

We have identified the following ten questions which we would like the candidates to submit written responses for posting on our website- (CKNA and BDNA). We have selected the first question that we will ask each candidate to respond directly to at the forum. In addition, candidates should select one other question from this list that they would like to address at the forum.

At the forum, after responding to the preset questions, we will open to questions from the chat.

Please respond with your written answers by Sunday, Apr 3, 2022 . Please also identify which question from the list that you would like to address in person at the forum.

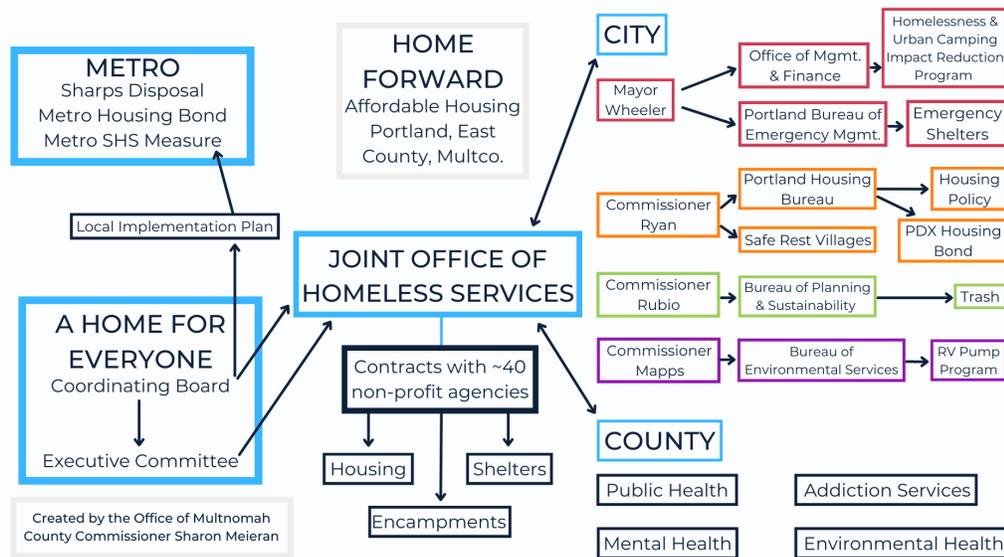
Let me know if any of this isn't clear and thanks again for participating

Category	Question
All candidates must respond to this question.	
Houseless Services	
1	<p>The idea for this forum came out of an experience that the Creston parent community encountered while supporting a school family faced with houselessness in the fall of 2021. This parent and child were #200 on the waitlist for shelter space. When they asked where they should sleep while they were waiting, they were told by the non-profit managing the homeless shelter (and contracted by the county) that they could provide a tent in the interim. We all know that the housing situation in Multnomah County is desperate, but it was an absolute shock to our community that the county was offering tents to single parents and their children rather than a safe shelter for the night. In the end, school parents raised funds to pay for motel shelter until a longer-term solution was found.</p> <p>It has been reported that there is a tension between the city and county in the preferred approach to housing policy with the county favoring a policy of prioritizing long-term permanent housing and the city pushing for short-term housing and shelters. How do you believe that this tension has contributed to the situation where single mothers cannot find temporary shelter in Multnomah County? What will be your approach to working with</p>

the City to ensure that every child in Multnomah County has access to a safe bed for the night?

It is unconscionable that anyone should be sleeping outside, particularly children. I'm an ER doctor who has cared for thousands of adults and children from different backgrounds, as well as a volunteer with Portland Street Medicine, caring for people living unsheltered outside, and a commissioner who has participated at the policy level on homeless issues and observed the degree of fragmentation and dysfunction in meeting after meeting.

Based on my experience, I believe that the issues we are facing with regard to homelessness are less about a tension between the City having one philosophy and the County having another, but more about local government structure and leadership. A picture speaks a thousand words:



The City and County are siloed - between each other and within their own organizational structures.

Nothing in this quagmire speaks to efficiency or accountability. Changing it will take dedication, deep understanding of the system, leadership, and unprecedented collaboration. I've been deeply engaged in this work, while being the only sitting commissioner to challenge the status quo. As Chair I will have the power to make change happen, and my experiences have given me the perspective to truly understand the issues, identify real solutions and have the skills to implement them.

	<p>In terms of specific policy solutions, as an ER doctor I always first stop the bleeding. To urgently respond to our humanitarian crisis, I've proposed adding three new crucial elements to our system:</p> <p>Micro-sites of 10-ish structures, with minimal footprint, distributed throughout the County, providing basic amenities (toilet, hygiene, shower/laundry, trash pickup), supported by peers.</p> <p>A network of safe parking sites.</p> <p>Meaningful coordination so case management, behavioral health and housing services are effective.</p> <p>We need to stop the one-off and reactive approaches that shelter tens to hundreds of people, when the need is thousands. We need to stop putting money into systems lacking accountability. We need to triage crises and act with innovative policies, such as my proposal, while we restructure the chaos of our current system.</p> <p>I have consistently been the only sitting commissioner who has spoken against the status quo which isn't working, called out the humanitarian crisis of people living unsheltered on our streets, and proposed a viable plan to move us forward.</p>
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Candidates- respond in writing to the following questions and choose one that you would like to address at the forum.

Housing

2	<p>Due to cost of living increases and other external pressures in Multnomah Co., many families are being displaced. This disproportionately impacts native people and communities of color. What sort of programs or policies do you support that would equitably address this problem?</p> <p>As the commissioner serving all of the county west of the Willamette River and inner southeast, I serve a part of the county that has a lot of wealth, but also many pockets of extreme poverty, along with neighborhoods housing many people of color, along with Indigenous and other historically marginalized and</p>
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	<p>underserved communities. They would like to see services and support in their neighborhoods so that they can remain in place, in their communities.</p> <p>I believe we need to be more intentional about the equity impacts across our County, and focus on how to keep people housed, such as through long term rent assistance and other supports and services, rather than negatively impact communities, cultures and the connections people have with each other by passively allowing displacement that disrupts communities and people's lives and wellbeing.</p>
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Behavioral Health Services	
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3	<p>Multnomah County is building an expansive Behavioral Health Resource Center in</p>
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	<p>Downtown Portland. What do you see as the barriers to accessing resources at the center to residents who live in Eastern Multnomah County? What is your plan for helping overcome those obstacles so that more residents can be served by the new resource center?</p> <p>As an emergency physician, I see people in behavioral health crises (including mental health crisis and crisis from substance abuse) end up in the ER, too often the most expensive and one of the least effective places to deal with their underlying issues. One of my top priorities has been behavioral health, and I have been a mental health advocate, steeped in the work, for years. When I started at the County, I sponsored a deep systems analysis of how services are provided and experienced in our region, and it laid out the tremendous challenges we face, along with recommendations for solutions.</p> <p>The Behavioral Health Resource Center (BHRC) will address a number of the needs that were called out, including needs for respite centers, culturally specific and peer workforce, shelter beds supported by dedicated behavioral health workers, and transitional housing for people coming out of institutional settings. This will fill a deep need in our County, but in a limited way.</p> <p>I have been a proponent of a model that has satellites and similar hubs in different sectors of the County, including East County. I believe we need a more holistic, accessible and effective system that meets the needs of all of our community, and this applies much more broadly than just to the BHRC. But until we have more sites, we need to ensure equitable access to the BHRC. This can be accomplished through providing</p>
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bus passes/ tri met/ and other appropriate modes of transportation, and virtual access to some programs and services. I will also look to the community, including consumers and providers, to understand how they would like to see their needs met.

Social Services

- 4 **The county manages the administration of SNAP and TANF benefits. These benefits are lifelines to many families struggling to make ends meet, however, when a family has a question about their benefits or spots an error and needs to contact the county, the phone wait can be over two hours. As a result, many county residents are left confused and with unanswered questions about their benefits. How would you work to update the customer service at DHS so that clients are able to manage their benefits without spending entire days trying to work through the system?**

People have shared horror stories of their experiences attempting to communicate with the County on a number of levels - from no one answering a phone, to extremely long wait times, to people not being courteous, or people constantly referring or just saying they didn't know the answer. I believe we need a full revamping of the system with unparalleled customer service. For one thing, we need real people to answer the phones. We need a system where issues or questions or complaints can be submitted in a variety of ways, and where all questions receive a response. We also need to work with community partners and community based organizations to increase access.

Elections

- 5 **Local elections are managed by the elections office which is a division of Multnomah County. Increasingly across the country, the validity and integrity of our elections has been challenged and election officials are being harassed. In parts of our country, state legislators are passing laws that restrict access to voting. What risk do you see for both the integrity and the accessibility of elections in Multnomah County? And what policies do you support to ensure safe access to free and fair elections in Multnomah County.**

We are fortunate in Multnomah County and in Oregon to have one of the most accessible election processes in the country. Our mail-in voting system has resulted in increased public confidence as more voters are using mail-in voting than ever before. However our democracy is fragile and we see that fragility and voter suppression happening all over

our country and we can't take what we have locally for granted. We must ensure our electeds do everything to maintain an open and fair electoral process.

One policy I support is making election day a national holiday. Locally I would look at how we can make voting more accessible on election day for Multnomah County employees.

Bridges

- 6 **Would you consider introducing bridge tolls on city bridges to pay for addiction services or other underfunded services in the county?** No. I would consider tolling, but I believe that bridge tolls should be connected to the service they are providing, namely, transportation-related infrastructure projects.

Public Safety

- 7 **Multnomah county residents and small business owners have become regular victims of \ crimes such as car theft, vandalism, break-ins and petty theft. What would be your approach as chair to addressing the issue of crime in Multnomah County?**

I think about this a lot. There are a lot of challenges we face as a result of our bifurcated local government and differences in roles and responsibilities and how we do business even within our structures. The County oversees the budget for jails, the sheriff's office, courts and DA's office. Yet the City oversees the police and emergency dispatch. I'm actually meeting with Commissioner Mapps to figure out ways our systems can coordinate and be more effective.

The question is not just about budgetary increases for existing programs, but whether we're investing in the right programs, and it's difficult to allocate funds when a huge chunk of the public safety system is not in your purview and you don't have control over it and there is not a collaborative relationship where we work on this holistically.

For people who are victims of crimes, we need a meaningful response. And for people who have engaged in criminal behavior, we need the right consequences. If someone committed a crime due to mental illness or a capacity issue, putting them in jail will not address the underlying issues. Rather, it is rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic, actually making people worse rather than changing their trajectory. One significant project I'm working on right now, is the Behavioral Health Emergency Coordination Network. This

will provide a resource for police, Portland Street Response and others to take people who have committed minor non-violent crimes related to mental health or substance use disorder, other than jail, where they can be triaged, stabilized, and connected to the services that can put them on a better path.

We need real time approaches to lessen the violence in the first place, informed by the community and what they are experiencing. Scott Kerman and Blanchet House - peers and teams who know people. Unfortunately, despite “urgently” investing, it is not meaningful. Streamline our approaches so we can respond.

And we need programs at the DA’s Office and in jails where address BH, recognizing that is in fact our reality. If we want people off drugs, we need the places they can go, and programs that work.

General

8 The position of county commissioner and county chair more specifically can be seen as a stepping stone in a political career. This can lead to office holders choosing strategic, politically-wise decisions over making difficult, sometimes unpopular decisions. What does success in this position look like to you?

Having served as a Multnomah County Commissioner for almost 5 years, I understand both what the job of Chair requires, and what the role of Chair can accomplish.

I originally ran for County Commissioner because of what I saw working on the front line in the emergency department - people ending up in crisis because they fell through the cracks in the systems of care that were meant to support them. These systems include mental health, substance use and recovery, homelessness, immigrant and refugee services, domestic violence, disability services, and so much more. I knew that if we put the right policies in place upstream, this could put people on a better path and improve the trajectory of their lives, the lives of their families, and our entire community.

Providing direct medical care to people living unsheltered and engaging with community members, I understand the issues facing people living outside, and the true public health, public safety and humanitarian crises being experienced by them everyday, along with their housed neighbors.

The work of the County is what I am passionate about. My priorities are and always have been core County issues -behavioral health, homelessness, public health, public safety - and I understand these systems on a very deep level.

I have no further political aspirations, and to be honest, if I didn't pursue this office, I could earn more money and not be exposed to some of the less desirable aspects of being a public figure in our current political climate. I am seeking the role of Chair because I know I'm the right person at the right time, and I could make a difference in the work I've been dedicated to for most of my adult working life.

I also would point out that I am not afraid to challenge the status quo. I've been the only sitting commissioner who has called out the humanitarian crisis of people living unsheltered on our streets, and proposed a viable alternative plan.

Success in this position will be leaving in four or eight years having a true holistic functional and effective mental health system in place (or well on its way), with people being able to access the services they need, where and when they need them, and, if they end up in crisis, they will not end up in an ER or jail, but at a place where their issues can be addressed promptly and meaningfully. Having a continuum of services available to address homelessness that is coordinated and centralized, with a By Name List of people who are unsheltered, which will ideally be a small number of people whose needs can be addressed, with data systems in place and public facing dashboards that let us know where things stand and where we might need to take action. There will be a spectrum of housing options, with elders supported in their homes, services provided in-home to people who need them, and sustainable measures in place to prevent people from becoming evicted. Having a contracting system that is consistent, centralized and open and holds contracting organizations to account for outcomes. And having a culture of trust, openness, collaboration, support and communication at the County.

Animal services- This question was submitted by a fifth grade class at Creston Elementary school

9 I love that so many animals are rescued and cared for in my community. How will you work to make sure that animals continue to be cared for in Multnomah County?

I too love animals and I thank you for this question. Our family recently said goodbye to our beloved dog Penny, who had a long and happy life and gave us all so much joy. We also have two pet rats - Merry and Pippin. Animals provide support to many of our community members that are both housed and unhoused, and we have a responsibility at Multnomah County to ensure that all animals receive care, support and safety. Our programs range from adoption services to volunteer programs and shelter. And I am hopeful that we will be able to build a new building that will house our Animal Services division, and have great spaces for animals to live and for people to work.

Oversight

10 **In December 2021, WW reported on the delay in issuing Emergency Housing Vouchers to Multnomah County Residents. Home Forward, a Multnomah County Partner agency, is responsible for issuing the vouchers. How do you plan to improve oversight and transparency to ensure that residents have access to services and benefits they are eligible for?**

The lack of accountability permeates all of the County's work, not just work on homelessness. It doesn't often make front page news because, when words like "contracts" and "performance metrics" are used, eyes tend to gloss over. But how the County contracts with service providers is at the core of how we ensure accountability and transparency in local government. As Chair, I will focus on transforming the way we do contracting, by streamlining and centralizing our processes, providing transparency through clear communication and public facing dashboards, and holding organizations accountable for the outcomes we purchase with taxpayer dollars.