

# Momentum to Vote

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

ty finished first with 46 percent of the vote, and Smith a distant second at 21 percent of the total.

The battle between Smith's campaign and Hardesty's has been brutal for its attacks.

Smith has accused Hardesty of financial management of the volunteer-run NAACP, for victimizing her at a campaign event by dancing with a supporter she accused of sexually suggestive misconduct a few years back, and for accepting large campaign contributions from groups and orga-

nizations, despite Hardesty's support for campaign limits and portraying herself as a small donor candidate.

Smith, meanwhile, must attain voter trust in spite of accusations of bullying by co-workers and complaints of inappropriate spending while serving as a county commissioner. Smith has denied the allegations and called the investigations biased against her.

Also contrasting are each candidate's campaign donations: Smith raised \$210,000 more than Hardesty, but Hardesty boasts a higher number of small donors.

The candidates have similar viewpoints on how they would help run the city, such as advocating for transparency and inclusiveness on city policies, advocating for better tenant protections and more affordable housing, and de-criminalizing homelessness.

But they differ greatly in their respective approaches to issues like opening the unused, and now privately-owned, Wapato jail to be used as a shelter for the houseless. Hardesty once called the idea "idiotic" (she later apologized for that).

Hardesty, a Navy veteran, supports self-managed villages for the houseless, like Dignity Village and Right 2 Dream Too. She's also mentioned advocating for allowing the city to hire houseless people at minimum wage to help clean up the streets and bestowing mental health emergency services to Portland Fire and Rescue personnel, instead of police officers.

Hardesty has called for more police accountability in general, more training, and less homeless sweeps, while Smith said she'd like to see implicit bias training done for police. Unlike Hardesty, Smith said she would support an increased officer presence on school campuses to ensure students are safe from gun violence.

The Portland Observer emailed both candidates questions to get some of their final comments on the campaign. Below are highlights from their responses.

**Portland Observer: How do you feel about your campaign now that the election is just around the corner, as opposed to when it first started?**

**Hardesty:** I am humbled by my campaign team, by my supporters and volun-

teers, and most importantly, by voters... Early on, political pundits told us that we were behind in the polls, that our message would not resonate unless it were on TV, and more... I am excited for the momentum that my campaign has harnessed and I cannot wait to take that all of that energy to City Hall in January.

**Smith:** I am even more energized and deeply touched by all the support from so many people across this community. Portlanders love this city, but they also see that it's changing, concerned that many are being priced out and left behind. This election is about what kind of Portland we want.

**PO: Is there anything you would have done differently in the campaign?**

**Hardesty:** I have gotten to learn much more about policies, ideas and beliefs from having eyeball to eyeball conversations with people who are all eager to help. I don't think there's anything I would change.

**Smith:** My campaign has grown stronger every day. I see Portland through five generations of families living here, and as a life-long public servant, I will continue to advocate to keep Portland a great place to live and be a city that works for everyone.

**PO: What final reflection or message do you want voters to hear?**

**Hardesty:** It's inexcusable that in a city with so much wealth, we have so many people living under every bridge and every underpass... The good news is that most people I've met know we have a problem with housing and they want to help... I ask for your vote so that we can work to solve Portland's biggest challenges together and create a Portland that works for us all.

**Smith:** I'm effective and have a successful track record of bringing people together to improve our community. I have a plan to address our homeless crisis, build more affordable housing, create more jobs and extend economic opportunity to all Portlanders... I also want to thank the community for their support and I hope I earn your vote.

The cutoff for submitting ballots is Tuesday, Nov. 6 at 8 p.m. In Oregon, they must be received at a county elections office or official ballot drop off box by the 8 p.m. deadline. Postmarks do not count.



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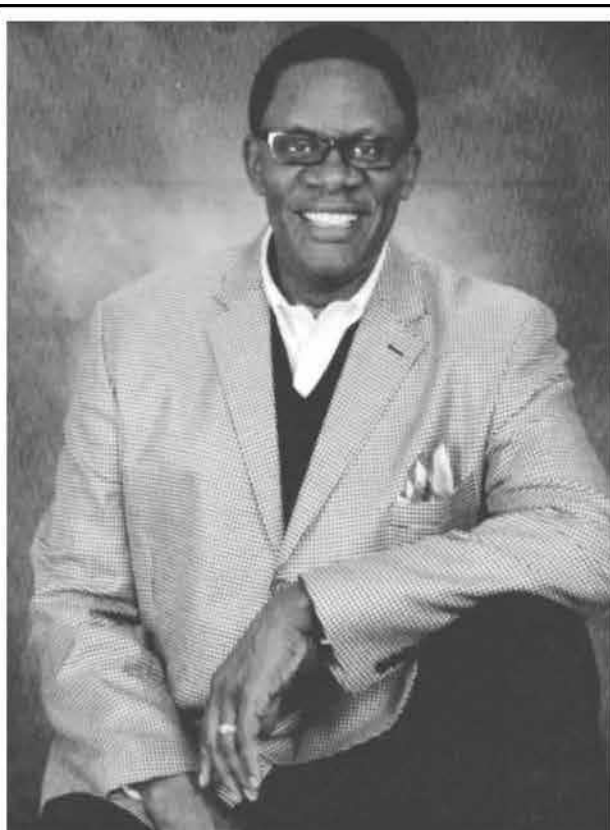
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