

District 4

Steve Callaway

OPB: Is Washington County currently striking the right balance between protecting rural areas and farm land and allowing development for economic growth and housing construction? Are there ways you think the county should adjust that balance?

Callaway: Washington County is proud of its agricultural heritage and of the incredible companies who have located, expanded, and become an indispensable partners and community members. Washington County today, however, has far less flexibility to plan and manage the healthy tension between urban and rural areas. Legislation in 2014 removed significant chunks of the county's urban reserves – the land areas where the region agreed to future urban development. So today, Washington County's options for future urban development are considerably limited. As far as adjusting the balance, before Washington County changes its approach, we first need to have a broader conversation at the state level about modernizing our land use system. If we want to hit the Governor's lofty housing goals and create good paying jobs so our kids have a future in their communities, we must address the system under which cities and counties across Oregon operate. I firmly believe rural and urban industries can succeed in Oregon and Washington County if given the opportunity.

OPB: Washington County was one of the counties hardest hit by the escalation in immigration enforcement last year. Is there anything more Washington County can do to protect its immigrant residents if we see another surge in ICE activity? In what ways, if any, should the county work with the federal government when it comes to immigration?

Hillsboro is the most diverse large city in our state and the county seat of Oregon's most diverse county. Cornelius is a minority majority city and home to Centro Cultural and Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Clinic. Forest Grove is home location of Adelante Mujeres. So the impact of ICE raids and unlawful detainments was traumatic locally and felt directly and indirectly in many ways all across District 4. Family disruptions, lost wages, farmers lost farmworkers, businesses struggling, homes and apartments no longer feel safe, and previous safe spaces (schools, places of worship, courthouses and government buildings, hospitals) are no longer safe. Due to the supremacy clause the authority and power of local governments is limited. But I support the emergency declaration ordinance passed by the County (and local cities) and the accompanying actions.

As a Commissioner I will seek assurances and confirmation that county staff is adhering to Oregon's Sanctuary Law. I will continue to share the facts and experiences of District 4 with federal officials and seek their partnerships is upholding due process and providing tight federal oversight. with I will continue to stand up for the Latino community, immigrants, and people of

all backgrounds and I will be open to additional ways and strategies to provide support and protection.

OPB: Last year the county tried to strike a balance with its DEI policies between upholding its values and not making a target of itself for the Trump administration. Was this the right approach? Why or why not? What would you do going forward?

The City of Hillsboro dealt with a similar situation in 2017 during my first few months as Mayor and shortly after the first Trump administration came into power. During deliberations about declaring Sanctuary City status, we heard from those who did not want our city to become a target, did not want to lose federal funds, feared repercussions from the federal government, and were concerned that a well-intentioned action meant to support might increase the vulnerability of some community members. I cast the deciding vote to identify Hillsboro as a sanctuary city, acknowledging that while it was a largely symbolic vote it nonetheless expressed our community's values and reaffirmed our commitment to Oregon's sanctuary laws. It's important to note that the small amount of direct federal dollars Hillsboro received were not directly threatened by the first Trump administration as the County's larger amount of Federal funds have been with the second Trump administration. From my perspective it appears that while some County's value statements or declarations may have been reworded the values of the county have remained the same. This is an approach I have seen used by other nonprofits and foundations as well. I support and won't second-guess the Commission's approach. I think it was reasonable and would use a similar, thoughtful, and deliberative approach moving forward as the county commissioners did and as I did as Mayor of Hillsboro

OPB: How do you plan to approach the tightening budget that Washington County and jurisdictions across the state face? Would you consider incremental cuts county wide or larger cuts to a few specific departments? Would you consider new taxes or other means of raising funds to prevent cuts?

My approach to tightening Washington County's budget will be the first lesson, ask questions, study the previous decisions and learn why they were made.

I will follow this year's budget process to help prepare for the 27-28 budget, which will be the first one this incoming Commission will present.

I served on the City of Hillsboro budget committee for about 25 years, serving as Chair or Vice Chair for many of them. Recently Hillsboro went from an annual budget to a biennial (2 year) budget for better planning and stability. In addition to municipal budgets, I have served as Treasurer of the Oregon Mayors Association and the League of Oregon Cities. I am in my 10th year as a board member for Community Action Organization. In this position I help oversee a budget that serves many vulnerable low-income members of our community. It is important to

note that my budget experience has included the pandemic era, a period of hyperinflation, a recession, periods of rising costs, and declining revenue.

Unlike most city budgets, which funds programs and departments that are overseen by city staff and administration, the County Commission establishes the budget for departments that are overseen by other elected officials such as the Sheriff's department (including the jail), the District Attorney's Office and the County Auditor. So this introduces another dynamic that will be part of my learning curve.

It is imperative that the budget focuses on services to people and the core responsibilities of the county. I would consider incremental and large cuts, but I recognize to a smaller program a incremental cut is the same as a large cut and could be devastating in its impact. If there is a program slated to sunset in the next year or two, that should also be taken into consideration. I would consider increasing revenue, but don't know by which means or actions because the current Commission may utilize some of them this upcoming budget cycle. We must continue to communicate at the state and federal level about current local conditions and the impact their policy decisions have on Washington County, especially when there are unfunded and underfunded mandates