

NORTHWESTnews

FIGHTING CITY HALL

Two gay men oppose Commissioner Randy Leonard
by Michael Burdick

Two gay men are among the 11 candidates vying for the seat occupied by Portland City Commissioner Randy Leonard. Frank Dixon and Aaron Hall are Portland natives who talk about creating a better working relationship between City Hall and neighborhood associations and helping small businesses in order to create jobs. Both express dissatisfaction with Leonard's performance, saying his thuggish management style hinders his ability to conduct the city's business successfully.



Aaron Hall (left, with spouse Edmund Gaines) wants to streamline small-business regulations

Aaron Hall recently married his partner of seven years, Edmund Gaines, in the first few days Multnomah County issued licenses to same-sex couples. After joining the Navy as a young adult, where he trained as an electrical engineer and worked as a power plant operator, he attended architecture school. He returned to Portland with Gaines a year ago after completing his architectural internship in Baltimore and Philadelphia.

In explaining why he decided to run for City Council, Hall says: "I've always been interested in city government, the planning department, [Portland Development Commission], all the bureaus in the city of Portland.... I actually hadn't planned on pursuing it quite so soon, but seeing Randy Leonard mess up so much—to be blunt, he's really screwed up a lot lately."

According to Hall, Leonard creates a dysfunctional working environment. "His demeanor is very abrasive. People that work for him are afraid for their jobs basically because you never know when he's going to go off. He's like a loose cannon."

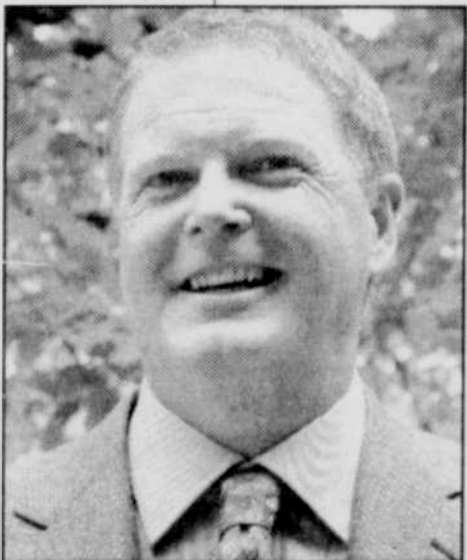
As an active member of the Beaumont-Wilshire Neighborhood Association, Hall has experienced firsthand the frustration of trying to work with Leonard. He says neighborhood representatives are "fed up with [Leonard's] inaction and his not listening to the communities in the city. There are 95 neighborhoods in the city, and they all have different priorities and needs. Randy's just basically blowing them off."

Another thing Hall finds troubling is how much money Leonard has received from developers in campaign contributions "and his votes while he's been in City Council the last 18 months supporting these developers." Leonard cast some of these votes, Hall says, despite vocal opposition from neighborhood advocates.

If elected, Hall would make helping small businesses a priority. "One of the things I want to do is streamline regulations."

Hall believes Portland's reputation for being unfriendly to small businesses—which employ 77 percent of those who work in the area—perseveres because the companies are overregulated and are subject to onerous taxes and fees. "We need to make it simple. What I'm proposing is a one-stop shop where businesses can go in and get all the permits they need."

Frank Dixon is president of the Northwest District Association and co-chairman of Basic Rights Oregon. He attended Lewis & Clark Law School and worked as an attorney before



Frank Dixon believes Randy Leonard's votes benefit developers at neighborhoods' expense

entering politics. He was once an assistant to Commissioner Dan Saltzman, and this is his second bid for elected office.

Dixon explains how he and five other candidates have employed a novel grassroots approach in their efforts to secure better leadership on the council: "The question was, would we just sit back and let [Leonard] have another term unopposed? Nobody was stepping forward really to run against him. So a number of us...decided to run against him. The idea is to give Portland voters a choice. If we're able to prevent him from getting 50 percent plus one of the vote in the primary, then we'll sort of coalesce behind the person besides him who makes it in the race, assuming of course that Randy Leonard doesn't end up third."

Although Hall is a neighborhood advocate, he has not been involved with this concerted effort to unseat Leonard. The incumbent enters the race with a big advantage because he has raised substantially more money—largely from developers and the firefighters union—than any of his opponents.

Dixon disagrees with Leonard's votes that in his view benefit developers at neighborhoods' expense. Dixon also believes Leonard's ideas about how to fulfill Portland's transportation needs are overly focused on cars.

But Dixon's greatest concern is not with ideology or policy but with Leonard's management style. "In Portland we have a tradition of doing things together, and his method is to try to go it alone. That causes problems that are usually greater than the individual problem that he is trying to solve."

Dixon acknowledges Leonard's heart may be in the right place but thinks that's not enough. "There's no question that he has some good intentions...but a commissioner is an executive. He is the top manager of the bureaus he's assigned. That takes leadership and management skills that are essential to make the city work. I'm sorry to say that we are not seeing them." **JB**

For more information about AARON HALL and FRANK DIXON visit www.hall4cityhall.com and www.dixon4council.com.

MICHAEL BURDICK is a recent graduate of Reed College. He can be reached at mike@nibblicious.com.

Injured? ...Call me

Free Consultation
No Fee Unless You Recover

Hala Gores, P.C.
Attorney at Law

503/295-1940
12th Floor, 621 SW Morrison
Portland



Integrity,
Experience
& Results

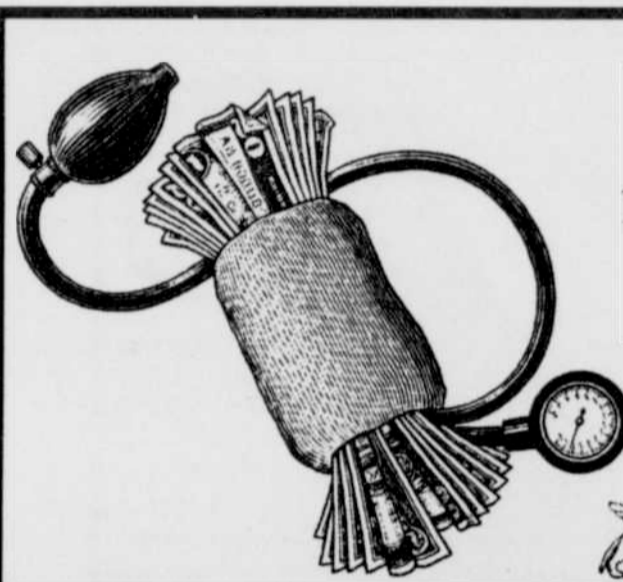


Proudly serving our community since 1989 in personal injury claims including:

- Auto & Motorcycle Accidents
- Bicycle & Pedestrian Accidents
- Medical Malpractice
- Wrongful Death
- Defective Products
- Insurance Claims

You Deserve Full Compensation for:

- Pain & Suffering
- Medical Expenses
- Lost Earnings
- Property Damage
- Car Rental

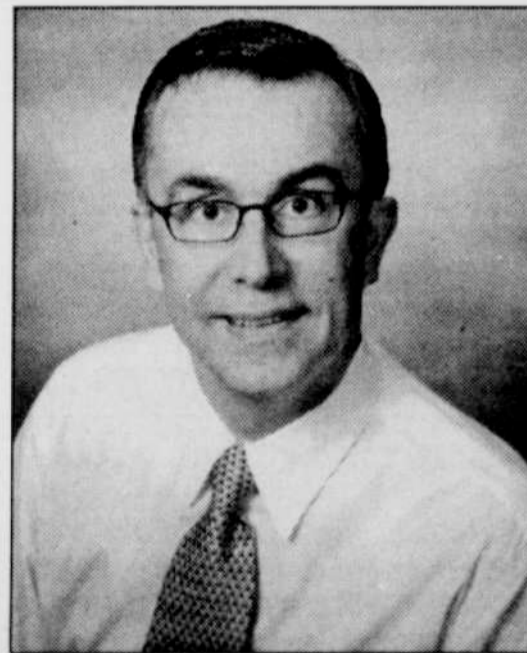


Time for a financial check-up or a second opinion?



Securities offered exclusively through
RAYMOND JAMES
FINANCIAL SERVICES, INC.

Antoinette Laferriere, CFP® - President, Griffon Financial Group, LLC - Financial Advisor
503.528.2800 • 5440 SW Westgate Dr., Ste 110, Portland OR 97221
www.griffonfinancial.com • 541.317.1617 • 131 NW Hawthorne Ave., Ste 105 Bend, OR 97701



Doug Beebe
Associate Broker
503.471.3479

Find Your New Home at
OregonDreamHome.com



BARBARA SUE SEAL
PROPERTIES
503.224.7325

Art For Your Space

4818 N Interstate Ave
(Inside the Portland Costless Carpets Complex)

M-F 9-6, Sat 10-4, Sun 11-3

(503) 282-5102
Fax (503) 284-3145
pearlrugcompany@aol.com

Visit Our Web Site at
www.pearlrugcompany.com

Accepts: Visa, AmEx, MC, Discover

Newlyweds receive 15% Discount!