



“Challenging People to Shape
a Better Future Now”

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PATRICIA IRVIN
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MONICA J. FOSTER
Seattle Office Coordinator

JULIE KEEFE
SUSAN FRIED
Photographers



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415 N. Killingsworth St.,
P.O. Box 5455, Portland, OR 97228.
Telephone (503) 285-5555.
E-mail: info@theskanner.com
World Wide Web site:
<http://www.theskanner.com>
Fax: (503) 285-2900

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DOJ Appeal Won't Hurt Reforms

The Portland City Council voted 4-0 in October to appeal a slim slice of a judge's ruling regarding the U.S. Department of Justice and the Portland Police Bureau.

Since then, I've heard members of the community ask: Why? And what impact will this have on the settlement between the DOJ and the City?

Zero. There will be no impact on the reforms we have wholeheartedly embraced.

The Portland City Council and the attorneys who represent us seek clarity regarding the hearings, and the judge's role. Nothing more.

As a public servant, I wholly embrace the letter and spirit of the DOJ settlement. I recently appointed Assistant Chief Larry O'Dea to become the new chief of police, and much of my decision was based on Larry's unwavering commitment to these reforms.

The city began implementing changes long before the judge's much-delayed ruling. In areas of promoting, training and disciplining officers, the changes are under way.

We've changed our policies on use of force and use of Tasers. We have increased the Behavioral Health Unit. We've adopted wide-ranging policies on de-escalation that already are having a positive effect. Every week, I read reports



PORTLAND
MAYOR

Charlie
Hales

of police using the power of their words to bring a peaceful end to crises.

This week, we will enter into contract negotiations for a Compliance Officer and Community Liaison. The team we selected includes nationally acknowledged

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experts in the fields of police interactions with the community, and with people in mental health crises. Joining the team is former Oregon Supreme Court Chief Justice Paul De Muniz.

In December, we will begin seeking members for a Community Oversight Advisory Board. This is another body designed to make sure the residents are heard.

We do these things, not because

a judge tells us we must, but because they are the right things to do.

We are committed to reporting our progress to the community, to the Department of Justice, and to the Court. We appealed none of that.

What we appealed was ambiguity in the judge's role. We had asked for clarity on how we report, and when we report.

The judge's ruling was ambiguously worded. The community needs clarity and accountability in police reform. Portlanders deserve no less. Our police officers deserve no less.

So we are asking an appellate

court to help us find the clarity we need.

What we heard from groups like the Albina Ministerial Alliance for Justice and Police Reform is this: We do not trust the city.

Fair enough.

But moving forward, here's what I say to the alliance: We trust you.

You'll be there, every step of the way, along with allies such as the

American Civil Liberties Union and the League of Women Voters. You'll be watching us.

You'll have my ear. And you'll have the ears of every member of the council. You'll have access to the Compliance Officer and Community Liaison. You'll have access to the Community Oversight Advisory Board. Nothing will change, in regards to the Independent Police Review within the City Auditor's Office. You'll be able to report your findings to the United States Department of Justice. And you'll be able to speak before the judge.

We hope to get clarity on the judge's role and his hearings. But whether we get that clarity or not, none of those oversight mechanisms will be affected.

Your city's elected leaders are committed to police reform and to the DOJ settlement. That hasn't wavered, and it won't.

Police reform is one of the reasons I ran for mayor. I expect to be held accountable for making it real. And I would humbly submit that a mayor who wakes up every day thinking about the Police Bureau is most likely to succeed at leading it.

Charlie Hales is Mayor of Portland and serves as Police Commissioner.

Democrats: Losses Show Party Out of Sync

If there was one lesson to be learned on Election Day it was this: Until President Obama is gone and the Democratic Party leadership changes, Democrats will continue to lose.

Under Nancy Pelosi's leadership over the past four years House Democrats have lost 74 seats. In 2010 alone, Democrats lost 63 seats. This week they dropped another 12. For the 2014 campaign it was as if leaders of the party never talked to one another on strategy. Obviously, there was none.

President Obama was out bragging about his record week after week while Democrats were campaigning against it.

In a speech on September 28, President Obama said, "There's almost no economic measure by which we are not better off than when I took office. Unemployment down. Deficits down. Uninsured down. Poverty down. Energy production up. Manufacturing back." That's what the president was saying this campaign season.

"Make no mistake: These policies are on the ballot. Every single one of them," Obama said at Northwestern University on October 10. Those words were then immediately used by Republicans to beat Democrats all over the country.

It's one thing to say that Democrats should have run on the things they've gotten done. It's another to pretend you don't see that the overriding message of the 2014 campaign is an anti-Obama



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Victoria
Burke

one. That's what President Obama did. He pretended not to notice this entire campaign was a referendum on him. When you consider that race mixed with

Voters were casting a vote against the president. Yet, he still doesn't get it

American people right now, the resounding message not just of this election, but basically the last several is: Get stuff done," the president said at a news conference after election day.

No, that wasn't the message.

The message was a complete and full repudiation of President Obama. No one voting for candidates like Tom Cotton, Thom Tillis, Joni Ernst, Dan Sullivan or Mitch McConnell was voting to "get stuff done." That cast of candidates has committed to nothing

after they take office. Voters were casting a vote against the president. Yet, he still doesn't get it.

This week, President Obama and House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi have chosen to pretend that the election never happened. Pelosi is already calling members of the House asking for support to again lead the Democratic Caucus — an idea that should be laughable.

After the president ignored the Democratic National Committee and instead created Obama for America and erased Howard Dean's 50-state strategy, there is no strategic party apparatus.

Obama, as leader of the Democratic Party, has been non-existent in building party infrastructure. That will be a big part of the Obama legacy as he leaves office. That is, that the Democratic Party

as a whole is much weaker now than it was in 2008.

Why? Because Barack Obama is the RGIII of American politics: It's all about him. And no team can win a team sport when it's all about one player all the time. Additionally, no team can score and win on defense. The Democrats have been on defense since 2010 after the Affordable Care Act was signed in to law, even after 11 million Americans have signed up.

The Democratic Party keeps bragging that Georgia is the next state that will turn purple. That talk will end, at least for now. Just as in Texas, where the Democratic Party invested nothing to build its power in 2008, Georgia is now an example of how Democrats have failed. Even after the party spent \$60 million to register and get out voters this year in states like Georgia, North Carolina and Arkansas, Democrats still lost.

In Georgia, there were five African Americans running statewide and a race for governor and Senate. But the state did not come close to turning blue. Georgia is just one example of how Democrats need to get their policy message in line with their campaign strategy. That Michelle Nunn only received 25 percent of White votes should be impossible.

But until the party's leadership changes and is replaced with leaders focused on investing in state and local strategies, the same losing trends will continue.