

SCHROEDER, from page 9

evictions and crazy inflation of rental units. I fully support campaign finance reform, and although I am a lifelong Democrat, I do not toe party lines, but rather approach each issue as unique with critical thinking determining my path.

When I was local president of my union, I never once signed a collective bargaining agreement or memorandum of understanding without getting insight and feedback from the people I was representing at the time (Veterans Affairs and had employees who ranged from claims adjudicators, to plastic surgeons, to gravediggers to police officers.)

I am an Army veteran, mother, wife, union organizer and community mobilizer. I am a member of the working class and have done this campaign working 40 hours a week because the working class needs a seat at the table where the decisions are made that affect our lives.

DISTRICT 1**Sharon Meieran**

1. *By nearly every metric, people of color are overrepresented throughout the criminal justice system. What are you going to do to correct that?*



The Racial and Ethnic Disparities Report clearly revealed objective evidence of the systemic

racism that exists throughout the criminal justice system at Multnomah County. We must directly acknowledge and accept this before we can move forward.

As a member of the Community Oversight Advisory Board that oversees the Department of Justice Settlement Agreement regarding Portland Police Bureau's use of force against people in mental health crisis, I have engaged with community members and advocacy groups representing communities of color about some difficult issues, including the systemic racism throughout our criminal justice (and other) systems. Rather than presume to know the best steps forward, I will listen and work with individuals who are directly affected and organizations representing these individuals to create a path forward to acknowledge and address the racial disparities faced by people of color throughout our justice system.

2. *Across the county, there is a massive imbalance of resources for people in need, with services concentrated in Portland. How do you see the county's role in getting its various municipalities to step up with dedicated resources to what is a regional need?*

This imbalance in resources is an issue that is extremely important to the county as a whole, and I will work with the mayors of Gresham, Wood Village, Troutdale and Fairview, along with the new West County commissioner, to consider this issue with fresh eyes, ears, hearts and minds. We must learn the priorities of these municipalities so we can work collaboratively as a board to address the needs of ALL Multnomah County communities and residents.

As an ER doctor, an advisory board member of the Unity Behavioral Health



Center, and as medical director of the Oregon Foundation for Reproductive Health, I work effectively not only as a director but as a member of a team to come up with the best approaches to address underlying needs. Though I would specifically represent West Multnomah County and inner Southeast Portland on the commission, my view would be toward the best outcomes for the county and the region as a whole.

3. *What are you going to do to curb opiate deaths and addiction?*

This issue is something I grapple with every day as an emergency physician. I see people who have addictions and want to get and stay clean; who have overdosed and need treatment and compassion; who suffer from effects of their addictions such as devastating skin infections, abscesses, dental emergencies, blood infections and heart valve infections. I regularly have patients tell me they desperately want to stop using drugs or alcohol, and I regularly have to tell them, "I have nowhere to send you. There is nowhere for you to go."

This is unacceptable, and my experience has prompted me to take action. I spearheaded efforts at the state level to address the epidemic of prescription opioid abuse. Working with Lines for Life and other community organizations, I have worked to raise awareness of the extent of the problem, and have engaged health care providers, local, state and elected officials, advocacy groups, and people with lived experience, to take action.

We need to recognize as a society that addiction is an illness and should be treated as such. We must invest in education, reimburse and provide alternatives to opioids for pain management, increase access to medication assisted treatment for opioid addiction, increase access to reversal agents such as naloxone for opioid overdose, invest in alternatives to incarceration for nonviolent drug-related offenses and invest in long-term substance abuse treatment centers. Only then will we be able to start making an impact on the epidemic of opioid addiction.

4. *In addition to the issues addressed above, what do you want to fix in the county?*

Although my priorities as county commissioner will be to address issues of housing, mental health care and public safety, I am not naïve enough to believe that I will be able to magically fix these on my own. Much of what I would like to work on at the county relates to process, accountability and transparency.

I believe we have started on the right path with the Home for Everyone program and the collaboration with the city with the Joint Office of Homeless Services to address the deep-rooted and complex issue of homelessness. This program uses best practices, has a systems approach and involves collaboration with individuals, nonprofit organizations, local government, the business community and others to achieve its goals. I would like to use similar processes to address our crises in mental health care and the criminal justice system. I am particularly passionate about delving deeply into the area of mental health care and mental illness.

I also recognize the importance of effective communication in explaining exactly what the county is doing to serve its residents, and where our taxpayer dollars are going. The county can and must do a better job of being transparent in its activities, engaging community members at all levels of process, and effectively communicating with our very diverse population of county residents.

5. *Why should people vote for you and not the other guy?*

I support Measure 97 – Eric opposes Measure 97. I support the county's campaign finance reform measure – Eric opposes this measure. I support the holistic and best-practices approach to the housing crisis adopted by A Home for Everyone – Eric focuses on Wapato Jail as the magic-bullet solution.

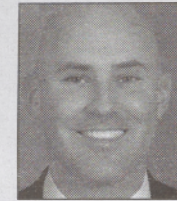
But what is more important than individual policy positions is the depth and breadth of experience I would bring to the office of Multnomah County commissioner:

I am a parent, a lawyer and an emergency room doctor. In my work in the ER, I have personally treated thousands of patients struggling with homelessness, economic

stress, chronic disease burden such as diabetes, legal issues, disabilities, domestic violence, mental illness and addiction issues. My training and experiences have given me a tremendous understanding and empathy for the struggles that people go through. Each person I treat is an individual with a unique story and unique issues to face. The insight I've gained from helping people as a doctor is something no bureaucratic experience can ever match. As a county commissioner, I will bring these personal experiences to make the right choices for all county residents through the services the county provides.

Eric Zimmerman

1. *By nearly every metric, people of color are overrepresented throughout the criminal justice system. What are you going to do to correct that?*



I am deeply concerned about the disparate treatment that people of color receive in our criminal justice system, both in terms of

arrests and prosecutions, as well as treatment while incarcerated. The recent audits showing how African-Americans in county jails are disproportionately subject to use of force by staff should be a wake-up call to this community. I support the recent decision by county prosecutors to move away from pursuing felony drug charges, a crime that has been used to target and incarcerate people of color in this community, particularly African-American males. We need to do more. We must work with county staff – both our criminal justice workers and those across county programs – to offer more training in cultural competency. We need to move forward with full implementation of Ban the Box to give those who have been through the justice system a better chance to get their life back on track. We need to do a better job adding diversity to the county's workforce to better reflect the community we serve, and that includes our criminal justice employees. And we need to pull out a seat and invite communities of color to the table when it comes to county decision making. I am committed to running a transparent, accountable county commission and addressing racial inequities is a cornerstone of that commitment to the community.

2. *Across the county, there is a massive imbalance of resources for people in need, with services concentrated in Portland. How do you see the county's role in getting its various municipalities to step up with dedicated resources to what is a regional need?*

Multnomah County faces the challenge of balancing the needs of a major modern city with the abilities of East County's smaller municipalities to serve local needs. The truth is we need to effectively serve people regardless of what part of the county they live in. There are clear unmet needs in East County. It will be vital for us on the County Commission to work with local leaders to identify how we can expand services and cover gaps in the system. I am proud to be supported by Multnomah County Commissioner Diane McKeel and other leaders from East County. I've worked with them on county issues, and I want to use that experience to take on the challenge of better helping people in need.

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