

Stephen L. Bates, known to most as Steve Bates, founded Oregon Fire Equipment Co, Ltd. and Stephen L. Bates Enterprises, LLC. These businesses required extensive travel and he was not able to actively participate with local organizations.

As his 40 year business career was winding down, he looked to give back and get involved with issues that affected his community.

In 2010, he became involved with asking questions why Tri-Met charged Boring businesses full tax rates when the service received was less than full. In 2011, he became the Chief Petitioner to withdraw Boring from the Tri-Met Transportation District. After a long year of battling the Clackamas County Commission, the Tri-Met Board and others, in December, 2011, the Tri-Met Board voted unanimously to remove Boring from the District effective January 1, 2013.

In 2011, he was elected Chair of the Boring Community Planning Organization and served for three years. During his tenure, the Boring Community was successful in several ventures:

1. The 2013 termination of an Agreement between Clackamas County, City of Sandy and Metro that essentially took property away from Boring owners along Highway 26. The City of Sandy filed an appeal with the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals and LUBA denied the appeal in 2019.
2. ODOT, City of Gresham and Multnomah County proposed the closure of access points to Highway 26 in the Boring vicinity. After several months of deliberation and hearings, this proposal was withdrawn and Boring residents maintained their access to Highway 26.
3. The City of Sandy proposed to place liens on properties within their urban growth boundary for road construction costs which affected several Boring residents. As Chair of the Boring CPO, Steve Bates argued with the Sandy City Council that this was an illegal over reach. The City of Sandy withdrew that proposal.
4. The City of Happy Valley and the Clackamas County Administrator set out to replace the ODOT Boring directional signs with Happy Valley signs on I205 in the Happy Valley/Clackamas areas. Steve Bates negotiated a compromise with ODOT that preserved seven Boring signs and gave Happy Valley two.
5. The Boring Community Planning Organization developed a relationship with Dull, Scotland. At the request of Steve Bates, in 2012 the Clackamas County Commission proclaimed every August 9th as Boring & Dull Day. The Oregon State Legislature passed a law in 2013 that made August 9th a state holiday honoring Boring & Dull. Steve Bates led a Boring delegation of nine to Scotland and was received by Perth and Kinross County officials.
6. Additional issues with Clackamas County were addressed that included land use and code enforcement for the Boring area.

All of the above successes were accomplished without tax dollars or paid staff.

The Community of Boring honored Steve Bates as its 2013 Citizen of the Year.

Steve Bates became the Chief Petitioner to remove Boring from the boundaries of Metro. ½ of Boring is in Metro, the other ½ is not. The petition was submitted to Metro and was ignored and mocked. Steve Bates took the petition to the Oregon State Legislature in 2015 with a House Bill. The House Bill was given a token hearing. Metro and the State ignored the voices of the people of Boring. There is no withdrawal procedure from the Metro Government. A Senate Bill was introduced in 2017 to remove Boring from Metro, but, it did not get a hearing.

Steve Bates ran for Clackamas County Commissioner in 2014. He lost by 763 votes and decided to run again in 2016. He came in second place once again. He ran for Clackamas County Fire District #1 Director in 2017 and was unsuccessful.

In 2012 he founded the Boring, Oregon Foundation, a 501(c)3 non-profit established to purchase land and build a community center for the greater Boring Community. He currently serves as Vice-President/Secretary and leads the annual Boring & Dull Day Community Social in the Park which is the organization's yearly fundraiser.

In 2017 he founded the Vietnam War Memorial Fund, a 501(c)3 non-profit established to fund and construct a Vietnam War Memorial on the Oregon State Capitol Grounds. He currently serves as President.

He has served as the Chair of the Committee on Memorials and Remembrance since 2015. This committee is affiliated with the Vietnam Veterans of America. It has been successful in having Memorial Highway Signs installed around the state honoring Vietnam Veterans who were killed in action. This committee also worked with the Boring, Oregon Foundation to raise funds and construct a Vietnam War Memorial in the Boring Station Trailhead Park in Boring which was dedicated in 2018. In 2019, funds were raised to add a second flagpole to the park enabling the Boring Community to honor all veterans by flying the POW-MIA flag 24/7 365 days a year.

In January, 2020, the Vietnam Veterans of America awarded Steve Bates an Honorary Life Membership for his continued work on behalf of Vietnam Veterans.

Steve Bates has been involved with many issues. Although he is not a military veteran, he has championed many issues involving Veterans. His Opinion/Editorial pieces have been published by newspapers throughout Oregon.

Since 2012 and including the upcoming 2021 Legislative Session, Steve Bates has had 18 pieces of legislation introduced by various legislators and committees. Over half of them have been passed. In the 2021 session, a Senate Bill will be introduced to establish the Vietnam War Memorial on the Oregon State Capitol Grounds.