 3 questions we are asked at every forum and by the hundreds of people I have met with during the campaign

How would you prioritize these issues and address solutions to each? • Trash will be the first issue I want to address because it is the first thing everyone has on their mind. I am going to propose an immediate suspension of the logo bag mandate, propose a five bag limit on weekly trash for each home (no large items w/o a request) and then have the City Manager work with the Solid waste dept to fully staff the non CDL trash worker positions in order to have enough manpower to collect the trash. I will ask the city manager to start the process of developing a long range solution to trash collection that I believe will be a hybrid of roll carts in neighborhoods where it works and trash bags where roll carts would not be functional. • We will set a goal and develop a plan to increase the (net) number of police officers on staff by 8-10 each year for the next 5 years. I will work with the City Council on the Collective Bargaining agreement for the Columbia Police Officers Association and The International Order of Fire Fighter Local 1055 to enhance and improve their Pay and Retirement Plans so that we retain the current staff and the young Men and Women who we hire and train to protect and Serve our citizens. • We will help our private industry partners get the housing supply back to acceptable numbers to help create housing opportunities, we will resource our local non profit agencies and offer guidance/ leadership to help reduce the number of people living on the streets and in downtown Columbia.

Do you believe that climate change is a serious problem for our city, our country, and the world? Do you support the 100% Renewable Energy by 2030 proposal? • I am aware that our planets Climate is changing everyday and that we face some uncertain times if the earths surface temperature continues to rise. I am not sure if I am in agreement with your 2030 proposal because I have not seen a plan where the pathway to accomplish this goal has been developed. I look forward to understanding the LWV's position on this topic and your other concerns for our City if I am elected as The Mayor of Columbia.

Candidate for Columbia Mayor – David Seamon

Name: David Seamon

Qualifications for Office: Member of the CPS Board of Education and chair of CPS Policy Committee; former District 19 Missouri Democratic State Committeeman; U.S. Marine Corps veteran; 10 years of experience in operations/management

Website/ Facebook page for Candidate: www.seamonformayor.com

Questions and Answers:

What do you view as the responsibilities of the Mayor's office? What do you think qualifies you to take on these responsibilities?

The Mayor represents the citizens of Columbia to our community and to those outside, and must lead the City Council with skill, vision, and clear values. The Mayor is key to setting the city's agenda. I have concrete experience governing MO's 5th-largest school district, during a global crisis, and understand all aspects of being an elected representative and the high expectations Columbia has for its leaders.

What do you see as the top 2-3 issues facing the City of Columbia? Why?

Community safety, housing insecurity, and disparities in opportunity are the top three issues facing Columbia. Everyone deserves to be safe in their homes and their neighborhoods, and share in our community's prosperity. From traffic stops to unmatched housing vouchers, the data clearly shows where we're failing.

How would you prioritize these issues and address solutions to each?

I approach all issues with an equity lens. I support community policing and tackling the root causes of violence. I will focus on initiatives designed to pull residents out of poverty, incentivize development of more affordable housing, and invest in youth services, mental health, and our diverse hometown entrepreneurs.

Do you believe that climate change is a serious problem for our city, our country, and the world? Do you support the 100% Renewable Energy by 2030 proposal?

Climate change is urgent, happening now, and affecting Columbia. I support the goal of 100% renewables by 2030 and doing so without inequitably burdening our most vulnerable residents with significantly higher utility costs. This is a conversation that needs to happen now. We can't wait.

Candidate for Columbia Mayor – Barbara Buffaloe

Name: Barbara Buffaloe; BuffaloeForMayor.com and Facebook.com/BuffaloeForMayor

Qualifications for Office: Qualified and registered voter in the City of Columbia since 1998. **Work experience:** University of Missouri, MU Extension, and the City of Columbia.

What do you view as the responsibilities of the Mayor's office? What do you think qualifies you to take on these responsibilities? The Mayor presides over all meetings of the council and serves as the head of the city government for all legal and ceremonial purposes. It is important to note that the Mayor has only one vote on the City Council and has no veto power. The power of the position is that the Mayor sets the tone for the meetings. My personality and experience is why I am qualified to be Mayor and why so many are supportive of my campaign. I worked for the City of Columbia for 11 years and worked under three Mayors and three City Managers. I have a deep understanding of what the roles and responsibilities are for the Mayor and the importance of authentic relationships with the City Manager, City Clerk, and Municipal Judge - the only employees of the City council. I also have a proven record of bringing multiple viewpoints together to move our city forward and will use it to run fair and transparent meetings and business.

What do you see as the top 2-3 issues facing the City of Columbia? Why? One of the top issues facing the City of Columbia is a fractured City Council and polarized national politics that are showing up in our local governance. There is no clear unity on the City Council. Disrespect and unprofessional behavior are the product of dysfunctional relationships. Every council member cares deeply for Columbia. I want to serve as a convener so more time can be spent responding to the needs of our residents. Second, Columbia is experiencing an affordable housing crisis. The entire housing spectrum, from transitional housing for those experiencing homelessness to having market-rate rental housing available for working families, is lacking in inventory. Finally, the City has received \$12.6M and will receive another \$12.6M in the coming year from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). ARPA funds have rules for what they can be used for and include a variety of eligible activities.

How would you prioritize these issues and address solutions to each? Clear communications and priority-setting work sessions will help repair our fractured City Council. I will host a City Council retreat within the first few months where Council members and City administration sit down and discuss their priorities. Knowing the priorities, seeing where we have connections, and clearly working on potential solutions will allow members to support one another and the staff. This will also result in less contentious City Council meetings because hurdles and speed bumps will be addressed beforehand at the retreat and work sessions. For our affordable housing crisis, I would champion the city coordinating the local stakeholders already working in this space. My priority actions can be found here: <https://buffaloeformayor.com/2022/02/13/what-i-am-advocating-for/>. Since the announcement of the ARPA funds, the City Council has already allocated \$12.5 million to help address the following priority areas: Homelessness, Mental health rapid access, Community violence, and Workforce development. I support the recommendation from City staff that the remaining funds be distributed based on public input through a robust community engagement process.

Do you believe that climate change is a serious problem for our city, our country, and the world? Do you support the 100% Renewable Energy by 2030 proposal? Yes, climate change is a serious problem. I helped develop Columbia's Climate Action & Adaptation Plan (CAAP) - the roadmap for how we can reduce our local emissions and prepare for an already changing climate - and support its implementation. One of the priority actions in the plan is to invest in 100% renewable energy and support programs that increase energy conservation and grid resilience.

Candidate for Columbia Mayor – Tanya Heath

Name: Tanya Heath

Qualifications for Office: I have a 30-year career in Advertising including sales, teaching and a wellness business. I was born and raised in Columbia and I graduated from Hickman and then MU. I was a 4-H Leader, on the Board of West Broadway Swim Club and a 28-year member of Community United Methodist Church. I get along with people in all parts of Columbia. I represent the regular Columbian, not special interest groups.

Website/ Facebook page for Candidate: heathformayor.com
[Facebook.com/tanyaheathformayor](https://www.facebook.com/tanyaheathformayor)

Questions and Answers:

What do you view as the responsibilities of the Mayor's office? What do you think qualifies you to take on these responsibilities?

To understand the needs of the City, get input and create effective policies. My 30-year career helps me think strategically and by living in Columbia for 50+ years, I would focus on long-term solutions.

What do you see as the top 2-3 issues facing the City of Columbia? Why?

Hiring, safety and handling a growing population. We are short staffed and Baby Boomers are retiring. We are on I-70 and 63 so we have a lot of drugs come into our City, mental health issues and violence. We are going to continue to grow because we are a great City.

How would you prioritize these issues and address solutions to each?

I would focus on hiring, safety and be proactive in figuring what the future stresses to the City are with a growing population and then look for proactive solutions from examples of other cities with 200,000 residents.

Do you believe that climate change is a serious problem for our city, our country, and the world? Do you support the 100% Renewable Energy by 2030 proposal?

I need specifics for how this is going to affect the average Columbian before I can give an intelligent answer. China has the Cobalt, they have human rights issues. Car batteries die, go into the ground and pollute the water. How much solar do we need on our house to make up the difference? And special phone metals are in short supply.

CANDIDATES FOR COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL

WARD 3

Karl Skala

Roy Lovelady

WARD 4

Erica Pefferman

Nick Foster

Candidate for Columbia City Council, Ward 3 - Karl Skala

Name: Karl Skala

Qualifications: I am a Marine Corps Veteran, husband, father of three, grandfather of two, four-term Third Ward City Councilman and Columbia's Mayor Pro Tem. I have lived in Columbia for 42 years. I retired from the University of Missouri after a career in cross-disciplinary behavioral and biomedical research. I am past Vice-Chair and 7-year member of the Columbia Planning and Zoning Commission, and past Chair and 13-year member of the Columbia/Boone County Environment and Energy Commission. I am also a 12-year member of Columbia Chamber of Commerce and its Government Affairs Committee and represent the City of Columbia on several panels for the National League of Cities. For more information please go to <https://skalaforcouncil.org/>.

Website/Facebook page for candidate: <https://skalaforcouncil.org/>

Questions and Answers:

What do you understand as the role of the city council? What qualifies you for this role? The City Council's role is to represent constituents, to establish policy and to legislate. Council members keep in touch with the needs and desires of their districts' residents and bring that awareness to decision-making about the city's policies, ordinances and budget. City Council members are not directly involved in the implementation of city policies—that is the job of the City Manager and staff—but they serve as a conduit of information between their constituents and the City Manager. The Council also hires and oversees the City Manager, City Clerk, and Municipal Judge. I have extensive experience on the council and have worked with 5 city managers to improve city services, especially in the 3rd Ward. I understand the need for the Council to cultivate city-wide representative consensus and develop unselfish compromises to reach equitable community solutions.

Most pressing issues and how do you think they should be addressed? Public Safety, Affordable Housing and Climate Change. **Public Safety:** continue to implement previous recommendations to approach violence as a public health issue and coordinate job training programs, and follow through on the Council's priorities for spending \$12.5 million in federal ARPA funding: 1) a resource center for homelessness and housing insecurity; 2) a rapid access center to provide 24/7 mental health resources; 3) a process to combat community violence; and 4) barrier-free workforce development programs. Since I was first elected to the City Council, police personnel have increased by 18% and fire personnel by 13%. I will continue to support public safety recruitment efforts. **Affordable Housing:** continue to work with and fund nonprofits and the Columbia Housing Authority; advocate for incentive-based inclusionary zoning to encourage developers to include affordable housing; re-evaluate zoning regulations for lot sizes and accessory dwelling units to cut housing costs. **Climate Change:** Continue to support and endorse the work of the Columbia Environment and Climate Commission and its Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP). Advocate for advancing the city's target date for 100% renewable energy to 2030.

Priorities and how would you go about advancing them as part of the city council?

Public Safety: add more officers and officer training to enhance our community policing vision; provide for "violence de-escalation personnel" and enhanced mental health interventions; provide funding for an additional fire station. **Roads, Sidewalks, and Streetlights:** continue to advocate for a fair share of city funding for 3rd Ward roads, sidewalks, parks, and trails; enhance energy efficient street lighting as an inexpensive neighborhood security solution. **Implement neighborhood protections** outlined in the city's "Columbia Imagined" plan and Unified Development Code (UDC); create and fund the Department of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Candidate for Columbia City Council, Ward 3 – Roy Lovelady

Name: Roy Lovelady

Qualifications:

Website/Facebook page for candidate: <https://www.facebook.com/lovelady4council>

Questions and Answers:

What do you understand as the role of the city council? What qualifies you for this role? I'll give the basic answer: the city council's role is to communicate with the citizens of its ward as well as outside its ward, to make decisions on the budget and create policies and ordinances. To give an opinion during work session and help everyone achieve a better way of life for all.

What do you see as the two or three most pressing issues facing the city council in the future? How do you think those issues should be addressed?

Trash . This will take small steps. 1 let the trash in all bags be picked up for now but still having to call about large pick up items, knowing the petition was submitted allowing it to get to ballot and be voted on by the citizens and then implement what they voted on, which i see as a hybrid mode of pay as you throw and roll carts. yes it will cost as the city will have to buy new trucks but if the system is effective it will be worth it.

Communication Because communication throughout the city from an outside perspective seems to not be working. Things aren't getting done as fast as they can. the process for me to talk to a city work is as follows contact city staff, they as approval from city manager he either say yes or no then contact established then cc everyone it pertains to on email, While i understand keeping track that a tedious process. Another form of communication problem in my opinion is from the city to its citizens, important info goes in 1 of 3 locations: facebook, city website, and newsletter that comes with your bill. if you are not following facebook you miss it, website is difficult to navigate and when my bill comes it's my main focus. My goal would be reaching all and in a timely manner.

Safety and crime. Crime is a public health issue, and people who lack resources create the most crime statistics say. Well columbia has definitely had its fair share of crime lately from shootings, drugs, robbing, car break ins, ect. We should be looking at the data and seeing how we can correct the problem throughout the city, not just downtown. We need sidewalks for safer neighborhoods, we need better parks to give children and families safer places to attend, we need resource centers and community centers. Columbia is a wealthy city with lots of resources but there are lots of obstacles in their way that make it harder to receive help. We have to start with some small thing to fix the bigger picture. If nothing changes then nothing changes.

What would be your priorities and how would you go about advancing these priorities as part of the city council?

My priorities would be listening to the people and pressing the issues forward that directly affect my ward and the city as a whole. I'd plan to do so by keeping in contact with citizens , office hours, newsletters, email appearances being boots on the ground and community driven as I already am.

Candidate for Columbia City Council, Ward 4 – Erica Pefferman

Name: Erica Pefferman

Qualifications: I'm not a politician. I'm a business woman, a very active member of our community who has a great deal of experience serving on governing boards, and a mother of five. My only agenda is to use common sense strategies to ensure Columbia remains a place where families can live, learn, and prosper.

Website/Facebook page for candidate: <https://www.ericaforcolumbia.com/>
<https://www.facebook.com/ericaforcolumbia>

Questions and Answers:

What do you understand as the role of the city council? What qualifies you for this role?

City Council's role is to set policy, cast vision, and direct the city manager. I am qualified for this role as I have 16 years of experience serving on governing boards for several non-profits as well as being a local small business owner with 14 full time employees. I know what the responsibility feels like to protect the mission and vision of an organization and to resource the executive director with who and what they need to be successful.

What do you see as the two or three most pressing issues facing the city council in the future? How do you think those issues should be addressed?

The most pressing issues facing the city right now is a lack of affordable housing, creating a sustainable workforce, and public safety. These issues should be addressed by directing policy and budgetary funds towards solutions reached by a healthy collaboration of city council members and staff.

What would be your priorities and how would you go about advancing these priorities as part of the city council?

My priorities would be to first and foremost help establish a collaborative and healthy working environment between council members and the city manager. This will be required to get any other initiatives done including pursuing affordable housing solutions, homelessness solutions, the 24 hour mental health crisis center, and the safety concerns of our citizens.

Candidate for Columbia City Council, Ward 4 – Nick Foster

Name: Nick Foster

Qualifications: Twenty years as a nonprofit leader, many years of leadership in churches previously. As executive director of Voluntary Action Center came to a deep understanding of the city of Columbia, its strengths, challenges, and opportunities. Following retirement, still very active with local groups to address community needs.

Website/Facebook page for candidate: fosterforfourth.com, facebook.com/fosterforfourth

Questions and Answers:

What do you understand as the role of the city council? What qualifies you for this role?

The essential role of city council is to establish policy for carrying out the functions of city government. The council executes policy through instruction of the city manager who oversees the work of city staff to follow established policies. Having worked with three nonprofit boards, a similar arrangement, I am prepared to hear all points of view and work successfully toward consensus. My life has been a life of service. Government's role is about the provision of services to community residents. I know how to provide services and believe service on Columbia's city council is a role I will fill well.

What do you see as the two or three most pressing issues facing the city council in the future? How do you think those issues should be addressed?

Please see my answers to #3 below. Underlying many challenges is the nature of our community's growth. The city must work with county and regional leadership to address adequate housing, infrastructure, and transportation, among other issues, while maintaining the character of the city we love and responding adequately to the needs of current and new residents. All these issues are inter-related and impact one another.

What would be your priorities and how would you go about advancing these priorities as part of the city council?

Housing and homelessness: Construction and support for a center for services to the unsheltered. We must give attention also to housing that is affordable for people across the income spectrum. Efforts may include incentivizing development of housing for low-wealth households, creative infill initiatives, and development that includes mixed-income options.

Climate concerns: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and move quickly to renewable energy sources. Columbia's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan provides a roadmap for how we proceed in this regard and council must give full attention to recommendations of the Climate and Environment Commission towards successful implementation.

Mental health: The establishment of a mental health crisis center will be a helpful addition – and a start – to providing adequate mental health services to our community. We need also to convene community experts in the field to chart a comprehensive path forward.

Public safety: We need effective and adequately resourced fire, EMS, and police departments. We need to ask what we want our police officers to do, recruit the very best to do that work, and be sure that all emergency personnel are fairly compensated for their service to the community. We must also address the root causes of violence such as poverty, substance use, lack of access to adequate employment, and mental health concerns.

CANDIDATES FOR COLUMBIA SCHOOL BOARD

Suzette Waters

Blake Willoughby

Andrea Lisenby

Adam Burks

Candidate for Columbia School Board – Suzette Waters

Name: Suzette Waters

Qualification for office:

CPS Graduate - Shepard Elementary, Jefferson Junior and Rock Bridge High

CPS Parent - Grant Elementary, West Middle and Hickman High

CPS Volunteer - Room parent, classroom volunteer, tutor, advocate, PTSA Treasurer, etc., for the past 13 years

Website/Facebook page for candidate: <https://suzette4schoolboard.com>

Questions and Answers:

What do you understand as the role of a school board? What qualifications do you have to perform as a school board member?

A board member's main role is governance. The three ways the BOE governs is by hiring the superintendent, approving the budget and directing policy. Beyond that, however, the board is a liaison between the district and the community and that is where I feel my strengths will play out. I have the time to devote to making connections in the community to serve our students' academic-adjacent needs (mental and behavioral health, disparities in access to tutoring, extracurricular activities, food insecurity, etc). I've committed publicly to being present, if elected, in the school buildings to which I am assigned by attending PTA meetings and faculty/staff meetings monthly.

What do you see as the role of the teacher in the Columbia Public Educational System?

Teachers are the linchpins that hold this whole education machine together. We can have new buildings, relevant curriculum and engaged parents, but if we don't have good teachers children will not get a good education.

Charter schools are being promoted in the MO State Legislature. Do you think there is a role for Charter Schools in Columbia, and how would they be funded and held accountable?

I do not like the idea of charter schools in Columbia for two main reasons. First, charter schools are publicly funded but are not publicly accountable. The group that holds the charter does not have to be local, which means decisions about spending local tax dollars on local students can be made by an out-of-state entity. Second, charters require a duplication of infrastructure that results in more spending on transportation and buildings and less on instruction and extra-curriculars. The dollars we spend on teachers and activities are far more beneficial to students, and that is where we should keep our priority.

Candidate for Columbia School Board – Blake Willoughby

Name: Blake Willoughby

Qualification for office:

I have served on the Columbia School Board for 3 years (2019-2022) and on all three of the major committees of the Board (Policy, Finance, & Long-Range). I also have served on other commissions in Columbia. Beyond my service to my community, I am an instructor at MU and I teach K-12 education majors on the practice of being a culturally competent educator. I am also an educational researcher that conducts research on school board governance and best practices.

Website/Facebook page for candidate: Website: www.Willoughbyforcolumbia.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CPSBlake

Questions and Answers:

What do you understand as the role of a school board? What qualifications do you have to perform as a school board member? The school board has three main roles: (1) Oversight of the Budget; (2) Creation/Review of the District's Policies; and, (3) Oversight of the Superintendent. These three roles allow for the seven members to govern as a body to ensure that public education is being administered effectively and that the public good that the community entrust us with is being operated well by the superintendent. We also enact these roles when engaging with our community to take input and provide context to the work of the district. My qualifications to perform these duties come from my past three years of experience on the Board, my experience on all three of our Board committees, my research on school board governance, and my 50+ hours of open-community forums over the last three years. This experience and actions have equipped me to be the best qualified candidate to ensure that our district can respond to the needs of our students and staff.

What do you see as the role of the teacher in the Columbia Public Educational System? The role of the teacher in CPS is the most vital role in our system. They are one group of our staff members that engages with our students daily to provide instruction, develop relationships, and provide additional support in response to the individual needs of a student. They are the ones enacting our mission, vision, and values daily. Beyond being an educator giving instruction to our students, CPS teachers are mentors to our students, friends to our parents, and valued members of our community giving the most service back than any of us on the Board – that service being the act of ensuring our kids become critically thinking and actively engaged citizens of the United States.

Charter schools are being promoted in the MO State Legislature. Do you think there is a role for Charter Schools in Columbia, and how would they be funded and held accountable? I do not believe there is a need for charter schools in Columbia. We have an alternative variation of charter schools – our lottery schools: Benton Elementary, Locust Elementary, Ridgeway Elementary, and Jeff Middle School. These schools offer specialized areas of focus, while still providing the CPS quality of education to our students. Since the state has allowed the development of charter schools, more of them have closed than have stayed open. Many have been closed due to mismanagement of public funds. A publicly elected board with oversight of the public schools district is the best means to ensure that our community's funding of education is utilized properly. Beyond the mismanagement of funds, some charter schools have been given renewals of their contracts by the State Board of Education even when their academic scores are not better than their local public school district. This shows that the state is not providing the necessary oversight of charter schools and would be a detriment to our community here in Columbia.

Candidate for Columbia School Board – Andrea Lisenby

Name: Andrea Lisenby

Qualification for office:

I've spent the past 7 years volunteering inside many different Columbia Public Schools in various capacities: PTA committee chair on 4 PTAs, weekly classroom volunteer, hands-on help for students, school office work.

My husband and I are business owners. I've had first-hand experience with leading an organization: strong leadership, effective communication, employee retention, balancing a budget.

Most importantly, I'm passionate about public education, serving my community, and ensuring we provide an excellent education to each and every student!

Website/Facebook page for candidate: www.andrealisenby.com; Facebook @LisenbyforCPS

Questions and Answers:

What do you understand as the role of a school board? What qualifications do you have to perform as a school board member?

Per the Missouri School Boards' Association, "Board members are entrusted with one of the most important responsibilities: ensuring that all children in their school district have sufficient opportunities to reach high levels of educational achievement." Board roles and responsibilities include: clarifying district purpose and establishing goals, collaborating with Superintendent, monitoring district performance, connecting with community, and be responsible leaders. I have a passion to serve my community by being an active and hardworking member of our school board. I believe that the strongest leaders lead by serving, empower people to be their best versions of themselves, set clear expectations, and support their team in achieving success. I have experience in corporate leadership roles, as well as owning a small business here in Columbia. The training and hands-on experience that I have overseeing large operations will benefit me helping to support our Superintendent and be a leader in strategic planning. I also have a long history of working well with others. I'm a natural leader and collaborator. We have a large school district and community, and I look forward to the challenge of working with so many diverse people with diverse perspectives!

What do you see as the role of the teacher in the Columbia Public Educational System?

Teachers are the most integral piece of student education. Their role is to educate students in accordance with Missouri state curriculum standards, as established by the district. CPS is fortunate to have an abundance of outstanding educators! They are well-respected, caring, and hard-working professionals. Nearly all of our teachers go above and beyond the call of duty for our students everyday! I've been out in the community and schools meeting with as many teachers and principals as I can. The majority of teachers feel burdened and overwhelmed. I'd like to work with the community and support our Superintendent in finding ways to ease their burdens. I've been brainstorming solutions with many teachers already and would like to work hard in implementing them!

Charter schools are being promoted in the MO State Legislature. Do you think there is a role for Charter Schools in Columbia, and how would they be funded and held accountable?

As a School Board member, I would focus all of my efforts on making Columbia Public Schools the best district in the state of Missouri. Our Columbia community places great value on education and has a history of being very supportive of CPS. There are pros and cons to charter schools. I am actively learning more about the possibilities of charter schools. School Board members are elected by the community, so it's essential that the board work closely with the public, the district, and experts in determining what's best for the Columbia community.

Candidate for Columbia School Board – Adam Burks

Name: Adam Burks

Qualification for office: *Education:* BA Business from Columbia College and MBA from William Woods University

Work Experience: I worked for MidwayUSA as the Safety & Facilities Manager (Hired April 2010)

Volunteer Experience: Boone County Fire Protection District and serve as a Volunteer Captain/Station Manager of Station 13 located north of Columbia on State Route E. (Volunteer since June 2002)

Website/Facebook page for candidate: www.burksforcps.com, facebook.com/burksforcps, aburksforcps@gmail.com

Questions and Answers:

What do you understand as the role of a school board? What qualifications do you have to perform as a school board member? The school board has 5 primary functions. Those functions are: Establish goals and the vision; develops and approves policies; approves the budget proposed, ensures that the budget supports the goals and vision of the school district, and provides supervision and evaluates the Superintendent. Board Members are advocates for the students and works with local, state and federal legislators to secure resources for students success.

The qualifications that I have to serve as a school board member is that I have a passion for serving my community. I will help Columbia Public Schools work towards meeting their vision by providing leadership and strategic planning guidance that I have learned over the years in management. I am committed to listening to everyone in the community, regardless of your background or status. I want to rebuild our community partnerships with students, parents, community members, and our local, state, and federal partners.

What do you see as the role of the teacher in the Columbia Public Educational System?

The Missouri Teaching Standards is what I have adopted as the role of a teacher in the CPS System. This also includes that the educator maintains a high level of professionalism in all matters, both in and out of school and is a role model of the Columbia Public Schools Vision/Mission/Values. Educators should also collaborate and maintain a professional relationship with co-workers and community partners to enhance student learning in the classroom.

Charter schools are being promoted in the MO State Legislature. Do you think there is a role for Charter Schools in Columbia, and how would they be funded and held accountable?

As of today, I am not a supporter of Charter Schools in Columbia. The reasoning why is we have a great education system here in Columbia, it just needs a lot of focus, strong leadership, and board members who are willing to hold administrators accountable for the performance of the district. Failure for board members to provide the right leadership and guidance will result in a continuation of declining district performance and will make Charter Schools easier to be implemented in the district. Charter Schools are held accountable, as well as funded, through laws and regulations outlined in section 160 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri (RSMo). They receive funding by reporting their Average Daily Attendance since they are considered a public education center, just like Columbia Public Schools submit on an annual basis.

BALLOT ISSUES INFORMATION FOR THE APRIL 5th ELECTION

Columbia Public Schools Ballot Issue

QUESTION Shall The School District of Columbia, Boone County, Missouri, issue its general obligation bonds in the amount of Eighty Million Dollars (\$80,000,000) for the purpose of paying costs of acquiring, constructing, improving, extending, repairing, remodeling, renovating, furnishing and equipping new and existing school facilities and acquiring land therefor, including, without limitation, constructing two new elementary schools, enhancing safety and security, improving facilities to comply with accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), renovating and upgrading aging facilities, repairing or replacing roofs, windows, parking lots, and heating and air conditioning, and improving technology?

Information from the Columbia Public Schools:

Q. What is the amount of the proposed bond issue?

A. \$80 million

Q. Will the bond issue require a tax increase?

A. No. A tax levy increase is not necessary to maintain and improve our facilities. The bond will only extend the current debt payoff period.

Q. How is the bond debt paid?

A. Bond debt is paid using the debt service fund. Debt service is one of four funds included in the school district's tax levy. The fund is used to pay principal, interest and fees on outstanding bond issues. The debt service levy is \$0.9719. The addition of the bond will not increase the debt service levy.

Q. What is the difference between a tax levy and a bond issue?

A. By law, bond issues only provide funds for new construction, renovation of existing facilities, technology and the purchase of equipment. Tax levy funds are used to pay for operating costs such as salaries, benefits, materials and supplies. Bond funds cannot be used to pay for operating expenses. The April 5 Election is a bond issue request of voters.

Q. How will the funds be spent?

A. New Construction

- \$25 million for a new elementary school on the John Warner Middle School property
- \$28 million for a new elementary school, including purchase of land, in a location to be determined

Building Additions

- \$15 million for an addition and facility renovation at the Columbia Career Center
- \$4.5 million for a classroom addition to Eliot Battle Elementary School to address continued community growth

Building Improvements

- \$3.5 million for ADA enhancements, facility maintenance and improvements, including roofs, tuckpointing, HVAC and other critical projects

Safety & Security and Technology

- \$2 million for safety and security enhancements, including construction of additional secure vestibule single points of entry
- \$2 million for technology infrastructure needs

Q. Why is there a need for these items?

A. The Board of Education has adopted facility goals based on an evaluation of district facilities. These goals include addressing continued growth in our community; improving the physical and learning environments in all facilities; and increasing the functional life and efficiency of facilities. Additionally, the district's facility plan includes areas of focus on projects to improve accessibility and safety and security across the district.

Boone County and the City of Columbia Ballot Issues

Proposition 1: Shall the **County of Boone** impose a local use tax at the same rate as the local sales tax rate, provided that if the local sales tax rate is reduced or raised by voter approval, the local use tax rate shall also be reduced or raised by the same action?

PROPOSITION 1 Shall the **City of Columbia**, Missouri impose a local use tax at the same rate as the total local sales tax rate, provided that if the local sales tax rate is reduced or raised by voter approval, the local use tax rate shall also be reduced or raised by the same action?

Information provided by Boone County Commissioner Janet Thompson and Columbia Director of Finance Matthew Lue:

On April 5, 2022, voters in Boone County, the City of Columbia, and the City of Ashland will see "Proposition 1" on their ballots. Proposition 1 asks if a "local use tax" should be imposed in each of those jurisdictions. To decide that question, it is helpful to understand what a "use tax" is and how it works.

Currently on the local level, **sales tax** is collected on sales made by local sellers—those who have a physical presence in the jurisdiction. But, when we make a purchase from a seller not located here, no local sales tax is collected at all, neither here nor at the seller's location. For instance, when we buy a book from an online seller who has no physical presence here, we don't pay that local sales tax. But, when we buy the same book from the University Book Store, we pay local sales tax.

In 2018, the United States Supreme Court held that **use tax** could be collected on sales made by a remote seller. The issue had become more important as the way Americans bought and sold products underwent an enormous change. Gone was the time when all books, clothes, sheets, towels, and even lumber for a remodeling job were purchased at a local “brick and mortar” store. Instead, especially with the growth in popularity of the internet, more and more sales were made by companies with no physical presence in the local community. By the time the Supreme Court Wayfair decision was handed down, over 50% of sales nation-wide were made by remote sellers.

At the same time the percentage of online sales are skyrocketing, local governments are still relying on local sales tax to fund core functions of government, from public safety to road and bridge maintenance. In Boone County, for example, almost three quarters of the money required to support those core functions comes from sales tax. The link between these two facts is thus apparent: Without a **use tax** in place, local government is asked to maintain the same level of core services to an expanding population with a revenue stream that decreases with each remote sale that is made.

The impact on local businesses is equally important to recognize. Those brick and mortar businesses that not only grace “Main Street,” but also provide employment to local individuals, both in those businesses and as supporting businesses which repair air conditioning units or plumbing; remodel offices; build homes, or pave parking lots, are often not even considered when a purchase decision is made. They have a distinct competitive disadvantage to those online sellers who currently do not collect local taxes at all. And yet, to deliver their packages, those online sellers utilize the very road and bridge network that sales taxes support; they rely on law enforcement to assist them if “porch pirates” steal their packages, or if their delivery trucks are involved in collisions.

Questions? Janet Thompson jthompson@boonecountymo.org & Matthew Lue matthew.lue@como.gov.

Information from the City of Columbia Website (<https://www.como.gov/use-tax/>)

What is a Use Tax?

A use tax is a local tax on goods purchased from out of state (most often online) for delivery to and use in the City of Columbia. Currently, the City of Columbia collects a 2 percent local tax on all goods and services purchased from local businesses. However, that is not the case for purchases made online from out-of-state vendors.

For example, if a person purchases a piece of furniture at a store located here in Columbia, the vendor collects a state and local sales tax on that item. However, if the same person purchased the same piece of furniture online from a vendor located outside the state of Missouri, the vendor is not required to collect the same local sales tax.

If voters approve Prop 1 on April 5, 2022, a 2 percent local use tax would be collected on goods and services purchased from out-of-state vendors. The revenue generated from the use tax would be allocated in the same manner as the City's local sales tax which funds public safety, public health, streets and sidewalks.

Residents would benefit from a use tax as it is estimated the City would be able to build new fire stations and hire as many as seven new firefighters and eight new police officers, while maintaining these items and positions going forward. The funds could also be used to repave up to 15 lane miles of roads and repair 30 city blocks of sidewalk annually.

The use tax rate would be the exact same as the resident's local sales tax rate. Residents would never have to pay both use and sales tax on the same purchase.

What would a use tax mean for Columbia residents and businesses?

A use tax would eliminate the disparity in tax rates collected by local and out-of-state sellers by imposing the same rate on all sellers.

With no local use tax in place, consumers have an incentive to purchase goods and services from out-of-state vendors instead of buying locally. If voters approve the Prop 1 ballot measure, online, out-of-state purchases would be taxed at the exact same rate as in-state purchases.

It's estimated that the City would collect \$5.6 million annually through the use tax. The funds collected by the use tax would be spent in the same manner as the local sales tax. The use tax funds would be allocated to capital improvements, parks, transportation and the City's general fund. The 50 percent that is allocated to the general fund is then further broken down into public safety, administrative support, health, parks, transportation and capital improvements. The largest piece of the general fund goes to fund public safety (57%).

Funding sources that better reflect consumer behavior

Online shopping has become much more prominent in recent years, and the general trend is that in-store shopping is decreasing steadily. Nationwide, e-commerce sales rose 14.9 percent in 2019 to \$601.7 billion and represented more than 11 percent of total sales.

With the rise in e-commerce, the City is seeing a decline in sales tax growth. To keep pace with this trend, the City must modernize its revenue sources to continue to provide the essential services our residents expect. The City relies heavily on revenues from local sales tax to fund basic services, such as road maintenance and public safety. Because the City doesn't have a use tax in place, Columbia has missed out on approximately \$30 million in tax revenue due to online shopping over the last five years.