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## Race is on for City Council '08

*Candidate's already off and floating for next May's primary*

**By JIM REDDEN**  
*The Tribune*

Commissioner Sam Adams has finally met his match — at least when it comes to generating media coverage.

Around City Hall, Adams has a reputation for seeking publicity, or at least not turning down any photo opportunities. He allowed a local television station to film his sleep apnea surgery. His smiling face adorns cards being handed out downtown asking people to report traffic problems to a new hot line. And this coming Tuesday, Adams will host a citywide town hall on increasing arts and cultural opportunities, an idea he has been working on for two years.

But Charles Lewis was not to be outdone Wednesday morning when he announced his candidacy for Adams' council seat.

He brought along a biodiesel-powered, 46-passenger amphibious bus dubbed the "Chuck Wagon." Lewis bought it last



**LEWIS**

summer for his company, Portland Duck Tours. After the announcement, he offered reporters and supporters free rides on the Willamette River in the vehicle, officially known

as a Hydra-Terra.

"I started the business because I love Portland and wanted to show it off in a fun and innovative way," said Lewis, who has been offering tours since August. Before that, he ran the Ethos Music

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# Lewis: Fish, Lister, Fritz may run

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Center, a nonprofit music school he started nine years ago to fill the gap created when the Portland schools began dropping arts courses because of budget cutbacks.

Whether Lewis ends up running against Adams or a slew of other candidates remains to be seen.

Adams has not announced his political plans but is widely thought to be interested in running for mayor. Giving up his seat to challenge incumbent Tom Potter is thought to be politically risky, however. Potter's popularity is believed to be very high, despite the trouncing his "strong-mayor" City Charter measure took in the May 15 election.

"Tom won election with 63 percent of the vote, and a poll taken during the charter reform campaign showed his positives at over 70 percent," said Potter press aide John Doussard, who does not think voters considered the election a referendum on the mayor himself.

## Others eye seat, too

Potter has said that he will not announce whether he is going to seek re-election until Sept. 12, when he turns 67.

If Potter decides not to run and Adams files for mayor, several people are considering the race for the vacant council seat: attorney Nick Fish; nurse and neighborhood activist Amanda Fritz; small-business owner Dave Lister; and transit activist Chris Smith.

All of them have ruled out running against any incumbent, including Commissioner Randy Leonard, who has already announced he'll seek re-election.

"Right now it's like we're playing a game of musical chairs, and one player won't stand up," said Lister, who says



Charles Lewis brought a bus/boatload of supporters with him Wednesday to drop off his candidate paperwork at City Hall.

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he believes both Potter and Adams should declare their election plans now.

Fritz and Fish also said they would not run against an incumbent, and will wait until Potter announces his plans before deciding what to do.

Lewis said he is prepared to run against anyone, including Adams, saying he represents a creative alternative to the political establishment.

"I am not planning on dropping out if Adams runs for re-election. I am not running against a person, I am running on a platform of ideas," said Lewis, who lists his political inspiration as the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Lewis formally announced for office in front of the King statue at the Oregon

Convention Center.

The wait may cause problems for candidates who want to use the city's public campaign financing system, also called Voter Owned Elections.

The system allows city candidates who collect 1,000 individual \$5 contributions to qualify for city funds — up to \$195,000 for commission candidates and up to \$245,000 for mayoral candidates. But the council is considering moving the start and finish dates for collecting the contributions up several months. The period now runs from early September to late February. The new period would start on July 13 and end in late January.

This means that any candidate who waits until Potter an-



In announcing his candidacy for City Council, Charles Lewis and supporters arrived via a Hydra-Terra amphibious bus alternately called the Chuck Wagon or McCall's Mallard, after former Gov. Tom McCall.

nounces his decision in September could lose two months of valuable contribution-collection time.

According to Doussard, Potter is not worried about inconveniencing anyone by waiting until September to announce his intentions.

"Tom is not spending any time trying to figure out the best way to game the system," he said.

## Boyles' ghost still haunts

The council also is considering reducing the number of people who can make the \$5 contributions. At this time, contributions can come from any Portland resident. But the council is looking at limiting the contributors to registered voters living within the city limits.

This change is a response to problems created when council candidate Emilie Boyles qualified for public campaign funds with allegedly fraudulent signa-

tures collected by aide Volodymyr Golovan. Boyles currently owes the city just over \$102,000 in funds she was later found unqualified to accept.

Limiting contributions to registered voters would allow campaign officials to check the signatures against voter registration rolls. Although some of the signatures submitted by Golovan appeared forged, they could not all be compared against any existing database.

Although Lewis plans to qualify for public campaign funds, he did not announce Wednesday to give himself the full time to collect the contributions. He chose the date because it is the anniversary of the death of Robert Kennedy, another of his heroes.

"I made up my mind that's when I was going to announce. I'm excited about talking to people about the future of the city," he said.

— jimredden@portlandtribune.com