NAME: Tim Morris

CANDIDACY

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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.,
I support higher education and support low, or no, costs to receiving a higher education. Our community greatly benefits from Lane Community College and the University of Oregon, including many out of state visitors, experts in a variety of fields of studies, and mutually beneficial support systems wherein UO, LCC and Eugene can thrive together.

As a member of the Lane Community College Budget Committee, I was a frequent advocate against tuition hikes and instead, I advocated for cuts at the higher levels of the college administration. The cost of running the school should not fall on the students who are attending.

As a city councilor, I plan to fully utilize the resources offered by our local colleges. There is a wealth of experience and knowledge that the Eugene city council does not utilize, including the LERC. I’m proud to fully support LERC now as a regular citizen and as a future city councilor.

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.
Transparency in government is crucial for a community. I believe that big donors to universities often have strings attached to their donations and, whether by ignorance or malice, detrimental harm is brought to public interests when these donations are not publicized. I believe that there is much to be gained by ensuring that a public budgetary process is in place and that all transactions are searchable by the public. Only until our community can hold each other accountable can we truly have a transparent process.

UNION RIGHTS
Do you support the right of employees to collectively bargain?
I fully support employees' rights to collectively bargain. Years ago, I was hired as an independent contractor as a delivery driver for a newspaper company. Wage theft was frequent, our workspace was often unsafe, and threats of firing people for minor infractions were commonplace. Without a union to stand up for us, we were powerless to prevent exploitation. This experience showed me first hand the importance of unions. I am fully supportive of the work LERC does on campus to not only protect workers rights but further protection of the working class.

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. In 2017, I stood in solidarity with AFC-SME 2831 during the Lane County worker strike. This strike is a perfect example of a breakdown of communication between elected officials, management, and employees; and how open communication and strong union supporters elected into office could serve to support workers in equality and equity. I am proud to say I have never crossed a picket line, never have and never will. As a City Councilor, I will oppose any ballot measures seeking to reduce the support systems that Unions need to function.

How likely are you to publicly oppose measures, as indicated above, that are deemed to be hostile to organized labor?
Incredibly likely, and proudly.

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 respect the work of AFSCME to represent Eugene city employees and protect their livelihoods. As a City Councilor, I will use my bully pulpit to continually stand strong with unions. Often, our city councilors will stand silent on issues that are not directly under the purview of Eugene. I will testify in Salem against bills that serve to weaken unions. Issues like demanding fair pay with the women of UFCW Local 555, or UO GTFF striking to support a living wage for staff in our universities, or SEIU Local 49 who find it unreasonable to expect anyone to pay a 21% increase on health insurance premiums. As a private citizen, I have made my stances on these worker’s rights issues and I plan to continue standing up for workers as an elected official.

LOCAL ISSUES
What is your position (and any plans) on addressing the Eugene/Springfield housing Situation?
We must work towards removing restrictions on building diverse housing. Existing in our local housing codes are several intentional roadblocks set up to prevent the construction or existence of diverse housing. Our campaign has one of the most aggressive house reform plan; reduction of
restrictions with zoning laws, no/reduced system development charges for already existing structures, reformatting our archaic and outdated zoning laws, and working as an activist to do outreach and connect with people in Eugene to change the narrative of the positive effects of 20 minute neighborhoods.

Our area has seen an uptick in “hate crimes” and related activities. How would you work towards addressing these issues?
I believe our community is ready to stand up and stand strong to the hatred living in our city. I have attended many “hate” rallies as a counter protester and every time, the counter protesters outnumber the attendees. I plan to fully support the new Multi-cultural liaison position which can serve as a conduit for change between the city of Eugene and the vulnerable populations living here. I believe we need strong, bold leadership in the face of standing up against hatred. I plan to advocate taking on the actual nomenclature “Sanctuary City” to ensure that people know Eugene is a safe place. I’m extremely frustrated that Eugene’s own vote to condemn White Nationalism in July barely passed, 4-3 in favor, with my own city councilor voting against this resolution. I believe we need to stand strong in the face of adversity and stand together with our vulnerable neighbors. If I was a city councilor at the time, I would be proud to cast my vote in favor of condemning white nationalism and advocating that this is a belief that the City of Eugene will follow for the rest of our history.

How do you plan on addressing issues around poverty and homelessness in our area?

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 have made commitments to support Project Labor Agreements with bids for construction in the city of Eugene. I have committed to supporting construction within the Urban Growth Boundary and not to vote for more urban sprawl. I have been quoted several times in the newspaper regarding my stance on homophobia, skyrocketing rent prices, short term rentals, and more.

What are your three primary goals while serving in this position, both short term and longer-term?
1. In the long term, I want to be a part of re-drafting Eugene’s zoning code to be in compliance with HB2001, the Multi-Unit zoning bill. I serve on the Rulemaking Advisory Committee for HB2001 and HB 2003 and in that room, we enact the ideas and solutions of people from all across the spectrum of opinions on housing density. If we can have even the most staunch anti-growth individual agreeing to specific limitations, we can easily update our housing code to reflect the changes. I believe that Eugene is a unique city and our zoning code needs to reflect that which is why I am in support of not adopting the model code, but creating our own. I advocate for building a code that will last for decades to come.

2. Trends for cities show that many people are ready to step away from their cars and begin taking alternative transportation. As a city councilor, I will actively look for ways to implement our adopted Transportation System Plan, which outlines several options to encourage people out of their cars into more environmentally friendly options. Public transportation will be key to
reducing carbon emissions and getting single occupant vehicles off the streets. However, while we promote alternative transportation such as bike riding, walking and taking public transportation, it is vital that our sidewalks and bike lanes are safe. One such protection is Red Light Cameras, which are proven to reduce traffic fatalities and support pedestrians going about their daily lives.

3. When it comes to talking about the homeless, facts and opinions tend to blur. The fact of the matter is that Eugene has the highest homeless population in the country per capita. Every constituent I talk to talks about homelessness and ask what can we be doing as a city to “deal with the homeless?” I believe that there is not a single solution to addressing homeless, rather multiple directives to take. First we need to provide renter support, such as revolving loan funds for security deposits and incentivising evictions for monetary gain, to keep people in their homes and not on the streets. We must also provide more housing to keep rents affordable. We must also diversify our housing stock with significantly missing “middle housing” options in order to diversify our neighborhoods.
Second, we need to coordinate our public service organizations and nonprofits to better serve a broader range of services. When you are unhoused, you do not just face a lack of housing. You may face challenges with your health, access to food/water, adequate clothing, medication, etc. We must build more low barrier income housing but also provide a space to address other issues a person may face.
Third, criminalization of the unhoused population continues to grow rampant. For example, a recent report was released by the Eugene Human Rights Commission speaking to just this issue. Ninety-nine out of a sample of 100 work orders to clean up “homeless camps” involved camp sites found in obscure or hidden areas of parks or open spaces—nowhere near foot traffic, residential areas, schools or playgrounds. Often these clean ups happen at random and without warning, which often leads to people losing their belongings. We need to pull back our “sticks” and begin providing “carrots” to address over criminalization of people who don’t have anywhere else to go.

How will those goals and your plans while in office benefit Higher Ed organized labor as well as the students we serve?
In order to serve a diverse range of students, it is crucial we have a diverse range of housing options. Eugene’s rental vacancy rate is roughly 2%, whereas an average city’s is 5% - 8%. What this data tells us is that we have more people looking for housing then places for them to go. We have to lift restrictions towards building affordable and accessible housing for all ranges of people.
Our cities thrive when our neighborhoods thrive. With a diverse range of people living in our neighborhoods, we can see our local economic strength grow as well and see a diverse range of jobs available.
I believe it is important to also have an elected official supported by educators and education organizations. Our campaign has earned the endorsement and support of Lane Community College Board Members Melanie Munzer, Angela Van Krouse, Chelsea Jennings, and Lisa Fragala. We have also received support from 4J school Board member Dr. Martina Shabram and
from GTFF local 3544. As the youngest city council candidate in Eugene, let alone in Ward 1, I believe that in a city which average age is 33 having a young representative voice is incredibly important.

Why did you decide to run for this position?
I am running because I want to make bold changes to how our city views housing, and to begin implementing changes to grow our woefully missing middle housing. I’m running for Eugene City Council because I am a community organizer and activist who has formed two different service based non-profits and this experience is missing on Eugene City Council. I’m running for Eugene city council because in a city with an average age of 33, we see a lack of urgency from our city council to address climate change, who’s average age is 63, while my generation is fighting like hell to save our futures and the futures of generations after us. Eugene’s elected leaders do not see the homeless population as I do in my role in substance recovery. Eugene is the #1 capital for homeless people and rising. Platitudes and vague plans will not address anything, and I believe that Eugene as a city can become a city of support for those in need. Eugene is hungry for change and I believe that I can bring bold leadership as a city councilor. If elected, I would be the youngest city councilor by about 20 years, the first progressive LGBT city councilor in 30 years, the only city councilor who founded a housing-related nonprofit, the only progressive renter on city council, and the only city councilor with experience in substance use treatment work. These are all vital perspectives and I am running to bring fresh new ideas to Eugene.

What other organizations are supporting your candidacy?
Democratic Party of Lane County
Joint Council of Teamsters local #37
Lane Labor
Graduated Teachers Fellows Federation
Sierra Club Many Rivers
Among 30+ community leaders and elected officials

What is your plan to win your election?
Our campaign and kitchen cabinet team has over 50+ collective years working on campaigns. We are a grassroots funded campaign, working tirelessly with volunteers and staff to connect with everyone in Ward 1. We plan to knock every door in Ward 1 with the help of a dedicated team of local community volunteers who are ready to see change on our City Council. We will also be making calls and connecting with people through a variety of house parties, listening sessions, town halls, and community events.

What would UAUO’s endorsement mean to you?
UAUO stands as a representative of progressive educational community members. Earning the UAUO’s endorsement will show the community that our campaign directly serves the educational community and that if elected, I will be a strong advocate for students, educators, and people of my own generation who are looking for a representative voice in elected office.