

St. Helens mayor, city council positions up for grabs in November

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The May 21 election ballot in Columbia County will be crowded, with county commission races, a Columbia County jail levy, a 5-year local option St. Helens police levy and a Columbia 911 renewal levy that supports the county's sole emergency dispatch agency.

But it's not the last ballot voters will face in 2024.

While it's not known, at press time, whether four-term St. Helens Mayor Rick Scholl will run for another two-year term, a pair of four-year city council positions are up for grabs in November.

At the Nov. 5 election, two positions, presently held by Jessica Chilton and Russell Hubbard, will be up for election. These terms would begin Jan. 1, 2025.

While Chilton has informed the Spotlight she will seek another term, Hubbard said he hasn't made a decision yet.

Scholl's current term began Jan. 1, 2023, and Chilton's term began Jan. 1, 2021.

Following interviews with 10 candidates in mid-September 2023, the city council named Hubbard to fill the remainder of Patrick Birkle's term. Birkle resigned his council seat Aug. 1, 2023, stating that he was unable to meet the obligations of being both a full-time teacher and a city councilor.

There are residency and other requirements to run for one of these positions: Candidates must be 18 years of age or older and be registered to vote in Oregon. Those interested must have resided within the city limits of St. Helens during the 12 months immediately preceding the election.

For information on how to run for these positions, visit www.sthelensoregon.gov/citycouncil/page/city-council-election. Application information can also be obtained at St. Helens City Hall from 8:30 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The filing period begins June 5 and candidates have two options to file: by declaration or by petition.

Filing by declaration requires a \$50 fee, paid at www.municipalonlinepayments.com. The fee is in lieu of obtaining signatures on a petition.

For those interested in filing by petition, petition forms must be approved in writing by the city elections official before you begin to gather signatures. After the petition is approved,

the city elections official will return the form to you to start gathering signatures. Candidates must collect 64 valid signatures to place their name on the ballot.

Required forms must be properly completed and returned to city elections official Kathy Payne, no later than 4 p.m. Aug. 16.

For more information on how to apply for mayor or city councilor, contact Payne at kpayne@sthelensoregon.gov.