

Letters to the Editor Policy

SIUSLAW NEWS GUIDELINES FOR POLITICAL NEWS COVERAGE, LETTERS and POLITICAL ADVERTISING, NEWS and EDITORIAL COVERAGE

Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor as part of a community discussion of issues on the local, state and national level. Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters need to include full name, address and phone number; only name and city will be printed. Letters should be limited to about 300 words. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received.

Libelous, argumentative and anonymous letters or poetry, or letters from outside our readership area, will not be published.

POLITICAL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

As a general rule, the newspaper does not endorse candidates for local office. Also as a general rule, the newspaper does not cover fundraising dinners or promotional gatherings limited to particular candidates or political parties.

Election-related news coverage will be at the sole discretion of the newspaper's publisher, general manager and editor in the name of newsworthiness, reader interest and information.

Also:

- 1) Election-related letters MUST address pertinent or timely issues of interest to our readers at-large.
- 2) Letters must Not be a part of letter-writing campaigns on behalf of (or by) candidates
- 3) Letters must ensure any information about a candidate is accurate, fair and not from second-hand knowledge or hearsay
- 4) Letters should explain the reasons to support candidates based on personal experience and perspective rather than partisanship and campaign-style rhetoric.
- 6) Candidates themselves may not use the letters to the editor column to outline their views and platforms or to ask for votes; this constitutes paid political advertising.
- 7) The newspaper is likely to reject singular letters to the editor that are "signed" or submitted under the names of multiple authors. We will not publish such letters without information provided that allows us to promptly verify that each signatory is aware of and has agreed to the contents of the letter.
- 8) The newspaper strongly encourages writers to limit letters to about 300 words or less.
- 9) In the case of questionable content (e.g. unfounded allegations, statements of fact that are suspect, or assaults on a candidate's character or moral standards), the newspaper reserves the right to verify such information before publication, or to edit letters. Any changes necessary to render a letter suitable for publication will be reviewed with the writer prior to publication whenever possible.
- 10) All letters must be signed and include the address and telephone number of the writer. Electronic letters must include address and telephone number of the sender. Phone numbers are for questions and verification purposes only and will not be published.

11) As with all letters and advertising content, the newspaper, at the sole discretion of the publisher, general manager and editor, reserves the right to reject any letter that doesn't follow the above criteria.

POLITICAL ADVERTISING

1. All political advertising is charged at the prevailing open rate. (No discounts, special pricing or earned rates.)
2. All political advertising must be paid for in advance. No exceptions.
3. All political advertising must carry a line reading "Authorized By..." or "Paid For By..." If authorized by the candidate, his authorized political committee or their agents, the ad must clearly state such. If not authorized, the ad must clearly and specifically state the name of the person, committee or organization who placed or financed the ad. (Personal identification may be requested.) In the case of citizens' groups, committees and unofficial organizations, these must be established, registered and/or reasonably identifiable to the newspaper's readers. If not, the name of the treasurer or another officer may be required.
4. The phrase "PAID POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT" by itself is insufficient.
5. No political ads may be placed on special discounted pages or as part of any standing advertising features or categories within the newspaper that carry discounted or flat rates or restrictions on advertising. (e.g. page 1, main sports, directories, editorial page, comics page, etc.)
6. There is no guaranteed position or placement offered for political ads. All political ads will be placed ROP – Run of Press – in our normal course of laying out the newspaper.
7. In the case of questionable content (e.g. unfounded allegations, statements of fact that are suspect, or assaults on a candidate's character or moral standards), the newspaper reserves the right to verify such information before publication, or to reject the material.