

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



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BETTY AND THE MAYOR

What if the idea were to shift more of the council votes to 5-3? Who might benefit from that and how could it be done? Let's try to think this through.

If the council remains evenly divided, then the mayor is empowered to break ties and become the decider. Since Mayor Piercy is not as conservative as the conservative half of the council, the more progressive side benefits by having a 4-4 council.

So, the strategy from a progressive point of view would be to keep Betty Taylor.

From a conservative point of view, the strategy would be to get someone to run against Betty who could claim to have her values, be portrayed as more vigorous and persuasive, and willing to consider some of the lesser unpalatable truths of the other side. The goal would be to get more 5-3 votes, especially in crucial times. The overall impact would be to reduce the power of the mayor to decide.

How to get this done? First, find an attractive young man with a compelling life story and have him move into Betty's ward. Spend two years helping him with his bona fides, and provide some backing, but not too much so as to leave an obvious trail. Build dissonance among Democrats by encouraging their self-destructive tendencies. Hire the best turncoat possible. This, sad to say, is the easy part.

Add in some ageism, an R-G editorial endorsement, and voila! People don't really plan and exercise power this way, do they?

Jerry Diethelm
 Eugene

DIFFERENT STANDARDS

The Lane County Commissioners appear to be deciding whether or not to invite public input based on their own bias. Three commissioners decided they will not hold a public hearing in Eugene on a resolution to support coal trains traveling through the city and communities in western Lane County. Yet, these same commissioners were anxious to hold a public hearing on plans to build an eight-mile bus rapid transit line in west Eugene.

Regarding the coal trains, Commissioner

Jay Bozievich was quoted in *The Register-Guard* (10/4) as saying "I don't think it rises to the need for a public hearing," and that he thinks that "researching issues and making decisions is what the voters elect them [the commissioners] to do."

However, his stance on the bus rapid transit along West 11th was completely opposite. Bozievich stated he believes many people who will be affected by the project are being shut out of the decision-making.

Coal export is an issue that would impact the entire western half of Lane County. Public input should be heard, no matter what side of the issue a person may take and particularly because coal mining and exporting is subsidized by public dollars. I ask, does it make sense to seek a public hearing for a local bus project while simultaneously refusing to give the public a voice in a coal export scheme that could impact thousands of county residents, as well as our air, water, salmon fisheries, energy policies and transportation infrastructure?

Lisa Arkin
 Executive director,
 Beyond Toxics

FALSE LOGIC

Letters in the 10/4 *Weekly* supporting Betty Taylor for Eugene City Council claim that contributions to her opponent Juan Carlos Valle define him as conservative. Don't let this false logic will sway your vote!

Fallacy #1: A donor's beliefs are defined by her/his source of income. Betty's campaign has received over \$1,500 from Deborah Noble, who is in the timber business — she is an avid progressive but if you buy this fallacy, you will incorrectly assume that these donations are from the timber industry.

Fallacy #2: A donation ensures that the candidate will do the donor's bidding. One of Betty's biggest donors is AutoCraft, an opponent of the West 11th extension of EmX. Did Betty oppose EmX so long because of AutoCraft's donation? I trust that is not the case, just as I know that Juan Carlos won't change his pro-environment, pro-equity stance because of some of his donations.

So why are folks from such diverse perspectives supporting Juan Carlos?