

OUR VIEW

# Tell Elgin residents real cost for police department

Elgin city officials must be sure they are on the right track before they discard a contract to provide law enforcement services from the Union County Sheriff's Office.

In short, Elgin's elected leaders need to be sure they have all their ducks in a row.

The Elgin City Council voted earlier this month not to renew its contract with the Union County Sheriff's Office and to create its own police force. Elgin disbanded its police department about 10 years ago.

Now, the city receives 420 hours of dedicated service from the sheriff's office every month. The city also pays \$343,000 per year to the sheriff's office for the coverage.

Union County Sheriff Cody Bowen has offered a three-year deal to the city. Under that pact, Elgin will pay about \$348,000 in the 2022-2023 budget year, \$358,000 the next year and \$368,000 the year after that.

Clearly the costs from the sheriff's office for law enforcement coverage will go up at a steady pace. That should be, if it wasn't already, a crucial factor to consider by Elgin officials.

Yet, there are other questions Elgin taxpayers should ask.

For example, what will be the cost for Elgin to stand up its own police force? How much will the initial start-up cost — the purchase of uniforms and equipment — be? Over a five-year period, how much would a separate, stand-alone Elgin police force cost? Will the cost be more than the price of coverage from the sheriff's office?

Elgin city officials pointed to what is — essentially — a technical reason to move on to a separate force. State regulations, officials say, prevent the sheriff's office from enforcing city ordinances.

For example, a sheriff's deputy, officials say, can't enforce a city ordinance on such cases as the use of motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles in town.

Bowen countered that assertion and said while deputies can't cite people on charges of violating city ordinances, deputies do often enforce ordinance violations indirectly as an individual violating a city ordinance is often also violating state law.

Yet, taxpayers should be focused really on one item — cost.

If the cost of standing up a new police department and then financing it pencils out more than what the sheriff's office coverage costs, then the decision for taxpayers — who foots the bill no matter what — is an easy one.

Voters need to see those numbers and then give feedback to their elected representatives.

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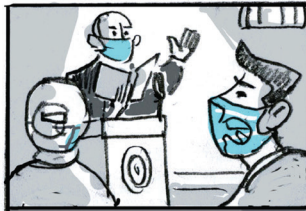
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WHAT I MIGHT MISS ABOUT FACE MASKS



Sleeping on planes with mouth open / drooling.



Yawning undetected.

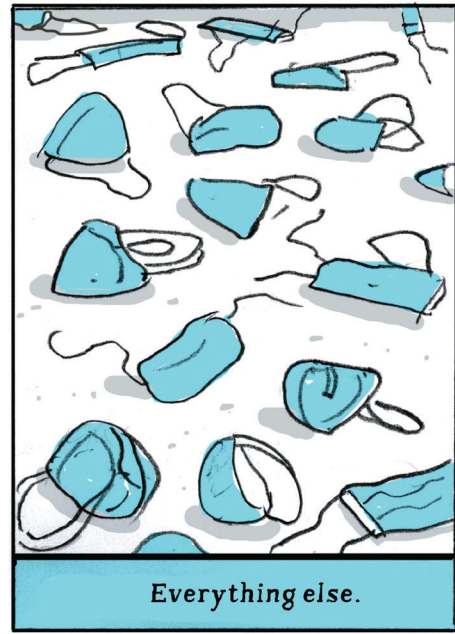


Hiding nervousness, face rash.



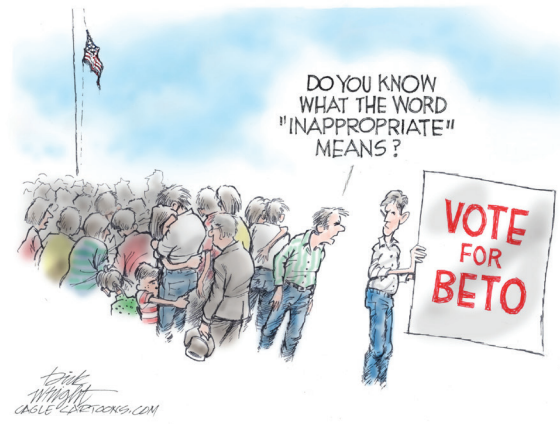
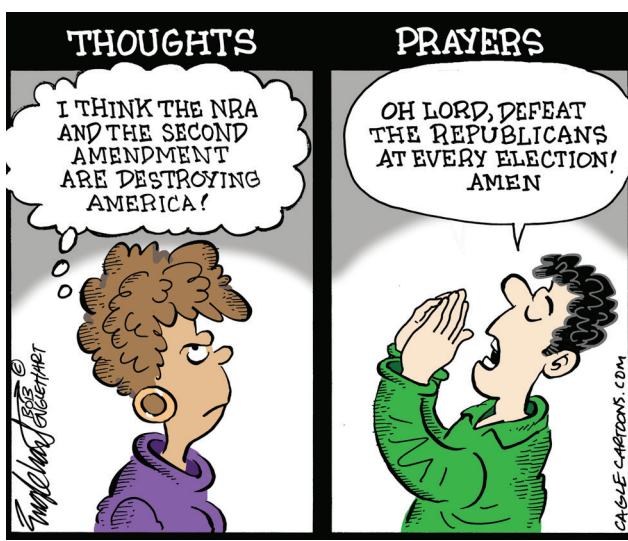
Expressing an opinion without further discussion.

WHAT I WON'T MISS ABOUT FACE MASKS



Everything else.

KUPER



# Race reveals lack of Republican cohesion



RANDY STAPILUS  
OTHER VIEWS

With 19 distinctive — not to say sometimes colorful — candidates for governor, Oregon Republicans should have told us something about themselves by their choices in the just-ended primary election.

They did: They are split. Many seem driven by abortion or other culture issues, some are powerfully drawn by regional preferences, but a plurality just want to win in November.

No single overriding motivation appeared to apply overwhelmingly to Oregon Republican voters.

Former legislator (and House Republican caucus chair) Christine Drazan was the clear winner from early on, and she won a majority of Oregon's counties. She led (decisively) in the three Portland metro counties, and her four best counties (in order — Willowa, Curry, Klamath and Benton) were widely scattered across the state. Her win cannot be called narrow.

What drew Republican voters to her? Likely not the media endorsements (her website's endorsement page didn't even link to them). But she was endorsed by a slew of Republican elected officials and a number of GOP-leaning organizations. She had an extensive county organization, and it seems fair to say she was the closest thing to an (informal) candidate of the statewide Republican organization.

That helps a lot. And she was articulate and likable.

Careful messaging

She did not emphasize hard-edged messages. Her website's tag lines called out "lower taxes, safer neighborhoods, brighter future, better schools" — something Democrat Tina Kotek

could use as easily (maybe with some tweaking of the first one). She did offer some specific policy proposals, but she was not among the candidates with quotable lines on abortion, stolen elections and similar subjects.

Was this the candidate considered by voters as best equipped to fare well in November? Probably that was part of it.

Remember though that she received just 22.7% of the Republican primary vote, a support level that looks better only in the context of her 19-person field. Her nearest competitor, former state Republican Chair Bob Tiernan, was not terribly far behind with 17.8%. Seven candidates received more than 5% of the vote.

If there's another contender who might logically be called a Republican establishment candidate — because of service in elected office and as chair of the state party — that would be Tiernan, who won six counties — Clatsop, Coos, Columbia, Douglas, Lane, and Tillamook. His second-place vote actually may owe to some of the same factors as Drazan's.

Candidates who lost past major races, like Bud Pierce and Bill Sizemore, underperformed.

So, there's a good chance electability was heavily on the minds of close to half of the Republican electorate, maybe reflecting both desire to win and a sense that 2022 might not be a good Democratic year.

But that still leaves a majority of the Republican primary voters apparently signaling other concerns.

What powered Sandy Mayor Stan Pulliam to a third-place showing with 10.4% of the vote? There are a few possibilities, but a good bet might be abortion, high profile during the voting period. Though not endorsed by Oregon Right to Life, Pulliam got attention for the edgiest abortion portion stance in the campaign, criticizing his competitors as being wimps on

the subject and saying without qualification he would as governor sign any "pro-life piece of legislation."

Votes for him may be a reasonable measure of the abortion-driven segment of the Republican vote.

Anti-masker fizzles

That seems a little bigger than the climate change and anti-masking approach of Marc Thielman, the former Alsea school superintendent who won a straw poll at the Dorchester event. He had backers statewide — he had more than a few signs in Eastern Oregon — but still managed just 7.8% of the vote.

If you're looking for a candidate testing the salience of rural and anti-metro appeal, look at Baker City Mayor Kerry McQuisten. She won seven counties, more than anyone but Drazan, carrying most of the land area of Eastern Oregon with Baker, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Sherman, Union and Wheeler counties. No candidate got a higher percentage in any single county than McQuisten did in Grant (44.6%).

Of course, relatively few voters live in those counties, and McQuisten wound up just sixth in the results. But she left a stronger marker of the east-west and urban-rural gap in the state.

Some messages seemed not to catch on. Nick Hess, who pressed for a traditional conservative style (and was nearly alone in the field to do so), got only 1.1% of the vote.

And if there had been more "electable" candidates and fewer "message" candidates? This primary could easily have seen different results. The instability of the parties — Democrats too but especially the Republicans, even in a time of polarization — may be one of the primary lessons of this year's Oregon primary.

■ Randy Stapilus has researched and written about Northwest politics and issues since 1976 for a long list of newspapers and other publications.

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