

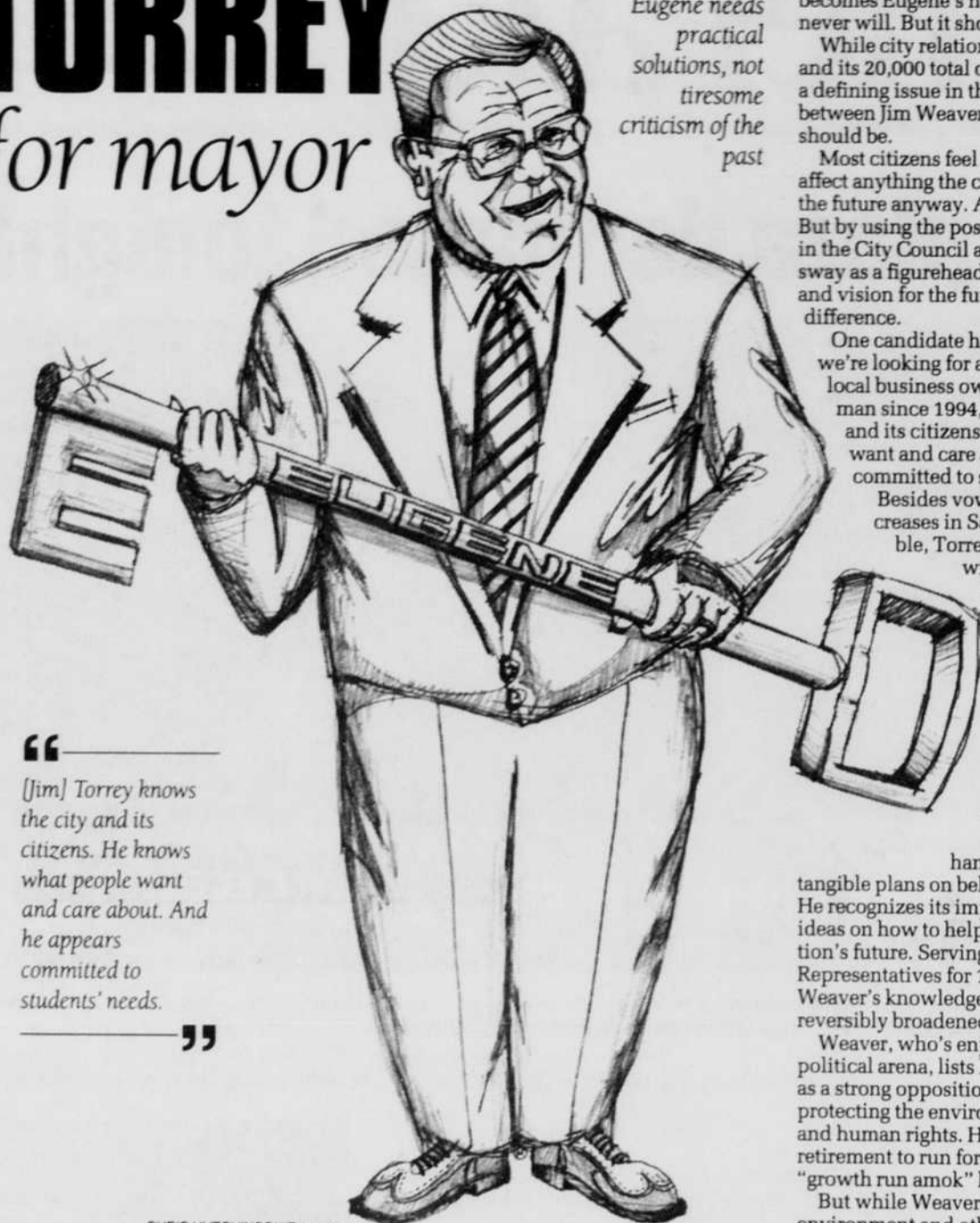
THIS WEEK
MONDAY: Opinion
TUESDAY: Politics
WEDNESDAY: Opinion
THURSDAY: Politics
FRIDAY: Opinion

OPINION

editorials, letters, commentary and perspective

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TORREY for mayor



“ [Jim] Torrey knows the city and its citizens. He knows what people want and care about. And he appears committed to students' needs. ”

CHRIS HUTCHINSON/Emerald

OUR OPINION:
 Eugene needs practical solutions, not tiresome criticism of the past

The innumerable debates, advertisements, slogans and signs haven't made a difference. The University community still doesn't care who becomes Eugene's next mayor — and maybe never will. But it should.

While city relations with the University and its 20,000 total occupants have not been a defining issue in the mayoral campaign between Jim Weaver and Jim Torrey, they should be.

Most citizens feel the mayor can't directly affect anything the city or University does in the future anyway. And this may be true. But by using the position's ample influence in the City Council as well as its obvious sway as a figurehead, the next mayor's ideas and vision for the future could make all the difference.

One candidate has the ideas and vision we're looking for and that is Jim Torrey. A local business owner and City Councilman since 1994, Torrey knows the city and its citizens. He knows what people want and care about. And he appears committed to students' needs.

Besides vowing to fight tuition increases in Salem whenever possible, Torrey hopes to join together with other college mayors in the state to form a collective voice on behalf of higher education. He wants the University to be a part of the community, and encourages students to attend City Council meetings and voice their concerns.

Weaver, on the other hand, doesn't have any tangible plans on behalf of the University. He recognizes its importance, but has no ideas on how to help students or the institution's future. Serving in the U.S. House of Representatives for 12 years hasn't helped Weaver's knowledge of local politics, it's irreversibly broadened his own beliefs.

Weaver, who's enjoyed a lifetime in the political arena, lists his career motivations as a strong opposition to war and a belief in protecting the environment, civil liberties and human rights. He said he came out of retirement to run for mayor only to stop the "growth run amok" he observed in the city.

But while Weaver's lifelong stands on the environment and other causes are indeed

gallant, none of these beliefs transfer to real life solutions in Eugene's local government. His accomplished congressional career shows he can get things done but without any practical ideas to act on, Weaver will do nothing.

Torrey, instead, has realistic solutions to the complicated problems plaguing this city. While some police tactics have been questionable, Torrey's leadership during the recent dog and skateboard ban in the West University district demonstrates his ability to take action on the local level — no easy task. He knows business owners and citizens from all areas of the community and has an unparalleled beat on the pulse of the city.

He believes in increased spending for public safety, including the police department's Rapid Deployment Unit and a new training facility for firefighters. He knows the small problems law enforcement has to deal with, such as vehicle maintenance, and helps provide answers.

Weaver's stands on public safety and spending issues are once again gallant, but conspicuously impractical. He wants police to use bikes or walk, but ignores the consequences of such a far-reaching tactic. He wants police to respect all citizens, but is vague on just whom to leave alone — championing "civility and decorum" without providing concrete definitions for such causes.

Economically, Torrey is prepared and unafraid to make cuts, especially if Measure 47 passes. Weaver said "he'd rather not think about [the measure]" and appeared more eager to criticize current spending patterns. Torrey is willing to stop all hiring in city government and cut all "discretionary" spending after the measure, two unattractive but necessary solutions.

Weaver and Torrey both know the city of Eugene isn't perfect. In fact, it's in dire need of help in many areas. And they both know the next mayor will have a profound impact on how the city deals with these problems. But only Torrey knows how to solve these problems with ideas that will work, not just broad aspirations and criticism.

The future cannot be made better simply by tearing apart the past. The present must be analyzed while slowly stepping into the future. Jim Torrey will lead us down this road.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board.

LETTERS

Policy is a start

In response to your editorial about the proposed student sex policy, I think the policy is a start in the right direction (ODE, Oct. 28). Sexual assault occurs every day on university campuses across the nation. It is extremely emotionally and spiritually damaging to the victim and to society. It can cause a person to isolate themselves, drop out of college and struggle with self-esteem and negative feelings.

The purpose of the new policy is to empower victims of sexual assault so perpetrators should not be free to assault again. We have to start somewhere, and stressing communication between partners is a start. Just because you think "no one will follow it" is no excuse for not improving the Student Conduct Code. Do you think just because no one would stop at a traffic light, that we shouldn't implement traffic signals?

While the proposed policy might not be perfect, clarifying consent and responsibility is "displaying some levelheadedness" and common sense.

Jill Warner
 Psychology

Broad consent

While I think it is great that the Emerald editorial board acknowledged the importance of a new conduct code for sexual assault and rape, I had problems with the reasons offered for why the proposed change will not work.

When defining "explicit consent," the editorial stated that this must be "communicated verbally, perhaps even on paper." I am very curious as to where in the proposed changes this is inferred. What the changes do include is "explicit consent, verbal or otherwise." This could mean but is not limited to anything verbal, non-verbal, a gesture or I suppose, a written note. What explicit consent does provide for, however, is that instead of asking a survivor what he or she did to say no, the alleged perpetrator would need to explain what he or she did to obtain consent. Hopefully, this will result in more survivors feeling safe and comfortable reporting an incident because it will no longer be their responsibility to prove they resisted.

Yes, I agree that sexual assault and rape include a lot of

grey areas, but until the University as a public institution is willing to take a strong and disciplinary stance against assault and rape, we as a community will not see a decrease in these "extremely terrible and confusing" crimes.

Rebecca Peatow
 Political Science

Problem solvable

In response to your editorial on the proposed sexual misconduct language, I feel compelled to ask, "What's wrong with consent?" Your idea that "asking for permission just doesn't happen" disturbs me. Seeking consent is simply an extension of the mutual respect on which adult relationships are based. It is not unrealistic to expect students to practice prudence and simply ask when in doubt. If it is unrealistic, then that attitude is exactly what this language is targeting.

Furthermore, the policy will only come into play in a situation where someone feels violated. In the vast majority of sexual encounters, where those involved have reached a certain comfort level, the nature of the

consent — explicit or implicit — will not be an issue. The language is intended to serve as a guideline for determining if misconduct has taken place in situations where complaints are raised, not as a means for policing the sexual activities of students.

Finally, I am disappointed in your conclusion that "the world of sexual assault is an extremely terrible and confusing one...[and] some aspects of it, like prosecution, may never be solved." This defeatist conclusion is not only disheartening, but a slap in the face to the numerous students who organize around campus safety issues, not to mention those who put a year and a half of their time and energy into drafting this policy. Yes, sexual assault is a daunting problem, but to dismiss efforts to curtail it as ineffective and "extreme" does a disservice to the survivors and their plight.

I urge any and all of you who have an opinion on this issue to voice it at the public hearing today in the EMU Walnut Room at 2 p.m.

Matthew Scotten
 ASUO President

Oregon Daily Emerald

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