

## **The Oregonian**

# **Mayoral candidate Iannarone calls out Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler over Sondland donations**

*By Emily Goodykoontz  
October 5, 2019*

A controversy over Portland hotelier Gordon Sondland's involvement in the Ukraine deepened its local ties Saturday as Portland mayoral candidate Sarah Iannarone publicly questioned donations Sondland made to Mayor Ted Wheeler's campaigns in 2016 and 2012.

The donations total \$15,500 and come from Sondland and his Provenance Hotel fund.

Sondland, who became the U.S. ambassador to the European Union last summer, has recently become embroiled in the Ukraine scandal and President Donald Trump's impeachment inquiry. He is reportedly scheduled to voluntarily testify Tuesday before Congress and could be the first current federal employee to testify.

The ambassador and Oregon hotelier continues to figure at the center of the unfolding drama of President Trump's dealings with Ukraine.

Sondland is a wealthy Portland hotel owner whose companies donated \$1 million to Trump's inauguration.

On Saturday, Iannarone's campaign publicly called on Wheeler to return Sondland's donations in a tweet and a news release.

"Our entire campaign is focused around an idea that massive donations from corporations and individuals corrupt our political atmosphere and especially when those are from someone who has actively worked to subvert our democracy," Iannarone's campaign manager, Gregory McKelvey, said, referencing Sondland's involvement with the Trump-Ukraine scandal.

McKelvey said that going forward, he'd like to see Wheeler "be more cognizant of the money that he's taking."

"Ideally Mayor Wheeler would return that money and make it clear that Mr. Sondland's money has no place in Oregon politics," McKelvey said.

Tim Becker, spokesman for the mayor, said the mayor's office cannot legally comment on previous campaign finances. Wheeler's campaign could not immediately be reached for comment.

Amy Rathfelder, Wheeler's deputy campaign manager, responded in an emailed statement.

"Like many Americans, I am eagerly awaiting to hear Mr. Sondland's testimony to Congress. I hope and expect that he will testify truthfully when he is called to do so," Rathfelder said. "We will be making a decision once we learn more about the nature of his role."

McKelvey also said the county would ideally set a lower campaign contribution limit -- large donations allow for corporations to have too much influence over Oregon politics, he said.

In November 2016, voters amended Multnomah County's charter, setting a campaign contribution limit of \$500 that was not in effect during Wheeler's 2016 campaign. That limit was struck down in Multnomah County Circuit Court in 2018 as a violation of free speech. The

county has since filed an appeal, and that appeal is set to go before the Oregon Supreme Court on Nov. 1.

McKelvey noted that Iannarone's campaign has set its own limit of \$250, focusing on "individuals and not entities" and does not accept donations from corporations.

Wheeler took donations from Sondland and an affiliated LLC on three separate occasions, totaling \$15,000 during Wheeler's 2016 campaign. The most recent, a donation for \$10,000, came just days before Wheeler was elected, McKelvey said.

"That at least gives the appearance of a conflict and potentially is a conflict," McKelvey said.

## **Letter from the Editor: Changing of the guard at City Hall**

*By Therese Bottomly*

*October 4, 2019*

The Portland City Hall beat is an important and high profile one for The Oregonian/OregonLive. This is a time of great consequence for the city, now with more than 650,000 residents.

Next year brings an election where the mayor's race and two City Council seats will be decided. Those in office next year will play an important role in what could be a controversial charter review process. Growth continues apace, with the resulting traffic congestion and housing challenges. Homelessness remains a top concern for residents and businesses.

Newsrooms are typically organized around beats -- education, business, government, to name a few. This week, Everton Bailey Jr., 31, started on the City Hall beat. He is an experienced reporter with nine years at The Oregonian/OregonLive. He has reported on crime, courts and breaking news primarily, but he also has covered local government and politics as The Oregonian/OregonLive's reporter assigned to West Linn and Lake Oswego city government. Before coming to Oregon, he was a legislative reporter for The Associated Press in Hartford, Conn.

For years, the newsroom had office space at City Hall (at times, not much more than a closet), but there is no media room currently. Bailey plans to spend most of his time there, however, learning as much as he can about city government as quickly as he can. You'll be able to find him by following the sound of his infectious laugh.

As for his approach to the job, he says he wants to spend less time writing about policy at the 30,000-foot level. "I am more interested in how that policy hurts or benefits people," he said.

Bailey looks forward to collaborating with other newsroom reporters who also cover city issues, most notably the Police Bureau, homelessness and transportation. "I'm really committed to learning as much as I can and listening to people," he said.

The beat is competitive and fast-paced because several other local news organizations cover City Hall closely. It's also an important beat for our readers, who may live, work or travel in Portland. The decisions made by the mayor and the council play out in readers' daily lives.

There are times the city's leaders think we are too tough on them or unfair in our unrelenting scrutiny, but part of our core mission is to hold those in power accountable for their actions.

Bailey describes his approach as a diligent effort to learn what is really going on. "The way I approach people and the way I interact with people opens doors," he said.

Betsy Hammond, on the Public Interest & Accountability team, is Bailey's editor and will help him set reporting priorities. "I view the three upcoming election contests, for the mayor's seat and two seats on the council, as crucial ones to provide voters information about," she said.

"I think the mayor and council's accomplishments or lack thereof regarding homelessness and affordable housing are No. 1 in the mind of readers, and we want to serve them well in that regard."

And, she added, "Minding money, from a watchdog point of view, is essential."

## **The Portland Tribune**

### **Sellwood neighbors rally around community center**

*By Samantha Kar*

*October 6, 2019*

#### **Facing an end to city funding, Southeast Portland residents take over operation of beloved facility.**

Sellwood residents have used their community center for over a century. In September, they were given the keys to the building.

That's because on Aug. 30, the city of Portland cut off funding to the park district property. Residents of the Southeast Portland neighborhood, however, would not allow the Sellwood Community Center to go down without a fight, as the building provides various popular programs including childcare and exercise classes.

The Friends of Sellwood Community House, a subcommittee of the neighborhood association SMILE — or Sellwood-Moreland Improvement League — successfully obtained permission to run operations in the building.

Members of the subcommittee signed a lease agreement with the city on Sept. 5, and got the keys the next day. The subcommittee has been established as a nonprofit and hopes to purchase the building down the line.

In a post on the subcommittee's Facebook page, member Kim Borcharding revealed late June that the center would be renamed Sellwood Community House, as a way to "separate ourselves from the Parks and Rec operation" and to restore the building to its former name.

Julie Currin, an active member on the SMILE board, Friends of Sellwood Community House member and mom of three boys, said she was "thrown into a panic" at the thought of closure.

Now, the feeling is "bittersweet," she said. "We're really happy that we've been able to step in and keep services going."

Gail Hoffnagle, the chair of Friends of Sellwood Community House, said, "We envision the center as a place where all kinds of people, both young and old, can gather together to have fun, meet new friends, recreate with old friends, learn skills and form relationships that foster a spirit of belonging to the neighborhood."

Those in leadership aim to make the programs affordable, so "no one feels left out because of income," Hoffnagle said.

## **Earlier threats prompted action**

The Friends of Sellwood Community House originally formed to gather support for the building at 1436 S.E. Spokane St. when threats of closure began 15 to 17 years ago.

"The Friends group has been active during times of threats and then traditionally has become quieter, sometimes even dormant, when the center has been successfully 'saved,'" Hoffnagle said.

Earlier in the summer, when awaiting a deal with the city, the Friends of Sellwood Community House worked to restructure facility operations. This included going through applications for after-school and preschool programs, creating logos and coming up with new programs. More than 70 people signed up to volunteer their services to the project.

Community members feared the center's closing meant losing its valuable history and services. Operating since 1910, and a part of the Portland Parks and Recreation system since 1920, the building is believed to be the second longest continuously operating community center in the city of Portland. In 2006, it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Currin's motivation for working to keep the building alive stems from its childcare programs. Her 8-year-old has been a part of the after-school program at the center for three years, and one of her other sons has participated for the past year.

"They spend almost their entire summer there, as well as spring break, and other school breaks," Currin said in an email. "There are truly no other after-school programs available in our neighborhood (as) both local elementary schools have programs with long waitlists. Without the after-school program, I've been afraid my sons (as well as many neighbor kids) will become latch-key kids."

Since her initial panic, Currin planned and attended rallies, spoke at budget hearings and emailed and called commissioners. She said hundreds of families, including hers, had no option but to wait and hope that the Friends of Sellwood Community House could successfully take over, especially with a tight timeframe.

The elementary after-school program at the community center provides activities for about 95 children Monday through Friday. For younger children, programs include preschool, indoor park, baby art and messy art. Judo classes and private piano lessons also are available for all ages.

## **City priorities questioned**

Victoria Hancock, who lives a couple of houses from the building, said she felt sadness but not disbelief when she heard about the center's fate this year, since the threat of closure had been in the air for years.

"We do understand the basic budgetary issues, but we think that dealing with them on the backs of the local community is completely unfair," Hancock said.

Karen Shumaker, a resident of the nearby Creston-Kenilworth neighborhood, said she felt parks were being picked on at a time of growth in the city and its population.

Parks and Recreation has to be a neighborhood thing, Shumaker said. "One of the city's goals has always been walkability, so why should people have to get in a car and drive five miles to a park or a community center?"

The Community House is a "real asset to the community," Shumaker said. "Really, when you walk in there, you feel like you're visiting somebody's house. It just has a great community feel to it, and all ages mix and mingle."

Though some residents use the center for childcare and after-school programs, adults also make use of the facility.

Since she moved to Sellwood in 1991, Hancock has participated in "Exercise For Every 'Body'" which meets three mornings per week for an hour. The class initially was led by instructors hired by the Parks Department from the YMCA, but "the pay wasn't sufficient for the time they had to put in," Hancock said. Three members of the class, including Hancock, volunteered to each lead a class once per week.

The monthly fee of \$20 to \$25 for weekly classes acts like rent for the gym, which includes a boombox, chairs and weights. Current participants are women ranging in age from 55 to 80 and occasional family members, with about 20 to 25 people overall in each class.

Hancock stressed the importance of the class and the impact it has made. Some rely on the class to bounce back from medical incidents. A younger man joined the class for several months after surgery, and Hancock has had both hips replaced. Many participants are single or widowed women.

"I am certain that for several, this group is their primary social contact and they would miss it grievously if it ended," Hancock said.

"This project is truly a demonstration of community spirit and it is strengthening ties between neighbors and the greater community," Hoffnagle said. "It is an empowering example of how people can work together for a common goal."

Throughout the process, what stood out to Currin was "watching the community come together and rally to make sure that this resource that we all value so much didn't just close down and get lost in the shuffle, that people worked very, very hard because it's such an important commodity."

## **The Portland Mercury**

### **Iannarone Campaign Calls on Mayor Wheeler to Return Funds From Donor Involved in Trump Impeachment Inquiry**

*By Alex Zielinski*

*October 5, 2019*

Sarah Iannarone, a candidate for Portland 2020 mayoral race, is requesting Mayor Ted Wheeler return all past campaign donations from Portland hotelier Gordon Sondland, a wealthy ambassador tangled up in Donald Trump's impeachment hearings.

Sondland, founder of Provenance Hotels, currently serves as a US ambassador to the European Union. A recently released whistleblower complaint shows that Sondland held met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky after Trump demanded the Ukrainian government investigate the son of Joe Biden. It's this ask that inspired House Democrats to open an impeachment inquiry last month.

According to the complaint, Sondland tried to help Zelensky "navigate" Trump's requests. Sondland has voluntarily agreed to testify before Congress next week.

Sondland, a regular contributor to Oregon elections, has donated a total of \$15,500 to Wheeler's past two campaigns—both as personal and corporate contributions.

Because of Sondland's ties to the impeachment investigation, Iannarone believes Wheeler should return every last cent to the monied donor.

“The Wheeler-Sondland relationship has proven to be one of the more lucrative couplings in Portland city politics,” said Gregory McKelvey, Iannarone's campaign director, in a press release. “Portlanders expect and deserve elections to be free from the money and influence of people like Mr. Sondland who have actively worked to subvert democracy.”

Wheeler, who has not officially announced a reelection bid, might not be in his current position of power without Sondland's support. According to former Gov. Ted Kulongoski, Sondland was also responsible for suggesting the governor appoint Wheeler to fill the state treasurer seat in 2010.

In an email to the Mercury, Wheeler spokesperson Timothy Becker said that Sondland “has been an integral part of our business community.”

“The Mayor would hope and expect that Mr. Sondland would testify truthfully before Congress, when he is called to do so,” Becker added.

Wheeler has yet to respond to Iannarone's request.

Sondland has a long history of using his wealth to support many other political campaigns and civic projects in Oregon.

Most recently, Sondland shoveled \$22,500 into former Oregon Representative Knute Buehler's unsuccessful campaign for Oregon Governor. Sondland's also donated a total \$1,500 to City Commissioner Nick Fish's past campaigns for city council. After Sondland's \$50,000 donation kept a Washington Park summer festival running, Fish gave Sondland the “Spirit of Portland” award in 2009.

## **The Daily Journal of Commerce**

### **OP-ED: Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Funds’ future looks bright**

*By Matthew Slavin*

*October 4, 2019*

Energy is about to get cleaner in Portland, and low-income households and people of color traditionally left outside of the green city ecosystem will be involved.

City voters in November 2018 approved an initiative to create the Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund (PCEF). It’s to be capitalized with a 1 percent tax surcharge on the gross receipts of companies with \$500,000 in sales in Portland and \$1 billion nationwide. A PCEF management team is in place and a committee is being assembled to advise City Council on issuing the grants. Two-thirds of votes cast were in favor of PCEF, revealing its popularity.

Rules for governing PCEF are being developed, with plans calling for the city to begin accepting grant applications in summer 2020. Between 40 and 60 percent of the grant money is to be spent on clean energy projects, 20-25 percent on workforce development, 10-15 percent on green infrastructure and 5 percent on innovative projects that meet city climate goals while generating

social and economic benefits. Clean energy projects include home weatherization, efficient HVAC and appliances, and rooftop solar. Both residential and commercial properties are eligible for grants.

Funds can be awarded to only qualified nonprofits, but the nonprofits can pass the money through to private entities for approved projects. Plans call for between \$7 million and \$10 million to be available for the first funding round. Between \$54 million and \$71 million is projected to be available annually thereafter, depending on health of the economy and whether exemptions are granted for certain businesses.

A principal goal of PCEF is to engage low-income households and people of color. Engagement will take various forms, from upgrading energy efficiency in homes and buildings to job training and apprenticeships for disadvantaged workers.

PCEF's future looks bright, but some obstacles will need to be overcome.

One is the threat of lawsuits. Supporters of the initiative that created PCEF emphasized the tax surcharge would fall primarily on big retailers. Think of Target and Home Depot, as well as banks. But it now appears that other types of businesses – including construction contractors, refuse haulers and insurers – will pay as well. Citing violation of the Constitution's Commerce Clause, groups representing these industries may sue in federal court to enjoin PCEF in part or its entirety.

Several businesses are seeking exemptions from the tax surcharge, and how City Council deals with these may determine whether lawsuits are filed.

Another challenge involves how investor-owners of properties – particularly multifamily buildings – will engage with PCEF. It's no secret that owners and managers of residential rental properties in Portland are in a sour mood following enactment of rent control laws by the city and state. The initiative passed by voters prohibits landlords from using improvements funded by PCEF as the basis for raising rents. Assuming there will be some kind of matching funds requirement for income-generating properties, landlords wonder how they're expected to recoup their costs if they can't raise rents. Improving the efficiency of rentals housing low-income households is a primary objective of PCEF, and most of these units are investor-owned. The Portland City Council and staff will need to figure out how to engage the investor-owners.

A third area of concern arose earlier this year when it was learned that a group of former and current city and state officials, including former City Commissioner Erik Sten, were working with local businesspeople on a plan to tap PCEF grants to leverage as much as \$150 million in private investment. The money would be used to acquire, rehabilitate (by improving energy efficiency) and finance construction of affordable housing in Portland. Fred Meyer Memorial Trust might also be involved. In return for PCEF funding, the group would commit to keep future rent increases modest.

As The Oregonian reported, close ties between the involved parties has fed concerns that the group will have an "unfair leg up" in competing for PCEF grants. There is also the aforementioned prohibition on basing rent increases on improvements funded by PCEF. While there is nothing untoward about the plan, it again points to issues that will need to be ironed out.

In seeking to bind climate action with social equity at a scale of \$54 million to \$71 million annually, PCEF appears to represent a first in the nation. Portland's experience will be watched closely by those who may want to emulate it. PCEF's upside is tremendous, but there are still some curves to be navigated.

**OPB**

## **Portland To Host Annual Gathering Of Climate Change Experts**

*By Monica Samayoa  
October 7, 2019*

The city of Portland will be hosting the return of a regional climate conference this week.

The 10th annual Northwest Climate Conference will be held at a downtown Portland hotel from Tuesday through Thursday.

The event will start Tuesday evening with an open session that will talk about agriculture and climate change in the Pacific Northwest.

Portland State University assistant professor and conference chair Paul Loikith said the summit has become more diverse over the years.

“I think each year the conference has sort of expanded the scope and the diversity of voices that participate and there’s reflection of that in the panels,” Loikith said.

A wide range of experts spanning from Alaska to Montana to Southern California will be sharing their latest research on climate change this time around.

The first conference was held June 2010 at Portland State University, which co-hosted with Oregon Climate Change Research Institute at Oregon State University. Since then, the event hosts have rotated between institutions in Idaho, Oregon and Washington. The most recent event in Portland was in 2013.

“So it’s a really, really dynamic environment where people that typically don’t end up in the same conference space are there interacting and learning from each other and teaching different things to each other,” Loikith said.

The summit will cover a wide range of topics including water quality impacts, drought, wildfires, and public perception of climate change.

## **22-Year-Old Claims Victory At Portland Marathon**

*By Rebecca Ellis  
October 6, 2019*

For 22-year-old Kallin Khan, Sunday’s race wasn’t even close.

From mile five all the way to the finish line, Khan led the pack of more than two thousand runners participating in the Portland Marathon. Another 3,600 opted for Sunday’s 13-mile route.

“Everyone was telling me I had a big lead,” Khan told reporters a few minutes after being crowned Sunday’s winner. “I was confident through the finish line.”

It took Khan, a Chicago native, just over two hours, 25 minutes to finish the course, which took runners through the city’s four quadrants. A second place winner would not be announced for another 20 minutes. That’s when Kunitaka Imaizumi, a student at the University of Oregon, sprinted over the finish line.

Khan said he's been working toward the victory since moving to Portland two months ago, running more than a hundred miles each week with the Bowerman Track Club. He hopes to soon qualify for the Olympic trials, a feat that would require him to shave six minutes off his Sunday time.

First place for the women's division – and third place overall – went to Jamie Gibbs, an analytics director at Nike, who ran the route in two hours, 48 minutes.

There were no Olympic-level runners in Sunday's event, according to Jared Rohatinsky, the CEO of Brooksee, a Utah-based race producer which oversaw the event for the first time.

The former race and route were scrapped in 2018 after lackluster attendance and a state investigation into the finances of the then-marathon director. A long city search for a new producer meant marathon registration didn't open until this spring. Typically, the schedules of Olympic-caliber athletes are booked a year and a half in advance, Rohatinsky explained.

In past statements, Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler, a runner himself, had said he hoped the new company would energize turnout and turn Portland's marathon into "a world-class event worthy of a host city that's known for running." Wheeler came in 883rd at Sunday's event.

A new course took runners from downtown to around Portland's neighborhoods like Sellwood, Reed College and NW 23rd Ave.

Runners interviewed Sunday agreed that the new course, which moved runners through some of Portland's most beloved areas, had taken a turn for the better after decades of lingering too long in the more industrial parts of town.

"You went out on Highway 30, which is nothing to look at," said Pam Leeding, a five-time veteran of the Portland Marathon. "I love this route. It's really fun to be in the neighborhoods."

Jared Rohatinsky, the CEO of Brooksee, previously told OPB that the company had made a point to design a distinctly Portland course, taking runners past city staples like Sellwood, NW 23rd Ave, and Reed College, instead of forcing them to be "to be out of the way, unseen."

## **Sondland's Political Contributions To Portland Mayor Under Scrutiny**

*By Meerah Powell*

*October 5, 2019*

Campaign donations made to Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler in 2012 and 2016 by Portland businessman and U.S. ambassador to the European Union Gordon Sondland are under new scrutiny following revelations of Sondland's involvement in ongoing controversy with President Donald Trump and Ukraine.

Portland mayoral candidate Sarah Iannarone called on Wheeler Saturday to return previous campaign donations he received from Sondland.

Wheeler received a combined \$15,500 in donations from Sondland and his business entity, Portland-based Provenance Hotels, in 2012 and 2016, according to ORESTAR, the state's campaign finance database.

Congressional investigators are interested in Sondland because he and another diplomat had talked to Ukrainian leaders about how to respond to pressure from Trump to investigate political rival and former Vice President Joe Biden.

Sondland indicated earlier this week that he will cooperate with the House impeachment inquiry into the president. He is expected to testify before Congress on Oct. 8.

Iannarone's campaign director, Gregory McKelvey, said in a press release that "The Wheeler-Sondland relationship has proven to be one of the more lucrative couplings in Portland city politics."

"Portlanders expect and deserve elections to be free from the money and influence of people like Mr. Sondland who have actively worked to subvert democracy," McKelvey said.

Wheeler's deputy campaign manager, Amy Rathfelder, said Wheeler is looking forward to hearing Sondland's testimony before making any decisions on the past donations.

"I hope and expect he will testify truthfully when he is called to do so," Wheeler said in a statement. "We will be making a decision once we learn more about the nature of his role."