



To The Columbia County 911 District

9/25/2025

Dear Board Members,

The executive members of Columbia County's Law Enforcement, Emergency Medical Services, and Fire Service disciplines, humbly serving the citizens of this community, wish to formally express our unified support and dedication to collaborating with the staff of the Columbia County 911 District (the "District") and its newly appointed director.

We believe that cohesive collaboration between Public Safety officials and the District is vital to the success of our combined missions which is to provide and facilitate emergency services to citizens of this county. Dispatchers, Technicians, and administrative staff of the Columbia County 911 district, play a crucial role in providing public safety services while effectively serving our county of approximately 50,063 residents.

Our partnership with the Columbia County 911 District has long been valued and appreciated for the following reasons:

- Established positive relationships between public safety personnel and District members, which are critical during emergency incidents and for providing constructive feedback to continuously improve our collective response.
- A shared institutional knowledge of past and current issues within the county, including what solutions have been tried, what works, and what does not.
- Experience with previous projects and surveys, along with a clear understanding of potential remedies and innovative solutions.
- A common commitment to moving forward together, particularly in addressing and developing realistic strategies to improve radio coverage throughout Columbia County — a crucial factor in safeguarding our first responders and citizens.

With our commitment of support in mind, we also want to convey our genuine commitment to addressing and resolving the known coverage and infrastructure challenges that have yet to be addressed over the past decade. Continuing to placate these known deficiencies will have real world negative effects. We are concerned for our staff and our citizens who are at the most risk.

It is not lost on us that there are numerous challenges requiring investments of time and finances, which will require many difficult decisions. We urge the Board to implement practical and actionable plans to immediately stabilize our communication system. The undersigned wish to support your success in finding solutions to these challenges that affects us as a team.



We believe the new director must be supported and not undermined. We are committed to supporting him as his tenure is less than 60 days. He must be given the latitude to learn his position and fully grasp the extent of the radio infrastructure challenges. We expect the Board to take actionable steps in supporting his role by giving him the financial support needed to fix our outdated and failing system. This support will be essential for him to make effective decisions as he leads the district. As Public Safety administrators we understand what it feels like to be a new leader in an organization. This comes with understanding the challenges of balancing learning a new work culture, past practices, employees' personalities, and much more that is associated with such a position. We must give him some time, latitude and support so that he can guide us through this tumultuous time and deliver us evidenced based solutions that any decision maker would require.

In closing, we are eager and dedicated to assisting the Columbia County 911 District and your motto of "Always There." We want you to be successful in active goal #3 and recognize that to achieve this, everyone must support the new director. It is our belief that to best implement your mission statement, "Providing quality emergency communication services to the public and to emergency service providers in Columbia County," cannot be accomplished without your dedicated and professional staff. From the District Director to the Dispatcher fielding calls for services, for all of us to be successful, we must move forward in a collective effort to provide the best in public safety services to the amazing residents of Columbia County.

With sincere commitment, united in partnership, support and collaboration, the undersigned:



Chief Bruce Holsey
Clatskanie Rural Fire Protection
District

Sheriff Brian Pixley
Columbia County Sheriff's Office

Chief Eric Smythe
Columbia River Fire and Rescue

Chief Joe Kaczinski
Mist-Birkenfeld Rural Fire
Protection District

Chief Jeff Pricher
Scappoose Fire District

Chief Chris Fluellen
Scappoose Police Department

Chief Matthew Smith
St. Helens Police Department

Sergeant Shawn Carnahan
Vernonia Police Department

Chief Greg Brody
Vernonia Fire District