

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Former Mayor Supports Sam Adams Recall

To my friends in the sexual and gender minority community:

You may have heard that I am supporting the recall of Mayor Sam Adams. Of all the communities affected by Mayor Adams' actions, this community has deep and personal feelings about the outcome. I know there are strong feelings on both sides of this issue. Because I love this community, I feel it's important to tell you why I made my decision to support the recall of our Mayor.

During his time as City Commissioner and Mayor, Sam Adams has demonstrated his serious lack of judgment, a complete lack of integrity, his serial lying to win an election, and his callous disregard for others.

My support for Mayor Adams' recall is not about his actions with Beau Breedlove, because we may never have the complete information as to whether or not he committed any criminal act(s) with Beau. This is not about the Mayor's sexual orientation. The only person I know who used his sexual orientation as an argument in this issue is the Mayor himself.

What this issue is about for me is the Mayor's attempt to deny and cover up his actions with Beau before and after Beau turned 18. He lied to us all in order to win an election. He made false accusations about a gay man's integrity while cloaked in self-righteousness. In the attempt to cover up his involvement, he lied right up to the time he recognized he could no longer hide the truth. He demonstrated a serious lack of integrity and ethical behavior. His actions caused many Portlanders to distrust him, and he was shunned by politicians at the state and national level. He was not invited to local events which necessitated other elected leaders filling in for him. Most every major print media has called for his resignation, including *Just Out*. He caused a division within the gay community in Portland and across the country that still sits heavy with us today. Today, there are many people who are afraid to speak out against Mayor Adams, yet feel they were duped by him.

I have heard people say the impetus for the recall campaign is from homophobic elements in our community. I have no doubt that homophobes take delight in Mayor Adams' problems and some of the more vocal radio personalities have tried to insert themselves in the middle of this problem. But the truth is that when Sam ran for Mayor he was endorsed by most print media in Portland, and his sexual orientation was not an issue in any campaign debates. The Community to Recall Mayor Adams committee has been training volunteer signature gatherers. The signature gatherers agree not to collect signatures from individuals who base their decision to sign on sexual orientation or religious social conservative reasons. I would never participate in any recall, or other ballot initiative which is based in such idiotic beliefs.

For sometime I have been observing how this issue disgracefully unfolded. I came to the conclusion that Mayor Adams should resign and a new Mayor elected to carry out those duties. Sam has made it clear he will not resign and I feel it is important for Portlanders to vote for or against the Sam Adams they have come to know now versus the person they voted for in the Primary Election of May, 2008. I love Portland and its people and I know this issue has generated heated debates and strong passions on both sides. Which ever side you come down on I will respect your views and actions. I know when this is over Portlanders will have to reconcile a lot of strong feelings about Mayor Adams and each other. This recall question is about honest government, an honest City Council and an honest Portland.

Ultimately, the sexual and gender minority community has to come together and focus on the bigger challenges of ensuring full civil rights for our community. I believe Mayor Adams currently stands in the way of that progress.

TOM POTTER
SE Portland

"It's Really Not That Hard" To Embrace Cesar E. Chavez Blvd.

I live on NE 39th Avenue in the Hollywood neighborhood. I applaud the unanimous July 8 vote by the Portland City Council to rename my street Cesar E. Chavez Boulevard. It's called leadership. We don't elect our leaders to simply follow a change-averse public when there are longer term issues, like community inclusion. As a small business owner, I sympathize with businesses which in hard times must incur additional costs involved in a street name change. ... Maybe this is the time for some of the businesses to upgrade their logos, their service and also their accommodation of the new customers who will want to check out what's happening "on Chavez." I've lived here long enough to remember the grousing about the "new" MLK street name. Now I just say, "well, to get to the Wonder Ballroom just go north

on MLK and turn left at Russell." I can't wait to say, "to get to my house, just go east on NE Knott to Chavez." For those who have trouble with change, remember the 39th Avenue signs stay up for FIVE years as well. Some things will come with time, such as marriage equality or street names to honor real American heroes. But someone has to take the first step. I'm glad our City Council found its collective voice. In the fall, with the turning of the leaves, I'd love to see some different kind of block parties in my neighborhood. Maybe ones in which the barricades keep out only cars, not those who don't happen to live on that particular block. It's called friendship.

It's really not that hard.

MARK A. WOOLLEY
Portland

Politics Shouldn't Be Left to Politicians "Unless They Have Integrity"

Just Out reflects high journalistic standards with its contribution to the initiative process, by keeping www.recallsamadams.org in the news.

Your recognition of a divided community (half who insist that integrity in office is unnecessary; confronted by those of us (who are, for example, raising kids or teaching in our schools) indicates that our well-paid politicians are expected to have just that: integrity.

There are also those who actually feel that politics should be left in the hands of the politicians themselves. I can't subscribe to such a position unless they have integrity.

Thanks to your persuasive approach, it is evident that we must act in the name of integrity since we have no other option.

BOB GEARY
Portland

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From left to right: Sheila Bennett, DMD, Adrienne Fischl, DMD Diane Applegate, DDS, Clarice Johnston, DMD

It's a beautiful thing.



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