

Skye Anderson, Columbia Council Questionnaire 2025

What would you like to tell the residents about your experience living in Hickory Ridge Village and Columbia that will help them evaluate you as a candidate for the Board? (Topics: introduce your family, what amenities you enjoy, what Hawthorn Center events you have attended, how you may have reached out to neighbors or other residents for social or neighborhood concerns, etc.)

I've lived in Clarys for 35 years, and, like many residents, it took me 10-15 years to understand the structure of Columbia and all it has to offer – the neighborhoods and villages, the CA amenities. I don't know what the answer is for quicker and wider participation but I have suggested get-togethers like town hall meetings with a designated topic where we can ask questions, brainstorm answers and meet more neighbors.

In the past two years on the CA Board, I have educated myself on the people of CA: I interviewed the ice rink manager, the horse center head, the lady in charge of Kidspace and the person who manages the SportsPark among others like the golf pro – even the border collie who chases away geese on Lake Elkhorn!

I have been on all the village committees: the WAC, the RAC, the AC as chair, the election committee, and I attend nearly all the village events from luncheons to story time to puzzle night to the now-defunct Chick Flicks and wine seminars. I love the pool party!

For the past two years on the CA Board I have held Office Hours weekly and am available to the residents via email or the village office.

What is/are your career area(s) and any other professional experience, and how will that assist you in Board actions and activities? (Topics: prior experience with HOAs, other BODs or other community action groups, any awards or public service recognition, etc.)

I served on my university housing board of directors in graduate school and on the board of a crisis center here in Columbia. In our village, I spent 7 years on the Resident Architecture Committee and 2 years on the Architecture Committee, including as Chair. I also served for 5 years on the village board and this will be my 3rd term on the CA Board. Last year I received the village Volunteer of the Year Award, and finally, I have been on my condo HOA board for 7 years.

I am retired Army and when I was deployed to Afghanistan, I devoured The LOG for news of home: it kept me connected. Being in the military teaches one about leadership. One take-away is:

Be there

Be on time

Be in the right uniform.

I have not missed a meeting in 14 years except when I had two meetings the same evening and had to choose.

I also taught Biology at Howard Community College and my degree in Genetics helped me write about COVID-19. I read and review books and serve as a 'reader' for half a dozen literary awards each year so I don't have the time to read what I want to, very often, between that and my dog training

Based on your knowledge of Hickory Ridge Village Board responsibilities, what issues concern you and what ideas would you contribute to Board discussions to address those issues?

This is a difficult question in that I am running for re-election for the CA seat but the question focuses on a village board seat.

One recent topic residents discussed was the revitalization of the village center (aka the Giant shopping center). I'm pleased to say that in addition to some great new shops and restaurants, the village center will soon be getting a much needed landscaping and signage upgrade.

We have an active, successful Watershed Advisory Committee led by Deborah Wessner, which has identified and pushed for environmental projects like Bright Passage, Bird Song Pass and Schoolmaster/Quarterstaff. We are fortunate to be neighbors of Grassroots and the Community Ecology Institute with opportunities to help others.

The CA board's primary responsibilities are to manage the President/CEO and ensure we meet or exceed our budget goals each year. This year we passed a new Strategic Plan for future years.

Residents particularly value Open Space and the outdoor pools.

Are there any other ideas you would like to express to the residents of Hickory Ridge Village? (Topics: ideas to better our community, how do you see our community in the future or how to increase resident participation in community life?)

Hickory Ridge has only two rooms to host get-togethers (Wilde Lake has 8) so we share them with outside rental events as well as nearly 50 events Emily puts on annually, such as StoryTime, Paint and Sip, Yoga at Lunch, Calligraphy, Cookie Decorating, and Family Bingo. One new event this year is the Hickory Ridge Walk, every Monday morning followed by coffee. I'd love this event to have an offshoot perhaps on Saturday mornings.

For years, I've wanted the village to host Friday evening chats for coffee and desert, and perhaps one evening a month for a town hall (one possible topic: how to increase resident participation in community life) or an educational talk such as the one Beverly White-Seals gives on The Side of Jim Rouse that You Never Knew. We have a large population of people who could teach one session classes on Butterflies or Growing Older and Better or How to Make DNA Using Toothpicks and Gumdrops. Hickory Ridge has so much talent that we could tap into! I think we need to continue what we are doing as well as survey the residents for what they want.