NAME CANDIDACY
Office: Eugene City Council, Ward 8

Candidate comm # or PAC #: Randy Groves for Eugene, PAC 20155

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HIGHER ED
Please describe your views and position on funding or support for higher education, including, but not limited to, State funding, tuition rates, University accountability, etc., Please describe your views and position on state transparency, especially in relation to University foundations that (are meant to) serve the interests of the State and its people.

I support higher education. I hold a B.S. in Planning, Public Policy and Management from the University of Oregon. My wife and I are currently supporting our two children in college and are acutely aware of the cost of tuition, books and materials, and housing. I support fixed tuition rates so that our students have more predictability in planning their higher education pursuits. I also support efforts by the state to control, and preferably bring down the cost of tuition. Our universities need to be accountable for their expenditures and tuition increases and I support transparency in our university foundations.

Unfortunately, while I am supportive of these ideals, as a city councilor I will have no legislative authority over these issues.

UNION RIGHTS
Do you support the right of employees to collectively bargain? **Yes**

Would you oppose efforts to eliminate or restrict the right of workers and their unions to represent all workers or use payroll-deduction for union dues, including publicly opposing ballot measures? **Yes**

How likely are you to publicly oppose measures, as indicated above, that are deemed to be hostile to organized labor? **I have been an IAFF Local 851 labor leader in the**
past and I continued to be a supporter of labor as Fire Chief. I will publicly oppose measures designed to limit or restrict workers’ rights.

What are some of the ways you imagine pushing back on the continued effort to weaken Union strength (State legislation following Janus v. AFSCME; attempt to gut LERC; etc.,)? I am willing to make public statements and contact our state representatives to advocate for labor. I opposed right-to-work legislation and I have been a participant and beneficiary of the LERC program.

LOCAL ISSUES
What is your position (and any plans) on addressing the Eugene/Springfield housing situation? With a 2.9% rental vacancy rate, (less than half the national average) we have a housing crisis in Eugene where the cost of rent and housing prices are outpacing wage growth. Wages have increased by about 14% since 2010, at the same time the median rental rate has increased by 47%, and the median home value has increased by 130%. We have a growing population that is experiencing housing cost stress. I will come at this problem from two directions, increasing our inventory and diversity of our housing stock while working to combat wage stagnation. To accomplish this, I will work to increase housing density in our downtown, mixed use and more dense housing along our transit corridors, and more density in our detached single-residential neighborhoods as provided for in HB2001. I will also work to enact policies that encourage the development of more housing through a number of different strategies including incentives and seeking out responsible developers who can enact a vision supporting the ideals discussed above.

Our area has seen an uptick in “hate crimes” and related activities. How would you work towards addressing these issues? The solution starts with a strong advocacy for embracing our differences, and education on hate crimes occurring within our community. It’s important for both elected and appointed officials to make clear that they stand with the folks being targeted by this kind of violence; including different organizations that advocate for under-represented groups such as the NAACP and Centro Latino Americano.

Finally, it ends with a strong no tolerance policy for hate crimes, and includes policy direction for our police force that sets expectations for both proactive and reactive response to problems that occur.

How do you plan on addressing issues around poverty and homelessness in our area? I will work to continue improving and diversifying our economy and producing more living wage jobs. It should be noted that although statistically we are experiencing low unemployment, we have high underemployment making it difficult for our lower wage earners to survive. For addressing our homelessness issue, the City of Eugene and Lane County jointly commissioned a study on
homelessness which resulted in the development of the Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC) Report. This report provides us with a roadmap to follow and solutions to enact that will help us address our homelessness problem. Some of the recommendations included in the report are already being implemented. I want to see us continue this effort and work to phase in implementation of the remaining recommendations as we identify resources support the effort.

CAMPAIGN QUESTIONS
Are there choices or decisions you have made in the past that we should be aware of in making our recommendation to support your candidacy? I am the former Eugene Springfield Fire Chief who retired in 2016 after more than 36 years of service. I currently serve on the City of Eugene’s Budget Committee. Over the course of my professional career, I have made many decisions, but I can think of none that would negatively impact your decision to support my candidacy. My behavior has been very consistent throughout my career and personal life.

What are your three primary goals while serving in this position, both short term and longer term? Increasing the inventory and diversity of our housing to improve affordability. Working to address our homelessness issue. Improve our Economy and Jobs with an emphasis supporting labor including the Community Benefit Framework concept, and creating more living wage jobs.

How will those goals and your plans while in office benefit Higher Ed organized labor as well as the students we serve? Supporting labor and working to address wage stagnation will help support those who work in higher education. Increasing the inventory and diversity of our housing stock to make housing more affordable, will again help those working in higher education as well as students who live off campus and attend our local institutions of higher education. Finally, working to address our homelessness issue will not only help those experiencing homelessness, but help improve the quality of our neighborhoods surrounding our higher education campuses.

Why did you decide to run for this position? I have been in public service my entire adult life and after retiring and having our children leave home, I sought to again become involved in government by applying to serve on our Eugene’s Budget Committee. When I met with my City Councilor, Chris Pryor, he informed me that he would not be seeking reelection when his term expired after serving four terms in office. After speaking with Chris, my family and a number of people in our community, I decided to run for the Ward 8 seat. I have lived in Ward 8 since 1983, I have been involved in our community, and my spouse and I both volunteered in the schools. I was also a Churchill Area Babe Ruth baseball coach and board member for about six years.
What other organizations are supporting your candidacy? I have endorsements from the Lane County Labor Council, Lane Professional Firefighters Local 851, IBEW Local 280, Eugene Police Employees Association, as well as individuals such as State Labor Commissioner Val Hoyle, the Ward 8 incumbent Councilor Chris Pryor (not seeking reelection), Lane County Commissioner Heather Buch, and three 4j School Board members and one past board member to name a few. I am also in the process of seeking further labor endorsements after receiving the Lane County Labor Council endorsement. For a complete listing, see my web site at www.randygroves.org

What is your plan to win your election? Market my experience and track record of success working within the same system I am seeking elective office in. I have served as a line firefighter, union representative, captain, shift supervisor, Deputy Chief over Operations (division manager), and Chief of Department (executive manager). I set the vision and led the merger between the Eugene and Springfield fire departments which resulted in saving money and improving service while retaining all of our firefighters. I served as an executive manager and was at the helm of our fire department throughout the Great Recession, and actually improved our service in a number of areas during this time of scarcity.

I am working hard to raise money, I have a goal of knocking on every door in Ward 8, I am connecting with voters individually and in groups, I am seeking endorsements from people and organizations that represent my values, and I am working very hard to win this election and serve our community.

I have also hired a Campaign Manager who has worked on numerous campaigns in our community, including serving as a field organizer for Peter DeFazio’s 2016 campaign.

What would UAUO’s endorsement mean to you? The endorsement would help demonstrate the value I place on higher education as well as support my strong advocacy for organized labor.