



Mel Rader's 5-year-old daughter drew her pink pet unicorn, who she said was recently born in Portland. "My favorite thing about Multnomah County is raising a child here to develop innovative thinking, progressive values and an appreciation of the natural environment," Rader said.

QUIZ, from page 7

advocate for more investment in this area.

We should also look at additional strategies to promote rent equality including: (a) inclusionary zoning to ensure big developers are doing their part to promote affordable options, (b) greater fairness in property taxes, including shifting more of the burden onto commercial property away from residential, and (c) fixing the problem with the ADU tax issue at the county.

BRIAN WILSON

The county made its first direct investment in affordable housing this past budget cycle and is expected to do so again in the current cycle. I plan to continue and expand direct investment, partnering more closely with Portland Housing Bureau (still the primary agency in Portland responsible for development of housing) and the cities in East County to get more units into the pipeline. Further, I want to work hard on finding a new, sustainable and direct source of local funding for additional affordable units, especially units that meet the needs of families. Whether through a fund created as a byproduct of some new inclusionary zoning ordinance or a transfer tax on real estate sales, new sources will need to be identified if we want to make an effort to meet existing needs and the needs of the future.

ERIC ZIMMERMAN

This year, for the first time, the county has invested in developing affordable units. I want to invest funds in this manner to continue to build the inventory of the most-affordable units. This is part of the county's responsibility in A Home For Everyone to address homelessness and help get people into transitional and affordable housing. But we also need to be doing more to address workforce housing issues so that struggling families do not end up on the street because of evictions, rising rents or a personal financial setback.

4. Beyond Portland, Multnomah County encompasses smaller municipalities all dealing with housing and homeless issues, with the county often picking up the slack. How will you get other municipalities to better address these issues? (150 words or less)

MARISHA CHILDS

It's important that all regions/municipalities recognize this problem. The issue needs to be humanized with some of these other smaller municipalities, so that folks suffering with housing security and homelessness issues are treated as individual people, and not just a "problem." Multnomah County, as the leader in the area, needs to work with the smaller municipalities to figure out why it's an "us versus them" scenario. I think if representatives of these smaller municipalities saw the individual faces and heard the individual stories of homelessness, we might make more progress.

SHARON MEIERAN

Working together and looking at the answers regionally is the only way we can address this complex issue. As our housing crisis grows, more homeless people are moving out of the urban center, and this creates more challenges when people become even further removed and disconnected from services. We need to find regional solutions that give people access to housing and services they need to be safe, healthy and live with dignity. Just like Chair Kafoury and Commissioner Saltzman are working on a city and county joint office of homeless services, we need to engage the mayors of Gresham, Troutdale, Fairview other municipalities in a comprehensive approach that makes better use of resources.

MEL RADER

Implement a housing-first policy that provides very basic housing options for everyone. It costs far more to provide services for the homeless than it does to provide a home for them to live in.

Using bonding authority, the county should provide all homeless people with a basic home, then connect them with medical resources to stabilize health conditions and economic services to promote job opportunities. This approach provides a compassionate approach to solving our

3. Yes or No: Would you support establishing a safe injection site?

MARISHA CHILDS

Yes. A safe injection site is more hygienic, and using at a safe injection site/supervised injection reduces the likelihood for sharing needles. Further, in the event of some sort of medical emergency, personnel is there to respond accordingly.

SHARON MEIERAN: Yes.

MEL RADER: Yes.

BRIAN WILSON: Yes.

ERIC ZIMMERMAN: No

A FEW OF THEIR FAVORITE THINGS

Each candidate was asked to select a local artist – professional or amateur – to draw his or her favorite thing about Multnomah County. Their submissions are on Pages 8-10.

5. Story question: If Multnomah County's budget projections showed a severe deficit by 2017, what would be your approach now to prevent or mitigate that situation? (150 words or less)

MARISHA CHILDS

It would really depend on where the deficit was coming from. What agencies or departments have the largest budgets, and how are they spending those portions of the county's budget? I would work closely with the auditor's office to see where changes and reductions could be made. I would be transparent about that projection, and work with partners to chip away at that projected deficit.

SHARON MEIERAN

We must be prepared for an eventual downturn in the economy. No matter the timing, we must invest our resources wisely, truly understand where our money is going and focus on our core mission. I will work to avoid duplication of services and ensure that our limited dollars are being used to help the most people. I will also ensure that we leverage our information technology to create efficiencies without making our systems more complex than they need to be. Finally, we must invest in housing at the front end, because the return on this investment in the long term will enable people to live and function even in difficult times. If we are able to address these fundamental issues now, when we have the resources, we will be very well-placed to weather the storm when the inevitable downturn occurs.

MEL RADER

I would seek to find funding to support critical programs. Opportunities for funding include:

- (a) Refer a proposal for general obligation bonds to pay for low-income housing, (b) advocate at the state level for a reform of the property tax system, including increased taxes on commercial properties, (c) use

targeted excise taxes such as a tax on e-cigarettes at the same level as regular cigarettes to pay for addictions treatment programs, and (d) implementation of a construction tax as now allowed within the inclusionary zoning legislation.

I would also seek to find savings in current programs with the highest opportunity being to (a) reduce enforcement of nonviolent crimes to save money in the corrections systems and (b) negotiate with health systems to take on some of the health services currently paid for through general fund dollars.

BRIAN WILSON

A range of things. I'd look for non-essential programs to temporarily suspend, and divert any savings to mission-critical programs, especially front line health and human services and law enforcement. I'd work with county employee unions to try and temporarily cap labor costs, just as we did in 2006. We'll have to dip into the savings account, too, and probably try to raise cash through sale of non-essential county assets.

ERIC ZIMMERMAN

I will fight to maintain current service levels by ensuring we are not expanding programs today that have to be cut tomorrow. We need to focus on essential services, paying attention to those most in need. A bad budget is usually accompanied by a bad economy, translating in more need for county programs. We will need to work with county employees to minimize the impacts of cuts and prioritize programs. We will also need to look for ways to save money through innovative approaches and better use of data to understand what is working and what is not.

6. Complete this sentence with the following options: I smoke marijuana

- a. For medicinal purposes only. b. To decompress after a stressful day. c. Recreationally. Hey, it's legal. d. Rarely. e. Never.

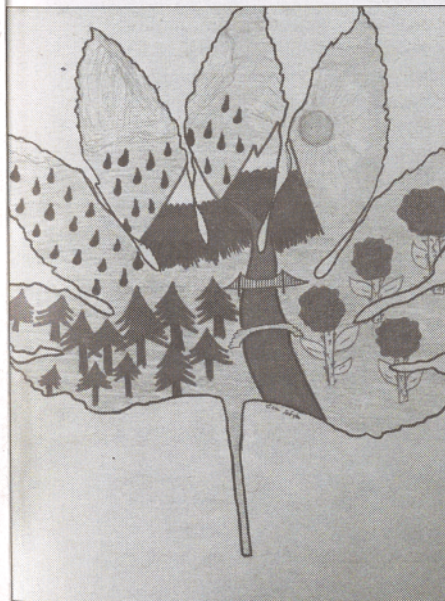
MARISHA CHILDS: e. Never.

SHARON MEIERAN: e. Never.

MEL RADER: d. Rarely.

BRIAN WILSON: e. Never.

ERIC ZIMMERMAN: e. Never.



Sharon Meieran submitted this artwork from her favorite artist – her daughter Ella.

8. How will you ensure young people of color will succeed in Multnomah County? (150 words or less)

MARISHA CHILDS

The county needs to provide opportunities for young people of color, including after-school activities and vocational training. This would also include opportunities for young people of color leaving jail, to make sure that they have opportunities and do not just end up back in the criminal justice system. This would require a re-allocation of funding, away from punishment for committing crimes, to preventing crimes in the first place.

Young people of color also need to see positive examples of leaders of color. I hope through myself, other people of color with interest in county and city leadership, and other leaders of color in the community, that young people will benefit from such examples.

SHARON MEIERAN

We need to engage youth and their families early on. We definitely need to promote school-based programs that provide mentorship, education, parenting support, leadership training. But we actually need to start even earlier than school to meet people where they're at, and provide effective programs that directly respond to the needs of traditionally underserved families and communities. I will work with community leaders and young people of color to understand the challenges they face and implement programs that will have the most impact. Ultimately, I believe we ensure the success of our youth when we can assure the financial security and economic viability for communities of color and offer meaningful pathways to higher education, training, apprenticeships and mentoring, jobs and housing/homeownership. We must find ways to ensure our county values, models and invests in these opportunities.

MEL RADER

The wage gap between whites and people of color is greater than it's been in many years with African Americans earning 76 percent and Hispanics earning 74 percent as much as whites.

The exact causes of these disparities are

complex, but it's critical that we address the solutions we can at the county by:

- Continuing to increase the minimum wage by looking into repealing Oregon's law that prohibits us from determining what our livable wage should be
• Advocating for labor unions' priorities including expanding hours for existing part-time employees rather than hiring more part-time staff to avoid paying benefits
• Serving undocumented residents with dignity and care

Another way to increase economic opportunity is to expand affordable childcare. This would allow all working parents to better provide for their families and reach their professional goals, and it would also reduce the likelihood of children's future interactions with public safety and corrections departments.

BRIAN WILSON

Using our amazing library system to help catch all kids with early reading programs to ensure they have the best chance for success staying in school and graduating.

ERIC ZIMMERMAN

I strongly support creating more opportunity for the youth of color, such as the Summer Youth Connect Program referenced above. We also must expand internships and other entry opportunities for youth of color to join the county workforce. There is also a critical conversation about children of color in our community and closing the achievement gap so that young people of color graduate from high school ready to succeed. That includes better parental support and early childhood education in a culturally conscious way. It also includes poverty reduction and helping working families avoid displacement, which can harm a child's education and uproot them from support in the community. And finally, we must work with law enforcement to provide better community policing that helps kids avoid criminal behavior and that reduces the number of our youth that enter into the juvenile justice system.

9. Pair the issue with the sentiment. Use each sentiment only once:

- 1. Sell Wapato Jail
2. Appointed (not elected) sheriff
3. Rent control
4. Regional Air Quality Bureau

- a. Great idea
b. Good idea
c. Needs work
d. Nope

MARISHA CHILDS

- 1. Sell Wapato Jail – d. Nope
2. Appointed sheriff – c. Needs work
3. Rent control – b. Good idea
4. Air quality bureau – a. Great idea

SHARON MEIERAN

- 1. Sell Wapato Jail – a. Great idea
2. Appointed sheriff – b. Good idea
3. Rent control – c. Needs work
4. Air quality bureau – d. Nope

MEL RADER

- 1. Sell Wapato Jail – c. Great idea
2. Appointed sheriff – b. Good idea

- 3. Rent control – c. Needs work
4. Air quality bureau – a. Nope

BRIAN WILSON

- 1. Sell Wapato Jail – a. Great idea
2. Appointed sheriff – b. Good idea
3. Rent control – c. Needs work
4. Air quality bureau – d. Nope

ERIC ZIMMERMAN

- 1. Sell Wapato Jail – a. Great idea
2. Appointed sheriff – b. Good idea
3. Rent control – c. Needs work
4. Air quality bureau – d. Nope