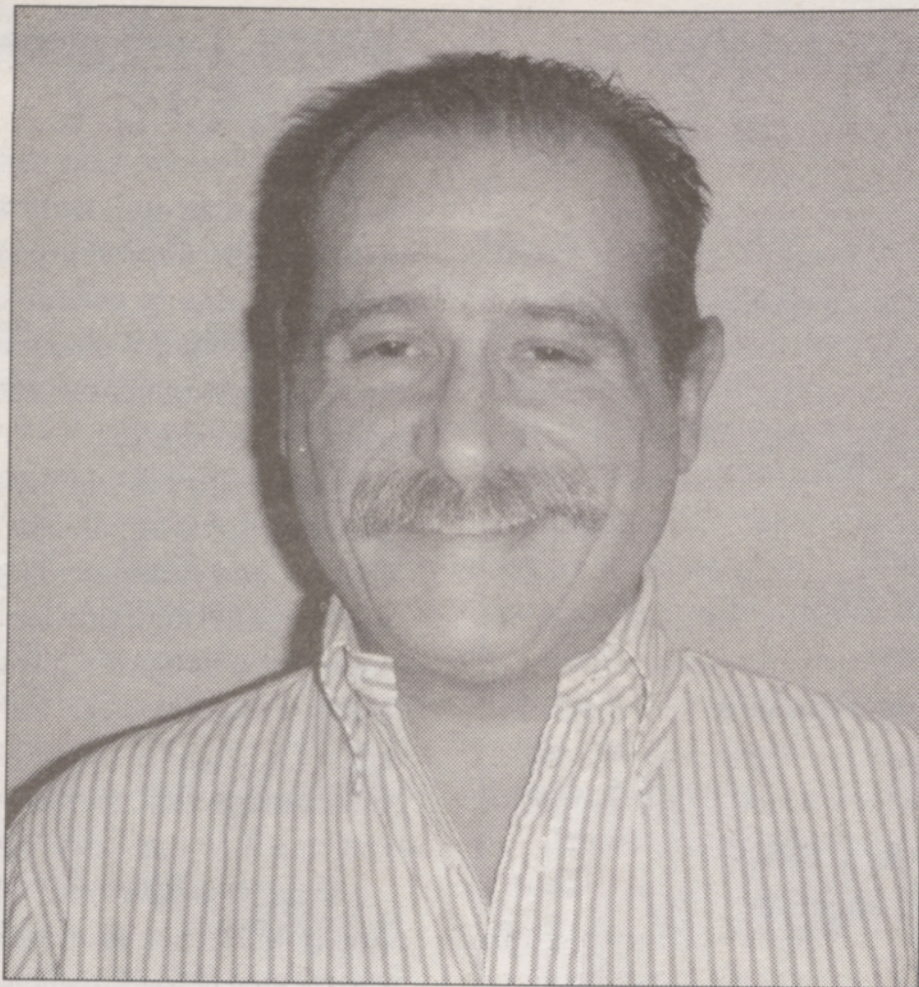




Steve Novick



Mark White



Jeri Williams

Lopsided fundraising in Portland Council Position 4 race

BY JANICE THOMPSON
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

An open seat on the Portland City Council typically results in a hotly contested race dominated by two or three candidates raising lots of money. The election to replace retiring City Councilman Randy Leonard, however, is not following this pattern. Though there will be seven people on the ballot seeking Leonard's Position 4 slot on the City Council, Steve Novick is the frontrunner. Two other candidates, Mark White and Jeri Williams, have also garnered media attention.

Only Novick, Williams and White have brought in campaign cash with Novick far ahead in the fundraising race. Novick's contribution total is \$241,064, compared to \$3,293 raised by White and \$5,831 raised by Williams. (These figures reflect contributions reported as of April 6 in ORESTAR. Due to continuous campaign finance reporting in Oregon these figures could change by publication date.)

Novick has received \$89,952 from 52 contributors writing checks of \$1,000 or more. Novick's largest contribution was \$6,924 from Novick's 2008 Senate campaign PAC. Most of Novick's donors in this contributions size category are individuals, but he also received 10 contributions from Portland area businesses and from four PACs of public employee unions. Many of these donors have given larger contributions to past Portland Council candidates so if Novick was in a more competitive contest a higher percentage of his total fundraising would likely be coming in the form of these larger checks.

Novick received \$106,245 in the \$101 to \$999 size category from 359 contributors. At 19 percent, the smallest component of Novick's fundraising, \$47,687, came in contributions of \$100 or less. Reporting of individual donors giving these small contributions is not required by law but

Fundraising by Three Contribution Size Groups as Reported Through April 6th :
Dollar Amounts and Percentage of Total Fundraising and numbers of Contributors

Candidate	Contributions \$1,000 and up	Contributions \$101 to \$999	Contributions of \$100 or less*	Total Fundraising
Steve Novick	\$89,952	\$106,245	\$47,687	\$241,064
	36%	44%	19%	100%
	52 contributors	359 contributors	955 contributors	1366 contributors
Jeri Williams	\$2,945	\$1,400	\$1,486	\$5,831
	51%	24%	25%	100%
	1 in-kind contributor	4 contributors	30 contributors	35 contributors
Mark White	\$1,000	\$968	\$1,324	\$3,293
	30%	29%	40%	100%
	1 in-kind contributor	3 contributors	26 contributors	30 contributors

*Contributions of \$100 or less do not have to be itemized by individual donor. Rather those contributions are reported as aggregated dollar amounts. This means it is impossible to know exactly how many donors are giving in the contribution category of \$100 or less. But an estimate can be determined by assuming that each of these small donations is \$50. Total contributor numbers are derived by adding the numbers of itemized contributors with estimates of numbers of those making contributions of \$100 or less.

assuming that each donation is \$50 provides an estimate of 955 contributors. Novick's total fundraising of \$241,064 came from an estimated 1366 donors.

Jeri Williams has received one in-kind contribution of 2,945 from the person who designed her campaign website. This represents a significant percent of Williams' fundraising but this contribution is less than any of Novick's top five donations which came in checks ranging from \$4,000 to \$6,924. Two donors gave Williams \$500 and two other donors gave her \$200 for a total of \$1,400 in the \$101 to \$999 contribution size category. At 25 percent of total fundraising, the rest of her fundraising, \$1,486, came in contributions of \$100 or less. Reporting of individual donors giving these small contributions is not required by law but assuming that each donation is \$50 provides an estimate of 30 contributors. William's total fundraising of \$5,831 came from an estimated 35 donors.

White's highest contribution is one in-kind contribution of \$1,000 from the company that designed his campaign website. This represents a significant percent of White's fundraising due to his low level of total contributions. Two other in-kind donors to White provided services valued at \$350 and \$368. White gave his own campaign \$250. White has received a total of \$968 in the \$101 to \$999 contribution size category. At 40 percent, the rest of his fundraising, \$1,324, came in contributions of \$100 or less. White's total fundraising of \$3,293 came from an estimated 30 donors.

One element in Novick's fundraising success is that he can contact previous donors from when he ran for office in May 2008. Novick lost the U.S. Senate Democratic primary to now Senator Jeff Merkley in that statewide vote, but beat Merkley decisively by 12 percentage points in Multnomah County. This demonstrates that Novick is popular with Portland voters

and presumably contributes to his frontrunner status in his current City Council race.

As reported last June in The Oregonian, Novick "launched a website this morning declaring his candidacy for Portland City Council, just hours after Commissioner Randy Leonard" told that paper he was not seeking re-election. Given the robust content of his website so early in his campaign, it seems fair to conclude that Novick had been given advance notice by Leonard.

More recently, The Oregonian has endorsed Novick, but begins its editorial with these words: "Steve Novick didn't just get a head start in the race to replace outgoing Commissioner Randy Leonard on the Portland City Council. He practically had the seat gift-wrapped and hand-delivered to him by Leonard and other supporters in the Democratic Party. That's frustrating to voters who prefer competitive races to coronations."

Mark White and Jeri Williams would likely have met the qualifying requirements for Portland's former campaign finance reform program, Voter-Owned Elections, and had the resources needed to mount more viable campaigns. It is ironic that The Oregonian complains about the coronation aspect of the Novick race given its opposition to this campaign reform option. The retention election to retain the public financing reform program lost narrowly by less than 1 percent of the vote in November 2010.

Even on a more level financial playing field Novick would likely have a head start given his past experience as a candidate and a solid record of advocating for policies that resonate with Portland voters. Voter choice is diminished, however, since the lopsided fundraising in this race reduces the ability of challengers to get out their message.

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