

WOMACK: Resigning to focus on family and business

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to do things.”

He is pleased with the financial well-being of the City, and proud of accomplishments like the creation of Fir Street Park, the completion of the Cascade Avenue Project and the general beautification of Sisters that the public works department works hard to achieve and maintain.

However, Womack is also concerned about the political climate in Sisters. He acknowledges that that political climate creates a high level of stress on volunteers who serve on local boards and committees, and that had an effect on his family life and his decision to step aside.

“Those stresses, they’re big,” he said.

“I think the silent majority have to get up and they have to say something. They have to have their voices heard.” — McKibben Womack

He says that he hears from many people who offer encouragement in private but are reluctant to step into a sometimes-bruising public discourse.

“There is a very boisterous minority that is having

an influence and taking a toll on the City, and that has to be dealt with,” he said, noting that he was speaking essentially of “the people associated with (the online circular) Sisters Voice and a political Facebook forum.”

He said, “I think the silent majority have to get up and they have to say something. They have to have their voices heard.”

Ed Protas is one of the co-authors of “Sisters Voice.” Asked to respond to Womack’s assertions, he responded, “While the folks within his circle might agree with him, I do not think he is knowledgeable about, nor can he speak to the opinions of a majority of this community. I agree that ‘they have to have their voices heard.’ Getting people involved and speaking up has been one of the primary goals of Sisters Voice, and I will gladly contrast what Mike Morgan and Ed Protas have done in that effort compared to what the City Council of the last two years has done. Actions always speak louder than words.”

Womack acknowledged that critics of the City have a right to speak out on issues.

“Absolutely,” he said. “But the way they are going about it is not right; it’s causing harm to the City... There are people in the City who they do not like, and they want to get rid of them. They’re willing to do whatever they can to get rid of those people.”

Protas said, “Councilor Womack ... invokes the ghost of Joe McCarthy when he makes allegations about this being some kind of personal vendetta. This is not the first

time he has made this claim, and he has no basis for it. No doubt our commentary is often times confrontational, and I can appreciate that McKibben and others take offense, but I will stand by the facts we have presented and the issues we have raised. It’s not about the people doing it, it’s about what they are doing.”

“Our new addition is supposed to be born somewhere around the end of April, so it kind of made sense.” — McKibben Womack

Asked if his stepping down is, in effect, giving in to the negative climate he abhors, Womack said, “I don’t know. I think time will tell. In some cases, things have to get bad enough that people say ‘enough is enough.’ If this is really what people want, then I’m in a minority and me stepping down is a good thing.”

Womack campaigned on the idea that more young people should get involved in public life, and he expressed some regret on that score.

“Part of me feels I kind of failed at that, because having a younger family is why I’m pulling out,” he said. “But you don’t know if you don’t try.”

Womack left the door open to a return to public involvement down the road.

“No more committees, no nothing for a year — then we’ll reevaluate it,” he said.

Kitzhaber advisers ask judge to toss Oracle lawsuit

PORTLAND (AP) — Campaign advisers to former Gov. John Kitzhaber are asking a judge to dismiss a lawsuit filed against them by Oracle America Inc.

Oracle sued the advisers in February, alleging they influenced the state plan to ditch the troubled Cover Oregon health insurance exchange, costing Oracle millions of dollars.

In a motion filed Tuesday, March 31, the five advisers say Oracle’s lawsuit interferes with their free speech rights. They cite an Oregon law that allows for quick dismissal of lawsuits that arise from participation in the political process.

Their motion says Oracle makes very few specific claims about the advisers’ involvement in the Cover Oregon decision.

Second major container carrier stops visiting Portland

PORTLAND (AP) — The Port of Portland has already lost its most important container carrier, and now it might be without its other major player.

Elvis Ganda is the CEO of port operator ICTSI Oregon. He tells *The Oregonian* newspaper that although German carrier Hapag-Lloyd has not announced it is ending Portland service, its vessel schedule does not show any visits to the Rose City.

Losing Hapag-Lloyd would be another big blow to the Port of Portland. Hanjin Shipping left in February, taking nearly 80 percent of the port’s container business with it.

The move came after years of strife at Terminal 6, with management accusing dockworkers of engaging in slowdown tactics and workers describing ICTSI’s labor-management model as authoritarian.



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