

County, state financially... well ... fudged

BY PRECIOUS COMSTOCK
INQUIRIES WELCOME

*Politicians
jockey for any
position that
still has some
money to
manage*

Multnomah County Commission Chairman Ted Wheeler resigned last month, accepting an offer to become the Oregon State Treasurer after Ben Westland, a beloved Republican, passed away with lung cancer.

A source close to the deal told Street Roots that Wheeler had been hard pressed by Gov. Ted Kulongoski to take the position. The source said the governor knew that the only person to oversee the hardships of a state that is truly and utterly financially f\$cked in 2011 was to appoint Wheeler, who has overseen the largest county in the state, which is also financially f\$cked and will be for the foreseeable future.

Wheeler's chief operating officer, Jana McLellan, who in the case of Wheeler's absence or resignation would have to run the county, responded to the news by spilling her coffee all over herself and yelling, "There's no f\$cking way ..."

Meanwhile, Wheeler's move spurred a small army of Portlanders to declare that they would be happy to represent Multnomah County, even if it meant overseeing an entangled list of unaccomplished goals and a budget process that will screw over most of its citizens.

In the first day, 12 candidates announced they were running for office — two of which (Margaret Carter and Steve Novick) who were shooting for the County Chair's position, dropped out after being informed that current County Commissioner Jeff Cogen was also running.

Novick, who was being advised by former county chair Bev Stein, actually told SR he would have no problem beating Cogen, but he didn't want to f\$ck over his career while trying to lead the county out of the depths of hell. Carter declined to comment.

Cogen is now set to run against someone no one knows, and who will lose badly. He

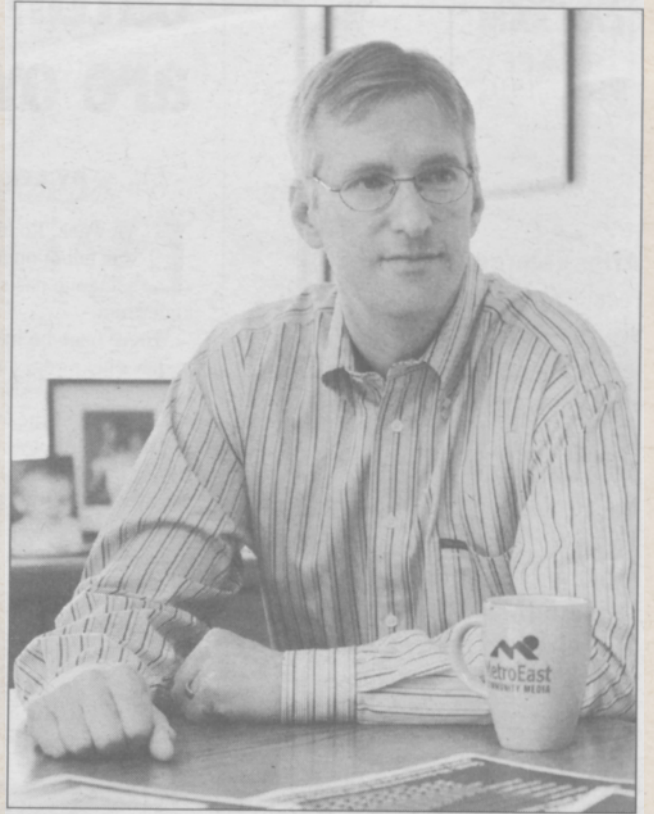
was also recently appointed to fill Wheeler's seat as chairman until the election in November, letting McLellan off the hook.

For Cogen's seat, 10 candidates announced their run for county commissioner, one of which, Enrique Arias, dropped out after coming home and telling his wife he was running for office. "I will f\$ck you up, Enrique, if you do this to us," said his wife. Enrique is the proud father of a 5-month-old-boy and a 5-year-old-girl. He declined to comment for this story. Two days later, Irma Linda Castillo also dropped out, citing family obligations.

Eight candidates now remain standing for the commissioner's seat — all of whom say they have the leadership to lead our communities away from the dark ages. The following candidates are as follows: Loretta Smith — who's worked as a staffer for U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.); political consultant Tom Markgraf, a staffer for U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.); film producer Enrique Arias; Maria Rubio, an ex-staffer for former Mayor Tom Potter; and Irma Linda Castillo, a county program manager.

They join Roberta Phillip, a newly hired staffer in Wheeler's office; former county commissioner Gary Hansen, Rev. Chuck Currie, Paul van Orden and Cogen staffer Karol Collymore. (We totally stole the last two paragraphs off the WW Blogtown, The blog formerly known as Blogwire WWire.)

Meanwhile, City Commissioners Dan Saltzman and Nick Fish, both incumbents facing little opposition in this year's up and coming race were seen dancing on their desks after realizing for the first time in three decades the region and the press actually were more concerned with county elections than city elections. The mayor declined comment, but staffers told SR he was in a jovial mood most of the day. Some speculating that, like Saltzman and Fish, Adams was happy people didn't care about



Former County
Commission Chair
now State Treasurer
Ted Wheeler.

city hall anymore.

During the candidates musical chairs set off by Wheeler's appointment, both the Willamette Week and The Oregonian took credit for being the fastest to type up news stories gleaned from press releases and stationing a reporter inside the elections office and then posting stories online.

This is the only story SR has covered to date on the reshuffling at the county. Joanne Zuhl, the managing editor of Street Roots, declined to comment on the lack of coverage over the past month, saying only, "That looks like a f\$cking headache to cover. I'm not doing it."

Fist-bumping ban intended to take care of a big problem

BY BABS ROCKWELL
DJING NIGHTLY AT DANTES

The rash of "fist bumping" — the gesture of tapping the knuckles of your fist to the knuckles of another person's fist — has resulted in a countywide ban on such behavior on the streets of Portland, Gresham and various lesser communities in Multnomah County.

"They were fist bumping sometimes three, four, five, six times in a four-minute passing," says attorney William Bereft, one of the lawyers who pressed the Multnomah

County Commissioners into banning the gesture. "It wasn't always in a friendly way."

Fist bumping became more mainstream after President Barack Obama was seen fist bumping his wife on stage after his nomination acceptance speech. It became even more popular when it was seen as a means of preventing the spread of the H1N1 virus, or "swine flu."

Proponents of fist bumping say it is just another way of being cordial and modern without spreading disease. But now that

Obama has been in office for a year and the H1N1 virus isn't such a big deal anymore, some see it as a suspiciously unnecessary interaction that might mean more than it appears to bystanders and police.

"It's a way that some people use to communicate to others, and when that happens frequently on the streets, we have to be concerned that there is something more going on," says Bereft. "We've seen arousal in the eyes of those engaged in fist bumping, when contact is made. It's mostly

men bumping men."

Bereft said some people seen using the fist bump have later been cited for illegal activities, including jaywalking, cigarette dropping and sitting on undesignated areas in Pioneer Courthouse Square.

"We realize that not all fist-bumpers are engaging in something that's inappropriate, but it's clearly an indicator of something more serious, and we have to be on top of that."

The ban goes into effect Jan. 1, 2012.

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