

## **Baltimore mayor riffs on politics, development - and The Wire**

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Baltimore Mayor Sheila Dixon will be in St. Louis on Monday to address the Urban League. On her way to another engagement, a speech at the Harvard University School of Government, Dixon took time to talk with Post-Dispatch City Hall reporter Jake Wagman about education, her city's portrayal on the small screen and regional delicacies.

**Q: The HBO drama "The Wire," which casts a critical lens on Baltimore government and other city institutions, is in its last season. Are you sad to see it go?**

A: I think it's lived its life. It generated money here in Baltimore in our economy, created job opportunities for people. It's lived its life. Maybe (creator) David Simon, who I think is a great writer, will come up with something more in line with what we are trying to do in the city. People love the mystery and suspense more so than more wholesome type stories. I'm a more a wholesome type of girl.

**Q: The show features a council president maneuvering to become mayor if the incumbent becomes governor. You served as council president before taking over for Mayor Martin O'Malley, who became governor of Maryland last year. Is the council president character based on you?**

A: There is some basis on her character in mine because I was city council president. We don't have the same style. Maybe clothes wise, but beyond that ... I don't determine decisions based on politics.

**Q: Do you have a favorite season of the show?**

A: My favorite season was really the one with the schools. I think it got deeper into a systemic problem. That's part of what we are doing for city government. How do we change systemic problems that are affecting the city?

**Q: Speaking of schools, Baltimore has struggled with the state over control of its schools. In St. Louis, the state intervened in the district last year. Do you think local control of schools is important?**

A: We generally get blamed for the problems so, yeah, I do.

**Q: Baltimore is home to the Cordish Co., which is developing Ballpark Village in St. Louis. In Baltimore, the firm helped make the Inner Harbor a major draw for tourists. But folks here are getting impatient with the lack of progress at the Village. Any advice?**

A: David Cordish's company usually finishes what they start and it ends up being very successful.

**Q: Last question: toasted raviolis or crab cakes?**

A: I don't eat red meat. Of course, I'll take the Maryland crab cakes.