



VOTERS GUIDE

**For the Columbia Contested Races
April 4, 2023 ELECTION**

Columbia School Board

Columbia City Council Ward 5

Ballot Issues Information

Voting Information

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

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Voter Information

Candidate for Columbia School Board – Paul Harper

Name: Paul Harper

Qualifications for office: For 7.5 years, I was the general counsel for Missouri State Auditor Nicole Galloway. I reviewed all audits before they were released and worked with the State Auditor's Office to investigate and audit schools and other local political subdivisions and to ensure transparency and accountability of state and local political subdivisions. I would like to put that experience to work serving Columbia Public Schools. Other work experience includes the following: Legal Counsel, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Childhood; Legislative Director, Missouri Department of Revenue; Deputy General Counsel of the Taxation Division, Missouri Department of Revenue; Assistant Attorney General, Attorney General's Office; Special Education Teacher, Jefferson City School District.

Educational Background: University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law—Juris Doctor, with distinction, 2003 University of Missouri-Columbia—Master of Education in Special Education, 1997 Central Methodist College—Bachelor of Arts, Double Major: social science education and business administration, 1993

Website/Facebook page for candidate: Webpage: <https://paulharperforcps.com/> Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VotePaulHarper/>

Questions and Answers:

Columbia Public Schools want to be the best school system in Missouri. What does this mean to you?

The best schools district is one where all students are meeting or exceeding their educational goals. To ensure that we are the best, we need to make sure that we are hiring, retaining, and training the best teachers. That means that we must be a competitive employer, not just locally but state-wide.

What is the role of a school board? The primary role of the school board is to set the framework under which the district must operate and then to make sure that the district is in fact operating under that framework. The school board does that, in part, by setting policies and procedures that the district must follow, and eliminating bureaucratic impediments to teaching and learning. The board also provides financial oversight.

Missouri now allows public taxes to be used for private schools and there are proposals in the Missouri legislature for open enrollment. How can Columbia Public Schools adjust to these kinds of changes? Local tax dollars from the community stay in the community. People move to Columbia in part because we have a great school system. The best thing that the board can do is to continue to work with our stakeholders to improve the district. I believe that Columbia Public Schools will remain a place where parents want to send their children and will continue to attract people to our community.

What are your goals if elected to the Columbia School Board? Our district has great teachers. Our focus should be in providing teachers with the policies and resources that aid them in ensuring student success. We also need to be a competitive employer not just regionally but statewide. In moving forward, we need to be student focused, meeting the students where they are at rather than where we think they should be. Finally, I believe in transparency and accountability, not just in words but in deeds. While we are working for a better district, we must be accountable and transparent to the people. This school district belongs to the people and we should remember that at all times it is accountable to the community. I will prioritize transparency in our school district. I would like to see an accountability portal online for financial data.

Candidate for Columbia School Board – John Potter

Name: John Potter

Qualifications for office: Community leader that has been involved with the district and the community on many issues for the last 2 1/2.

Educational Background: GED

Website/Facebook page for candidate:

Facebook page:

<https://m.facebook.com/111186015186449/>

website:

<https://potterforthepeople.org/>

Facebook CPS Transparency and Accountability group:

<https://m.facebook.com/groups/3762040927227332/?ref=share&mibextid=uc01c0>

Questions and Answers:

Columbia Public Schools want to be the best school system in Missouri. What does this mean to you?

Make district stand out from the crowd because of good work environments, good learning environments and good academic performances. Getting back to the basics, will help make CPS the best school System in Missouri.

What is the role of a school board?

Incorporate community vision of the District in to policy. Oversee physical responsibilities and budgets, manage Community relation.

Missouri now allows public taxes to be used for private schools and there are proposals in the Missouri legislature for open enrollment. How can Columbia Public Schools adjust to these kinds of changes?

Students need more options for lottery schools, STEAM schools. Rebuild trust with the community.

What are your goals if elected to the Columbia School Board?

Creating an educational environment in every classroom. Eliminate SRG in middle school and high school.

Candidate for Columbia School Board – Chris Horn

Name: Chris Horn

Qualifications for office: Board of Education Vice President, Heart of Missouri CASA Board Vice President, prior board service for other community entities. Educational Background: BS in Mathematics – University of Missouri-Columbia

Website/Facebook page for candidate: <https://www.schoolboardchrishorn.com/>;
<https://www.facebook.com/ChrisHornCPSSchoolBoardMember/>

Questions and Answers:

Columbia Public Schools want to be the best school system in Missouri. What does this mean to you?

It means that we are continuously improving in educational opportunities and achievement for our kids while attracting and retaining high quality educators. It means acknowledging our opportunities for improvement. It means being an economic driver in our community by providing jobs, being a critical infrastructural need in a growing community, and developing a workforce to meet the needs of today and tomorrow.

What is the role of a school board?

The school board is a governing body that is accountable for the district's policies, financial stability, and long-range facility needs. It is also responsible for managing the superintendent. The school board also serves as the liaison between the district and the community the district serves and as an advocate for those outside of our community who have an interest in our district.

Missouri now allows public taxes to be used for private schools and there are proposals in the Missouri legislature for open enrollment. How can Columbia Public Schools adjust to these kinds of changes?

By focusing on achieving our mission and vision. We should continue to advocate for the advancement of public education and find opportunities to build bridges towards common ground.

What are your goals if elected to the Columbia School Board?

Effective governance, improved communication and engagement with community, and a renewed focus on academic achievement. Given that five of the seven board members will be in their first term with two of those being new, we will need to focus on how to govern effectively. We will also be more intentional in community outreach and establish meaningful ways of public engagement. Lastly, we will make the achievement of our kids the focal point of all our work.

Candidate for Columbia School Board – James Gordon

Name: James Gordon

Qualifications for office:

Lived in Columbia for over 10 years; Parent of first grader and soon-to-be kindergartener at West Blvd Elem (Title I school); Former college-level instructor at the MU School of Journalism; Current youth advisor, coming-of-age mentor and Sunday School teacher at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbia; Current political strategist and data analyst with a critical, community-oriented lens

Educational Background:

Master of Journalism from the University of Missouri (Columbia, MO) with an emphasis in Data and Accountability Journalism, Bachelors of Arts from Hendrix College in (Conway, AR) with an emphasis in English Literature

High School Diploma from South Conway County Public School District

Website/Facebook page for candidate: jamesgordoncomo.org/
facebook.com/james.gordon.for.cps

Questions and Answers:

Columbia Public Schools want to be the best school system in Missouri. What does this mean to you?

I'm less interested in being the best school system in Missouri and more interested in being the best school system for our community.

What is the role of a school board?

To provide political leadership that calls everyone into cherish our public schools and tend to their problems in a pragmatic way. Our public schools are the roots of our community, a pathway to our collective thriving and the values of our community made material.

Missouri now allows public taxes to be used for private schools and there are proposals in the Missouri legislature for open enrollment. How can Columbia Public Schools adjust to these kinds of changes?

First, take let's name and toxic and destructive politics of Jeff City for what it is. Second, we need more coordination, first, within our district to compensate for the resources we might lose and, second, between leaders in our district and other school district to form an effective coalition against Jeff City's perennial nonsense.

What are your goals if elected to the Columbia School Board?

- Increase educator retention and recruitment (in that order)
- Involve and empower students and educators district policy discussions
- Increase wrap around services
- Eliminate involvement of law enforcement agencies in student disciplinary incidents
- Scheduled accessibility and privacy reviews of our instructional technology and public information systems

Candidate for Columbia School Board – John Lyman

Name: John Lyman

Qualifications for office: Have lived in Columbia since 1986, graduating from Rock Bridge High School in 1998. My wife has taught (18 years) and coached (20 years) at schools across the CPS district, and we have 3 children currently enrolled in CPS: 3rd grade at Paxton Keeley, 6th grade at Smithton, and 9th grade at Hickman.

Educational Background: University of Missouri – Columbia (BA Geography, minor History, 2003)

Website/Facebook page for candidate:

<https://www.johnlymanforcps.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100089319919882>

Questions and Answers:

Columbia Public Schools want to be the best school system in Missouri. What does this mean to you?

Best in the state, means we have the best teachers, staff and administrators, who work together to achieve the goal of preparing our students. We also need to be a welcoming place, for our immense diversity. Regardless of race, color, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, ability, age, or genetic information, CPS welcomes all.

What is the role of a school board?

A school boards job is to govern the school district, ensuring that it is being fiscally responsible, in order to provide the safest, most equitable education possible for their students. The board defines an intended result, and hires administrators to help move the district towards its goals. The board also must listen to all interested parties, and work to bring those parties together to move forward.

Missouri now allows public taxes to be used for private schools and there are proposals in the Missouri legislature for open enrollment. How can Columbia Public Schools adjust to these kinds of changes?

As a graduate of, a husband to a teacher in, and a father to three students attending our public schools, this concerns me. We need to be investing in our public school system. We need to invest in our teachers and staff, providing them the resources they need to prepare our students for life after graduation. We need to invest in our students, especially those in our Title One buildings, making sure they have the same educational experience as every other student in our district. For some, private schools may be the best path. For most, the experiences our students get in our public schools is what gets them ready.

What are your goals if elected to the Columbia School Board?

I want to continue to see the district move Forward, but I want to see a more Together attitude towards that goal. The last few years have seen major divisions in a lot of things, our public education system being one of those. All parties want a strong district that graduates its students and prepares them for life after graduation. We need to be better at listening to all. We won't make everyone happy, but everyone deserves to be heard.

Candidate for Columbia School Board – April Ferrao

Name: April Ferrao

Qualifications for office: I have spent 15 years working in our schools as an advocate for students, parents, and teachers in my various executive and committee roles at Ridgeway, West Middle and Hickman. This has provided me with direct insight into how decisions made at the board and district level directly impact the learning and working environments in the classroom. I have also been attending or watching board meetings for 10 years. I routinely read all board and committee agendas and contracts to stay informed of board operations.

Educational Background: I hold three degrees from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale; Associates in Applied Sciences, Bachelor's Degree in Business and a Masters in Business Administration with an emphasis in Management Information Systems.

Website/Facebook page for candidate: <https://www.april4cps.com/>
<https://www.facebook.com/April4CPS/>

Questions and Answers:

Columbia Public Schools want to be the best school system in Missouri. What does this mean to you?

To be considered the best school system in Missouri we must improve student achievement, but also create a working environment where high quality and experienced teachers desire to work. We must be a district that provides a high-quality educational experience for all students to prepare them for the work force or continuing education.

is the role of a school board? The role of the school board is to provide oversight of district operations, with a focus on students and financial accountability. In order to provide that oversight it is important that board members stay informed of district operations and plans. The board, along with the superintendent, should set clear measurable goals, and review plans and progress towards those goals on a regular basis. Financial decisions should always answer the question: How does this impact student academics? School Board members should also be accessible to the public, including all staff, to receive feedback or to direct community member to the correct resource.

Missouri now allows public taxes to be used for private schools and there are proposals in the Missouri legislature for open enrollment. How can Columbia Public Schools adjust to these kinds of changes? By becoming the best school system in Missouri. If open enrollment passes, we want to be in a position where more families want to send their kids into CPS rather than CPS families sending their students to Ashland or surrounding communities. We must retain and employ highly qualified teachers especially in core areas. In order to do this, we also must provide better pay, more supports in the classroom, and usable benefits for employees. We must continue to offer a wide range of educational opportunities for all students regardless of their zip code and be able to meet students where they are. We need to increase honors level course work at the middle schools to better prepare students for the rigors of AP course work in High School and continue to provide our excellent course offerings at the Career Center to prepare students for the work force directly out of high school.

What are your goals if elected to the Columbia School Board? I have a strong expectation of transparency, honesty and ethical actions on a personal level and that will be a guiding principle in how I serve. I believe all meetings should be easily accessible to all members of the public through live-streaming/cable and recorded for playback later. I believe public information such as contracts approved should be easily found on the CPS website, this is not currently possible. Increased transparency is top goal of mine. I would plan to ask questions, review all contracts, request progress updates to ensure we are working towards my goals of increasing student achievement, improving the learning and working environment, and optimizing our resources, both financial and human.

Candidate for Columbia School Board – Chuck Basye

Name: Charles (Chuck) Basye

Qualifications for office: Resident of the Columbia Public Schools District since 1986, 64 years old, registered voter in Missouri. Up to date on taxes paid. U.S. Marine veteran, 27 years employed with the Federal Aviation Administration, 4 years employed with Lockheed Martin, Inc. and eight years as a Missouri State Representative (6 years on the Elementary and Secondary Education Committee and chair for 3.5 years).

Educational Background: B.S. in Agriculture from the University of Missouri

Facebook page for candidate: Chuck Basye; Website: ChuckBasye47.com

Questions and Answers:

Columbia Public Schools want to be the best school system in Missouri. What does this mean to you?

Columbia Public Schools need drastic improvement in many areas, especially in academic achievement, which presently is very poor. New leadership on the board of education is desperately needed, plus the administration needs a makeover from the superintendent level all the way through most departments. Presently the focus on social justice, diversity, inclusion and equity is unnecessary and needs to be eradicated and replaced on student academic achievement!!

What is the role of a school board?

To lead the district in a totally different direction.

Missouri now allows public taxes to be used for private schools and there are proposals in the Missouri legislature for open enrollment. How can Columbia Public Schools adjust to these kinds of changes?

Columbia Public Schools needs to focus on what is best for students, parents and taxpayers and quit worrying about what the legislature is or isn't doing.

What are your goals if elected to the Columbia School Board?

See the answers above. Plus, provide transparency and accountability to the public and quit treating conservative parents like second class citizens.

Candidate for Columbia City Council Ward 5 – Donald Waterman

Name: Donald Waterman

Education/Qualifications for this office: Bachelor of General Studies (Business focus) 2010; Master of Mental Health Counseling (2013)

Website/Facebook page for candidate: www.donforcomo5th.com / [Donald Waterman for 5th Ward](#)

Questions and Answers:

What are the most important issues facing your ward and how would you address them?

Safety: Where the ward is located, the response time, especially in the Thornbrook subdivision can be lengthy for an incident in progress. Fully staffing the police department will help mitigate that.

Infrastructure: widening Forum to four lanes all the way to Nifong needs to be finished. I understand it's approved, funded and planned. Let's get it done. Continuing the four laning of Nifong to Scott Blvd.

What was recently accomplished helps, but you can see the back-up where it narrows back down to 2 lanes. Also with the Sinclair development, traffic will increase.

Also, the water treatment plant update and the issue with low water pressure in parts of the Thornbrook subdivision are concerns. These need to be addressed.

What priorities should Columbia be focused on?

Helping Columbia grow. Safety is a significant part of it followed by development for housing and being pro-business. If Columbia is going to continue to grow, the jobs need to be here for them as well as affordable housing. Business is where Columbia is going to grow and has to grow. The University is still the largest employer in Columbia, but the largest growth in employment has come from companies such as Veteran's United and Equipment Share. That generates the increased tax revenue that will then let the city contribute more toward the homeless and toward affordable housing on a continuing basis.

There are many Columbia Boards and Commissions. How can their work help guide the City Council's decisions?

Utilize the knowledge of the specialists that make up the boards. It was brought up during an earlier forum that the city is having difficulty filling these boards. Why do we not have interested citizens willing to assist the city with these? Have qualified individuals been asked why they haven't applied? Anecdotally, I was told there are two primary reasons: The council ignores the recommendations of the boards and commissions and that the council leans toward approving candidates that think the same as the council, instead of including a diversity of thought to arrive at solutions that are best for Columbia as a whole.

How will you communicate with your constituents?

Scheduled office hours "5 for the Fifth". I also want to start making the rounds of the local radio and TV stations to discuss issues and decisions on a quarterly basis at a minimum. I think there is not a lot of information being broadcast as to the reasoning behind recent decisions. Don't just make the media rounds during the election cycles.

Secondly, it was suggested during an earlier forum that knocking on doors between election cycles would be a way to keep in touch with the concerns of the ward. I'll commit to that.

Candidate for Columbia City Council Ward 5 – Gregg Bush

Name: Gregg Bush

Education/Qualifications for this office: Illinois Wesleyan University, BFA Theater Arts, 1997 Sinclair School of Nursing, University of Missouri, BSN-Accel, 2012

Website/Facebook page for candidate: GreggBush.com / [Gregg Bush for Columbia City Council](#)

Questions and Answers:

What are the most important issues facing your ward and how would you address them?

As I knock on doors and make phone calls, the two issues I hear from the people of my ward most often are sanitation and stormwater. In regard to sanitation, most people just want the council to make a decision so that we can put the “will they or won't they” roll cart debate to rest. The storm water issue, or more specifically, people’s properties being flooded, is a by-product of the rapid development in the 5th Ward. This is a matter than can be addressed by listening to our boards and commissions when it comes to the impact development will have on storm runoff, by working to ensure that our city departments are adequately funded and staffed by engineers who can manage stormwater, and by investing in the infrastructure that will prevent people’s homes and property from flooding.

What priorities should Columbia be focused on?

The number one priority for Columbia is how to manage growth. Columbia is growing at a rate of 1.37% annually with no sign of slowing down. Whether we are talking about infrastructure, public safety, affordable housing or economic development, every conversation must be guided by the overarching principle of managing our growing community and transitioning into our place as the 4th largest city in Missouri. When we grow, let’s make sure we don’t leave people behind.

There are many Columbia Boards and Commissions. How can their work help guide the City Council’s decisions?

As an RN, I’m practiced in needing the counsel of experts to care for my patients. The Boards and Commissions have the ability to deeply ponder issues that affect our city within a much narrower focus of expertise. Their deliberations and recommendations are instrumental in allowing the City Council to make informed decisions about matters that impact everyone in our city. The Council’s responsibility is to balance the counsel of the experts with the needs and desires of stakeholders.

How will you communicate with your constituents? I will be reachable by email, phone and in-person office hours both centrally and in my ward. I will be available for thoughtful engagement with the community. The best ideas for the future may come from the quiet voice in the back of the room, and I want to hear it.

Columbia PROP 1

Shall the municipality of Columbia, Missouri impose an additional sales tax of three percent (3%) on the retail sale of adult use marijuana? Yes or No

Background information

During the statewide election of November 2022, Missouri voters approved an amendment to the state’s constitution, which made the use and sale of recreational (adult use) marijuana legal in Missouri for adults over the age of 21. Additionally, the amendment placed a 6% statewide sales tax on purchases of recreational marijuana and authorized local governments to add a 3% sales tax.

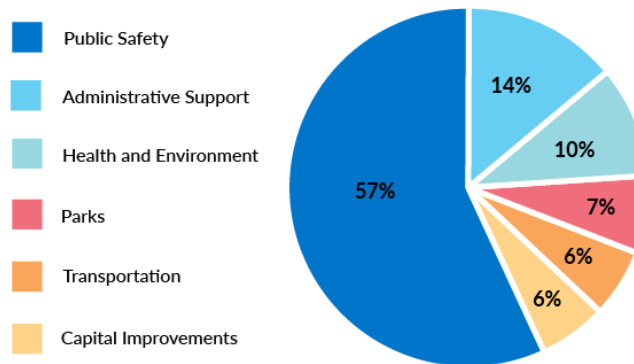
At its Jan. 17, 2023, meeting, Columbia City Council unanimously voted to put a question regarding the additional 3% sales tax on recreational marijuana on the ballot for the April 4 municipal elections. Currently, more than 100 municipalities have a recreational marijuana sales tax question on the April ballot, including Kansas City, Joplin and Jefferson City. Locally, Boone County has its own recreational marijuana sales tax question on the April ballot, as do several municipalities within the county, including Centralia, Sturgeon, Hallsville and Ashland.

Prop 1 Explained

Currently a sales tax of 7.975% is collected on all goods purchased in — or for delivery to — the City of Columbia. The State of Missouri currently collects an additional 6% sales tax on purchases of recreational marijuana.

If voters approve Prop 1, the City of Columbia will collect an additional 3% sales tax on purchases of recreational marijuana made within the City. The funds collected from the tax would be allocated to the City’s general fund. The general fund is then further broken down into public safety, administrative support, health and environment, parks, transportation, and capital improvements. See Chart. If voters approve of the Prop 1 ballot measure, the tax would go into effect Oct. 1, 2023. It is estimated that the City would collect between approximately \$400,000 and \$1 million in the first year of the tax.

General Fund Breakdown



Information from the City of Columbia’s website.

Boone County PROP 1

Shall the County of Boone impose an additional sales tax of three percent (3%) on the retail sales of adult use marijuana? Yes or No

During the statewide election of November 2022, Missouri voters approved an amendment to the state's constitution which made the use and sale of recreational (adult use) marijuana legal in Missouri for adults over the age of 21.

Additionally, the amendment placed a 6% state sales tax on purchases of recreational marijuana and authorized local governments to add a 3% sales tax.

Boone county intends to use the sales tax revenue to offset the costs of processing eligible marijuana-related expungements in order to meet the deadlines imposed by the voter-approved constitutional amendment.

If voters approve Prop 1, Boone County will collect an additional 3% sales tax on purchases of recreational marijuana. The tax, if approved, will not apply to the sale of medical marijuana.

Voters in the Cities of Ashland, Centralia, Columbia, Hallsville, and Sturgeon will see their own recreational marijuana sales tax issue on the April ballot.

Information from the Boone County Commission.

Voter Information

Election Day Voting – April 4 from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. at polling locations and the Boone County Clerk's Office

For more information about address changes, polling locations and other FAQ to go

<https://www.showmeboone.com/clerk/FAQs.asp#showit2vote>

Missouri Voter ID Requirements

To vote in person, you need to present one of the following forms of ID:

- A Missouri Driver license that is not expired;
- A Missouri Nondriver's license that is not expired or does not have an expiration date;
- A U.S. Passport that is not expired;
- A Military ID that is not expired or does not have an expiration date; or,
- A document issued by the United States or state of Missouri that includes your photograph and name that matches your voter registration record. (This document must not be expired or, if it is expired, it expired after the date of the most recent general election).

If you do not have one of the IDs above, **you can still vote** by casting a blue provisional ballot, which will be counted if you come back to your polling location before the close of polls on Election Day with your ID or if your signature matches the signature on file on the voter registration record.

Voting in Person

Any registered voter can vote in person at the Boone County Clerk's Office from March 21 to April 3 until 5:00 p.m. **This is known as no-excuse absentee voting.**

From the sixth Tuesday before Election Day until the second Tuesday before Election Day, eligible voters can cast an absentee ballot at the Boone County Clerk's Office if they can't make it to their polling place due to:

- Absence from Boone County on Election Day;
- Employment as an election judge, first responder, health care worker, or member of law enforcement;
- Incapacity or confinement due to illness or physical disability on election day, including a person who is primarily responsible for the physical care of a person who is incapacitated or confined due to illness or disability and resides at the same address;
- Religious belief or practice;
- Incarceration - if you have retained all other voting qualifications under Missouri law;
- participation in Missouri's [Safe at Home program](#).

Information from the Boone County Clerk's website. Go to - <https://www.showmeboone.com/clerk/> to learn more about the April 4, 2023 election.