

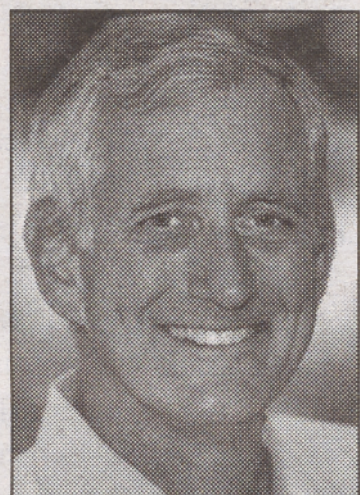
Your call

Mayoral and City Council candidates Charlie Hales, Jefferson Smith, Amanda Fritz and Mary Nolan take a shot at Street Roots' questions for the future of Portland.



1. The Department of Justice investigation into the Portland Police Bureau revealed, among other things, two serious problems. One being that our police use excessive force on people perceived to have a mental illness, due to deficiencies in policy, training and supervision. The other serious problem is failings in our mental health support network, from triage sites to engagement with health providers. What will you do to correct these problems?

Finally! The election trail is winding down to the final month. But between the debates, the interviews and the sundry media mashups, Street Roots still had questions. We posed the following questions — five for the mayoral candidates and four for the City Council candidates — to learn a little more about the people vying for your vote and the chance to lead Portland four years onward. Look for their responses on housing issues in the Oct. 26 edition of Street Roots.



Charlie Hales

Excessive use of force is not acceptable. Ever. Police officers are not mental health providers and should not be the first line of defense for mental health-related crises. We should be clear that the failure of the legislature to adequately fund mental health is a contributing cause of this problem. We need more wrap-around services to support our mentally ill population.

The Department of Justice report underscores that we need to focus our police bureau on true community policing — prevention, relationship-building in neighborhoods and training in de-escalation. When a community knows the officers assigned to their neighborhood by name and sees them on a regular basis, it helps to establish credibility with members of the community. This, in turn, will help prevent a collision of strangers resulting in the unnecessary use of force, making the use of force the exception, not the standard.

As mayor, I will return our city to true community policing practices and I will work with all partners at the local level to provide more services for our mentally ill citizens. I will lobby Salem for increased mental health services funding for our local providers and CCOs as well as advocate for greater Medicaid match. And I will work to increase police accountability, including ending the “48 hour rule” that prevents getting the facts from police officers involved in shootings until two days after the incident.



Jefferson Smith

In the public safety plan I recently released these two areas — better training of police and an expansion of our capabilities in dealing with people suffering from mental illness — are cornerstones of the work we need to accomplish.

Our training should make sure officers arrive on the scene with a mindset to solve problems — not limited to punishment or arrest. The new training center is a chance to enhance training practices and implement better procedures for our police to use. We need to look at how other cities — New York’s department is far from perfect, but they have reduced the number of incidents involving police using weapons in recent years.

In addition, we must invest in treatment options that offer more choices about where to take people who come into contact with law enforcement and are suffering a mental health crisis. Today, they can go to the emergency room or to jail. That’s wasteful and ineffective. Our Mobile Crisis Unit pilot project works in only one precinct. We must expand programs like that to better serve the communities and the people affected. We must also work with our nonprofit service providers to bring the full complement of possible services into the equation every police officer can use when faced with these situations.

Finally, we need one more thing — better communication between all of Portland: communications that must be led by the mayor’s office.

I’m proud to have the support of safety activists, local civil rights leaders, public safety officers and clergy, who are all deeply concerned about public safety in our community and who all recognize the issues of police accountability being debated in Portland.

As mayor I will work to bring all of these parties together, to ensure that our streets are safe, to build faith between our communities and our police and that all people’s civil rights are respected.

See pages 4 and 5 for the remaining questions and the answers from Amanda Fritz and Mary Nolan

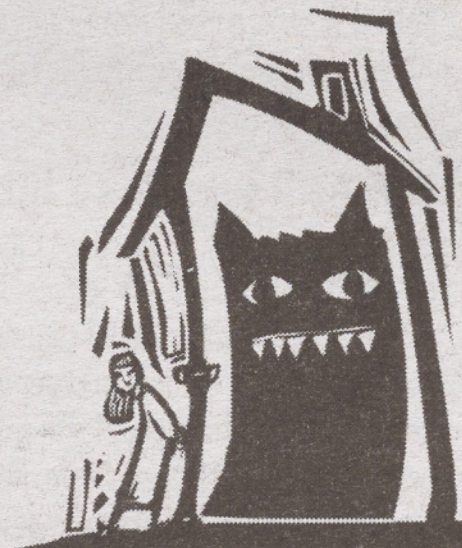
Inside



Measuring up

Street Roots weighs in on the state and local measures on a ballot near you

Page 3



Survivors' stories

Marking National Domestic Violence Awareness month with three stories of survival

Page 8



Joseph Stiglitz

An interview with the Nobel Prize winner about his new book on inequality

Page 10