

The Oregonian

Portland mayor on misconduct by homeless people: 'The laws will be enforced'

*By Gordon Friedman
September 26, 2018*

Business owners from Portland's Parkrose neighborhood came to the City Council to repeat a common refrain: That homeless people relieve themselves, use drugs or intimidate people near their businesses and the police do nothing, saying their hands are tied.

"We are in desperate need of your assistance," Angie Jenkins, president of the Parkrose Business Association, told the mayor and council Wednesday.

Jenkins, who owns an auto and tires shop, said she and other business owners want the homeless to receive aid, but also want police to respond to reports of theft, drug activity and vandalism.

As an example of dismissive conduct by the police, Jenkins said she reported a drug deal to officers, only to have one brush it off as "just a little bit of heroin."

Mayor Ted Wheeler delivered a pointed response, saying, "The laws will be enforced, and I'm directing they be enforced."

The mayor went on: "If a police officer or a firefighter ever tells you that I tied their hands, they are not telling you the truth. ... If an officer ever tells you that, get their name. Get their name. I want to know."

Wheeler asked Jenkins what she would have the city do in response to her complaints.

"I need you to enforce the laws and I need you to address behaviors," she told him.

Portland Police Bureau leaders have said their officers respond to increasing numbers of calls reporting illegal activity by the homeless. The Oregonian/OregonLive reported in June that homeless people comprised the majority of those arrested in Portland last year.

Deputy Chief Robert Day said in a September 20 statement that the Police Bureau's call load has increased 10 percent since last year and that a majority of the calls are related to reports of disorderly conduct, drug use, assaults and threatening behavior by the homeless. "If enforcement is warranted, we make arrests," Day said.

"Police didn't create this issue, nor can we solve it, but we want to help and respond in the most appropriate manner," the deputy chief wrote, adding that homelessness is "a societal issue" without a one-size-fits-all solution.

Wheeler noted Wednesday that the city budget adopted in June includes funding to hire scores of additional officers. Day said in his statement that despite additional funding, more than 70 unfilled officer jobs and retirements have affected the Police Bureau's ability to respond to calls.

Portland pays Nordstrom \$29K for sewer clog

*By Gordon Friedman
September 26, 2018*

The Portland City Council voted Wednesday to pay Nordstrom nearly \$29,000 to settle a legal claim from the retailer over a sewer backup at its downtown location.

The clog occurred because a tree root penetrated the sewer line in the city's right-of-way, according to a legal claim notice filed in May 2017 by Nordstrom facilities manager Paul Laurent.

The retailer claimed \$57,777 in damages, according to a city filing. Nordstrom spent more than \$100,000 to repair the busted sewer line, Laurent said.

Council members approved the settlement after being advised the city may be liable for the blockage. The vote was 4-0 with Commissioner Amanda Fritz absent on city business.

Portland pays man \$7K after police kick down wrong door

*By Gordon Friedman
September 26, 2018*

The Portland City Council on Wednesday approved a \$7,010 payment to a homeowner who had his door kicked in by police when they responded to the wrong address.

Officers mistakenly came upon Stanley Horak's home in the Irvington neighborhood when responding to reports of a woman with a knife in her chest in the early morning hours of February 5, according to a city memo.

"We hear this pounding on the door," Horak said. "I hear someone say, 'We're gonna have to kick the door in,' and bang, they kick it in."

Residents have frequently complained about illegal activity by homeless people. Mayor Ted Wheeler responded Wednesday.

Officers rushed in, only to find Horak, a retired attorney, and his wife Fay, a neuroscientist who works at OHSU, stunned awake by the chaos – and no medical emergency to be found.

Police realized they were at the wrong house and hurried to the correct one, just down the street, Horak said. Officers later returned to apologize and tell Horak he could file a damage claim against the city.

"They were very nice about it," Horak said. "Very polite and courteous."

He said it's fortunate that officers were not aggressive.

"Lucky I wasn't black, who knows what would have happened," Horak said.

At least the payment will fully reimburse him for the damage to his door and its frame, Horak said, adding, "Mistakes happen."

The Portland Tribune

Wheeler Talks to Wapato Owner About its Future

*By Jim Redden
September 26, 2018*

Developer and philanthropist who bought the never-opened Multnomah County jail believes it should be used to help the homeless.

Ted Wheeler's office confirms the mayor has talked to the owner of the former Wapato Jail about its future.

The owner, developer and philanthropist Jordan Schnitzer, has advocated opening it for the homeless. Wheeler's office says the conversations have not been that specific.

"I can confirm that the Mayor did tell Jordan Schnitzer that he has ideas about how to utilize the buildings at Wapato for public benefit. At this point, nothing has moved beyond informal conversations," press coordinator June Sophia emailed the Portland Tribune in response to a question.

Schnitzer did not promptly return a call for comment.

The conversation was first reported by Willamette Week in a story prompted by a Sept. 20 press conference Schnitzer and Multnomah County Commissioner Loretta Smith held at the North Portland facility to ask elected and business leaders to come together and open it for the homeless before winter. Schnitzer bought the 22-acre property and never-opened jail for \$5 million in April, then invited proposals to convert it into a homeless shelter or service center. Smith has long advocated using Wapato for the homeless. No one has yet submitted such a proposal.

At the press conference, Schnitzer said he would apply for a demolition permit on Oct. 1 if no progress has been made using it for the homeless.

To read the Portland Tribune story on the press conference, go to tinyurl.com/yc23pfuk.

Water Bureau Moves Ahead on Filtration Plant Project

*By Jim Redden
September 26, 2018*

Public comment on filtration type will be sought before final design decision is made.

A California company will manage the project to build the filtration plant approved by the City Council to remove contaminants from Bull Run water.

Portland is working to build the plant by 2027 under a compliance schedule with the Oregon Health Authority. The management contract approved by the council on Aug. 29 is not to exceed around \$68 million. The total project is currently estimated at \$500 million.

The company's announcement was made shortly after the Portland Water Bureau said it plans to seek public feedback on the type of filtration and other details of the project before moving forward with the project, at the direction of Commissioner Amanda Fritz.

Opportunities for feedback will be announced in the next few weeks. Mayor Ted Wheeler transferred the PWB to Fritz from Commissioner Nick Fish on Sept. 4.

The council approved construction of the plant after the potentially harmful *Cryptosporidium* parasite was repeatedly found in water in the Bull Run Watershed, the primary source of the city's water.

Brown and Caldwell describes itself as a leading environmental engineering and construction firm. It has worked on many similar projects in the past. The company sent out a press release on Wednesday saying it was "awarded a contract to provide program management services for Portland Water Bureau's (PWB) \$500 million Bull Run Filtration Project."

"Public health and safety is the bureau's top priority," Portland Water Bureau (PWB) program director David Peters said in the release. "This transformational opportunity for the city will further protect and improve our primary source of drinking water for the long-term benefit of our customers."

According to the release, Brown and Caldwell will lead pilot testing and project definition work to determine and optimize the preferred treatment system. As program manager, the firm will also provide permitting; management and control of budget, schedule, and risk; and management and review of the work of design engineers and contractors to be retained by PWB in 2019.

"We are honored to help the city of Portland responsibly deliver a water filtration system to reliably and sustainably serve generations to come," Brown and Caldwell program manager Jon Holland said in the release. "We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate with PWB for this landmark project for the region."

Following successful pilot testing and design, construction will likely commence in late 2022 with the new facility operational by Sept. 30, 2027, in accordance with the city's agreement with Oregon Health Administration, the release said.

In its Monday press release, PWB said, "While small amounts of *Cryptosporidium* were detected coming from the Bull Run source starting in 2017, *Cryptosporidium* has not been detected in Portland's drinking water since April 10, 2018. Over the next nine years, the Portland Water Bureau will be installing a new treatment plant to remove *Cryptosporidium* from Bull Run drinking water."

According to the PWB release, "Exposure to *Cryptosporidium* can cause cryptosporidiosis, a serious illness. Symptoms can include diarrhea, vomiting, fever, and stomach pain. People with healthy immune systems recover without medical treatment. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), people with severely weakened immune systems are at risk for more serious disease. Symptoms may be more severe and could lead to serious life-threatening illness. Examples of people with weakened immune systems include those with AIDS, those with inherited diseases that affect the immune system, and cancer and transplant patients who are taking certain immunosuppressive drugs."

Portland also supplies water to some surrounding cities and water districts. They include Burlington, City of Gresham, City of Sandy, City of Tualatin, Green Valley, GNR, Hideaway Hills, Lake Grove, Lorna Portland Water, Lusted, Palatine Hill, Pleasant Home, Raleigh, Rockwood, Skyview Acres, Tualatin Valley, Two Rivers, Valley View and West Slope Water Districts.

Results of ongoing test for *Cryptosporidium* can be found at www.portlandoregon.gov/water/article/628763.

Council Reduces City Costs for Marijuana-Related Businesses

*By Jim Redden
September 26, 2018*

Social Equity Program created for companies partly owned or staffed by people with previous pot convictions.

The City Council lowered licensing and other fees for marijuana-related businesses in Portland on Wednesday, including providing financial incentives for small companies who are partly owned by or employ a percent of people previously convicted of marijuana-related crimes.

The changes were submitted by Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, who oversees the Office of Community and Civic Life, which manages the city's management of marijuana-related businesses.

"Though Oregon voted to legalize cannabis in 2014, Cannabis prohibition still negatively impacts individuals and entire communities today," Eudaly said in a press release. "While we know our work isn't done, these changes are a small step toward reducing some of that impact. We're also excited to offer extra assistance and flexibility for small business owners, and to bring down fees for all license types, particularly retailers."

Among the changes approved by the council on Sept. 26:

- Reduce fees for all license types, including dropping retailer license fees from \$4,975 to \$3,500. In addition, Micro-Tier Producers and Processors and Retail Couriers will only pay a \$200 application and \$1,000 license fee. Reducing other license types, including Retailers, to just \$500 for both the initial and the renewal application fees.
- Create a Social Equity Program for companies partly owned or staffed by people with previous marijuana-related convictions. Incentives include discounts on licensing fees and a credit for Bureau of Development Services' Early Assistance and Preliminary Life Safety Meetings
- Offer a deferred payment plan for license fees and modify permitting requirements for processors and producers. Extract Processors must continue to demonstrate that all commercial building, mechanical, and tank permitting (if applicable) is final to get a license. However, all other Processors and Producers must now only demonstrate at least an issued (not final) applicable commercial building permit

According to the community and civic life office, there will be more changes to Portland's cannabis regulations in the coming months and years. These changes will be informed by data collected after implementing the above changes, by an upcoming citywide market study of Portland's cannabis industry, and by the restarting of Portland's cannabis advisory body in early 2019.

To see a previous Portland Tribune story on the issue, go to tinyurl.com/y8bla9qm.

Sources: Portland Playing Catch-up on Navigation Centers

By Jim Redden

September 27, 2018

Plus, Kafoury slaps Schnitzer over Wapato and Portland-only taxes highlighted in Voters Pamphlet.

In response to resident and business concerns, San Francisco officials are aggressively cracking down on homeless camps in their city, despite the recent U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that homeless people can't be forced to move if no other housing is available.

According to a Sept. 20 story in the Seattle Times, one reason could be that San Francisco has opened five Navigation Centers where the homeless stay while being evaluated for services. About 1,370 people have had a "successful exit" from them since January, the story says.

The nonprofit Harbor of Hope is still trying to open Portland's first navigation center in the Old Town/Chinatown area.

Kafoury slaps Schnitzer over Wapato

Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury took a shot at philanthropist and real estate investor Jordan Schnitzer over the former Wapato Jail last week.

Schnitzer, the president of Harsch Investments, bought the property for \$5 million in April and invited proposals for using it for the homeless. When no one replied, he and Multnomah County Commissioner Loretta Smith held a news conference there last Thursday to ask that area leaders work together to open it before winter.

In response, Kafoury, who long has opposed using Wapato for the homeless, issued a statement that read in part, "If the developers who purchased the jail want to invest their wealth in increasing winter shelter capacity, we'll consider any serious proposal."

While it's true Schnitzer is wealthy, he also has headed up many community fundraising drives, including ones that saved downtown apartments for low-income seniors and the Mittleman Jewish Community Center.

Portland-only taxes highlighted

The Taxpayers Association of Oregon has purchased Voters Pamphlet pages against Metro's \$652.8 million affordable housing bond, the Portland Clean Energy Fund, and the public campaign finance plan.

Among other things, they note that Portland residents and businesses already pay taxes no one else does, including the arts tax, the 10-cent gas tax, a land-line phone tax, a tax on car-share rides, and a \$35 per-car vehicle tax.

Willamette Week

Lawsuit Against City of Portland Challenges the High Cost of Public Records

*By Rachel Monahan
September 26, 2018*

Housing activist Alan Kessler challenged the city's \$150 minimum cost for an email search in a lawsuit that seeks records on a Portland Historic Landmarks Commissioner.

In a lawsuit filed yesterday, a housing activist and attorney is challenging the high cost of extracting public records from the city of Portland.

Alan Kessler formally requested records related to the emails for Wendy Chung, a member of the Historic Landmarks Commission. At issue for Kessler is whether it was appropriate for Chung to vote on the size and shape of an affordable housing project that is near her home. (The project was ultimately approved, *The Oregonian* reported yesterday, and Chung was not at the meeting, so did not vote.)

The Oregon Government Ethics Commission found that Chung had met the ethics requirement by disclosing of a possible conflict. But the fight over whether the city is handling public records may be more significant.

Kessler appealed to the Multnomah County district attorney to get Chung's emails from the city, but after after an order from the district attorney to provide the records, the city nevertheless missed a deadline related to providing the emails.

Kessler then filed suit.

The most significant part of the lawsuit may be his allegation that the city is setting a \$150 minimum charge for any request that involves an email search.

The city, in Kessler's telling, could lower the charge to actually reflect the amount of time it takes to conduct such a search. Or they could make available the "metadata" information on emails—including sender, recipient and date of the email—that would require a less extensive review by city officials before they were released as part of a records request. Kessler had requested the metadata and the city said it would have to produce that information.

"Oregon public records law is intended to make the government's business accessible," says Kessler. "I have run into a \$150 tax on any email search I try to do at the city. That tax probably isn't appropriate. If we can get that tax out of the way, it would be much easier to investigate the city's business."

WW reported this year that Portland City Hall collected more than \$800,000 in fiscal year 2018 by charging for records, and is on pace to collect more than \$1 million this year. City attorneys say those charges are needed to pay staff to search the records.

City attorney Jenifer Johnston did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The Portland Mercury

Hall Monitor: Commuter Cops

By Alex Zielinski

September 27, 2018

Eighteen percent.

That's how many police officers in the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) actually live in the city they're sworn to protect. According to city data obtained by the Mercury in a public records request, only 158 of the bureau's 864 sworn officers live at an address with a ZIP code that falls within Portland city limits. And that's actually a generous estimate—some PPB officers live in ZIP codes that straddle several city boundaries.

Most of Portland's police officers reside in suburbs south and east of the city, like Oregon City, Happy Valley, Gresham, and West Linn. Three officers live in Salem, and one officer inexplicably has a home address in Albuquerque, New Mexico. More PPB officers live in Washington state (177 total) than in Portland proper.

There's at least one obvious reason why more PPB officers live in Battle Ground, Sandy, or Tigard than in the neighborhoods they're paid to patrol: Portland's prohibitively expensive housing market. But, as Portland City Council continues to greenlight officer salary hikes while lauding the importance of community policing programs, this data adds to the growing narrative that paints Portland law enforcement officials as outsiders.

During the most recent alt-right protest that brought busloads of agitators to Portland from Vancouver, Washington, Portlanders blamed PPB officers for being friendlier to the out-of-towners than to the city's residents who protested the group's hateful rhetoric. This perceived leniency reignited a discussion around how PPB officers may see Portlanders as an "other"—either for having differing political beliefs or for not living in the same communities as the officers.

"This isn't their home," said one protester I spoke with at an August ICE protest. "Why should they care about protecting it?"

The issue Portland and its police force face is hardly a new one: In the 1970s, a number of major American cities reinstated residency requirements for their law enforcement officers in hopes of improving both their city property tax revenue and the relationships between residents and police. But low recruitment rates and pushback from police unions forced most cities to drop the requirement; Chicago is one of the few cities that still requires officer residency.

Portland has certainly tried to convince its officers to live within city limits, most recently promising PPB commanders and captains a 5 percent pay increase if they do—a promise that could cost the city up to \$50,000 a year. While it's unknown how many officers have taken the city up on this offer, Multnomah County Commissioner Loretta Smith—a candidate for Portland City Council—has proposed a more radical solution, suggesting the city offer houses they've foreclosed on to police officers living outside city limits.

This month, city council approved a 7.6 percent pay increase for PPB lieutenants, securing them a \$121,950 starting salary—more than enough to afford rent, if not a mortgage, in Portland proper. And according to market data, even the starting salary for a PPB officer—\$64,409—is enough to comfortably afford a two-bedroom rental in Portland.

Maybe forcing officers to relocate isn't the answer to Portland's growing distrust in the PPB. But after a sweltering summer of protests that pitted locals against the cops, geography may be a good place to start.

Portland-Based Cannabis Businesses Could Have Their Fees Lowered

*By Josh Jardine
September 26, 2018*

Licensed cannabis businesses throughout Oregon face numerous challenges—an oversupply has led to continual falling prices, the OLCC has changed packaging requirements yet again, and no one can get a goddamn bank account.

But in Portland, there's about to be some relief, and it's just the first step of an ongoing effort.

Brandon Goldner, the program coordinator for the City of Portland's cannabis program, reached out to share the fact that later today, "Portland City Council will discuss and potentially vote to approve changes to Portland's cannabis regulations."

"The proposal would lower cannabis fees for all cannabis businesses in Portland, as well as further reduce fees for small cannabis businesses and cannabis businesses whose owners or staff were impacted by cannabis prohibition," Goldner continues. "It would also offer deferred license payments, ease requirements for some license types, and offer credits for early assistance building permitting meetings for qualifying businesses."

The main thing here is the reduction of fees for all license types—which, like rent in Portland, is too damn high. If City Council agrees, these changes could include retailer license fees being lowered (from \$4,975 to \$3,500); lower fees for micro-tier producers, processors, and retail couriers; and lowered rates for retailers' initial license and renewal fees. There could also be a "social equity program" developed, giving discounts to small businesses that were directly impacted by cannabis prohibition, a six-month deferral of payment for all license types, and more.

I asked Goldner if these potential changes came from the goodness of the City of Portland's heart, or were a reflection of the challenges in place for cannabis businesses.

"In short, these changes align with the long-term vision of the program," Goldner said. "Also, [the] program receives no general fund and no tax dollars. Everything in the program is funded by application and license fees."

"We want to make sure that we're only taking in as much money as we need to recover the program's costs, and no more," Goldner added. "There will be more changes in the future. With these code changes, we will be able to collect data about which businesses are 'small' (as defined in this code change) and which businesses choose to share whether their owners or staff have been affected by cannabis prohibition. This information will help to inform future changes, as will an upcoming independent market study of Portland's cannabis industry, so we can have projections on what Portland's marketplace may look like in the coming years."

Anytime the city lowers fees, it calls for a celebration. Light one up.

Affordable Housing Remains Out of Reach for Portlanders With Disabilities

*By Alex Zielinski
September 27, 2018*

If John Griffiths didn't receive federally subsidized rent for having a disability, he's certain he'd be homeless.

"I'd wind up on the street, or institutionalized," he says. "I'd have nothing."

For more than a decade, Griffiths has lived in a one-bedroom apartment in Southeast Portland, where he's relied on a federal housing choice voucher—a form of partially subsidized rent for those who make under 50 percent of the local median income—to help cover the rising costs of Portland rent. His specific voucher, called a "mainstream" voucher, is reserved for people like Griffiths, who has a developmental disability. For Griffiths, whose only roommate is an energetic dog named Bob Barker, the voucher has given him the kind of freedom that's increasingly rare for people with disabilities and a fixed income.

"It's pretty simple: No voucher, no independence," he says.

But in Multnomah County, where 72 percent of all houseless people have one or more disabilities, Griffiths' situation is an anomaly.

Portland's diminishing options for affordable housing have impacted all renters, but the city's skyrocketing rents have been particularly cruel to those living with disabilities. Whether it's a matter of financial instability, poor physical accessibility, or outright discrimination, the barriers to finding an affordable, stable home—with or without government assistance—have left those in Portland's disabled community unable to feel truly independent.

Earlier this month, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) gave Home Forward, Multnomah County's housing authority, 99 new mainstream vouchers like Griffiths' to supplement the estimated 9,400 housing choice vouchers already in use in the county. It's a rare move—Home Forward says that aside from the feds' veteran-specific housing assistance, the 99 new subsidies represent almost half of all the voucher funding it has received from HUD in nearly 20 years. But it barely makes a dent in the number of Portlanders with a disability seeking affordable rent.

Home Forward will prioritize awarding those vouchers to people on the general voucher waiting list, which currently holds a total of 3,056 households. It's unknown how many of those people are eligible for the mainstream voucher, but Tim Collier, a spokesperson for Home Forward, estimates it's more than 99. While these added vouchers are a welcome surprise to the housing authority, their minuscule impact on Portland's disability community is a reminder of the serious housing inequities faced by this particularly vulnerable population.

In Oregon, almost 25 percent of those living with disabilities make under \$15,000 per year; only 17 percent of Oregonians without a disability make that amount.

Those statistics are likely affected by the fact that many who have disabilities and are unable to work rely on meager monthly Supplemental Security Income (SSI) installments from the federal government. Allen Hines, a local advocate for disability rights who uses a wheelchair, says his SSI comes in at \$770 per month—far below the \$1,132 rent for a typical one-bedroom apartment in the Portland metro region.

"That doesn't leave you with much left over," says Hines.

Often, people with physical or developmental disabilities who can't find affordable housing on their own end up moving into a group assisted-living home, which often costs residents around \$500 per month. But doing so is generally seen as a last resort.

“Group homes are akin to an institution,” says Griffiths, who knows a number of people who’ve lived in a privately-operated home. “You have no freedom, you have no privacy. You have to ask permission to do anything.”

These facilities are often understaffed, and employees are generally underpaid—to the extent that Oregon’s group homes have an average yearly staff turnover rate of 90 percent. And, since private group homes are run for profit, there’s little incentive to move people into a more independent living situation.

“It’s more advantageous to keep their clients around,” Griffiths says. “It’s how they get their money.”

That’s why, in 2017, Hines founded the Real Choice Initiative (RCI), a nonprofit with a mission to support those living in group homes and help them live independently. He spends a lot of his time with RCI visiting people in group homes across the Portland area.

“The staff aren’t always excited to see me, and some try to keep me out,” Hines says with a laugh. “But I’m persistent.”

If someone is interested in leaving a group home, RCI staff can help them navigate the city’s affordable housing market by accompanying them on apartment tours, helping them fill out rental applications, or simply advocating for their rights.

Griffiths recalls feeling discouraged the first time he applied for a housing voucher, since he had trouble reading the application. He eventually asked for someone to help him fill it out.

“It can be a little complicated to go through the system when you have an intellectual disability,” Griffiths says. “Let’s say maybe you don’t verbally communicate, but you read and write perfectly well. You’re going to have a difficult time speaking to a landlord or case manager.”

According to Hines, the city is supposed to be keeping a list of all rental units in town that are accessible for people with disabilities, but it hasn’t been updated for years. The county, which has a 24-hour hotline for people with disabilities seeking assistance, doesn’t have this kind of list at all; instead, it directs people to contact rental management nonprofits that specialize in wheelchair-accessible apartments, like Quad Inc. or Catholic Charities.

Multnomah County’s Joint Office of Homeless Services (JOHS) intends to make the rental hunt a little easier, at least for the 99 new recipients of mainstream vouchers. JOHS says the office will expand some of its existing programs to connect voucher holders with accessible units.

Those who weren’t lucky enough to nab one of those vouchers will continue to make sacrifices to adapt to their few housing choices. Hines says he once lived in an apartment where he had to get out of his wheelchair and crawl to access the bathroom.

“There were no other options for me,” Hines says. “I feel where a person lives determines their quality of life. I shouldn’t have to sacrifice mine just because I have a disability.”

The Portland Business Journal

Portland Gives Cannabis Businesses Fee Break For Pot Convictions

*By Pete Danko
September 26, 2018*

In approving reduced fees for cannabis businesses on Wednesday, the Portland City Council carved out a special break for businesses whose owners or staff have cannabis-related convictions.

The changes were championed by Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, who cast them as a modest dose of restorative justice for individuals and communities disproportionately impacted by cannabis prohibition.

“This is not enough and we’re not done,” Eudaly said. “But I think it’s an important and meaningful step in the right direction.”

All standard cannabis license applicants will now pay a \$500 fee, down from as much as \$975. Annual license fees that had been as high as \$4,975 for retailers are now all set at \$3,500.

The ordinance also includes a “Social Equity Program” intended “to support small businesses and individuals directly impacted by cannabis prohibition,” as the ordinance reads.

Any business whose ownership is at least one-quarter made up of individuals with a federal or state cannabis conviction before July 1, 2015, or whose staff hours are one-fifth from individuals with convictions, is eligible for the program.

Misdemeanors or felonies with elements that include cannabis possession, delivery or manufacture are included.

Businesses that qualify can get a 15 percent reduction in their license fee.

Small businesses — generally, those with annual income less than \$750,000 — are also now eligible for a 15 percent fee break. If a business falls into both categories, it's eligible for a 25 percent fee reduction.

Jeannette Ward Horton, director of NuLeaf, an organization recently tapped to use city cannabis tax dollars to support businesses of color in the industry, told the council the lower fees were a key next step.

“When you lower the bar to make it level for everyone, and I mean lower the financial bar, you really are doing the right thing,” she said. “This is super-thoughtful legislation that is going to create more innovation from small businesses. That’s where you’re going to see the real advancements and I think a cannabis market in Oregon that is going to outpace the others because it’s going to take advantage of that diversity.”

The ordinance also includes a deferred payment plan, and lower fees for “micro-tier” producers and processors as well as retail couriers.

The council vote was unanimous, 4-0, with Commissioner Amanda Fritz absent on city business.

OPB

Police Sued for Flash Bag Injury

*By Danny Peterson
September 26, 2018*

Man claims crowd control device was used negligently

A man is suing the city of Portland for being hit in the back of the head with a flash-bang munition that police are accused of launching at counter-protestors without warning during a right-wing rally early last month in downtown Portland.

Aaron Anthony Cantu, who was wearing a bicycle helmet when he was struck, claims he suffered a traumatic brain injury when the device pierced the helmet during the protest and was treated initially by a street medic before being transported to hospital Aug. 4, a tort claim filed last week on Cantu's behalf stated. The injury, which occurred on Southwest Columbia Street between First Avenue and Naito Parkway would've likely been fatal if not for the helmet, the claim said.

"The medics had to move him out of this dangerous situation created by created by Portland Police. Mr. Cantu thought he was going to die," a notice sent to the city by attorneys Juan Chavez and Crystal Maloney stated.

The claim also states that Cantu did not receive warning from police before the projectiles were launched. It also stated Cantu had not witnessed any projectiles or violence from the people on the counter-protestor side.

The photos of Cantu's injuries went viral on social media the day of the protest, though Police and the city's Independent Police Review were unable to speak with him to confirm their authenticity. Cantu remained anonymous up when the claim was filed a week ago.

When Cantu first heard a loud explosion, the claim states, he immediately started running away. He heard three or more loud bangs before being hit and started bleeding from his head, eyes blurry, and unable to yell or speak. He was attended briefly by a street medic at a bus stop before fleeing on foot again as police continued firing projectiles before being taken to a hospital.

Portland police temporarily suspended use of the flash-bag weapons, which were intended to be a "less-lethal" crowd dispersal tool, immediately following the Aug. 4 protests and the multiple reports of injuries.

Cantu is the second person to have notified the city of the intention to sue for injuries caused by the crowd dispersal munitions. Michelle Fawcett filed a tort claim on Sept. 13 for allegedly receiving third-degree chemical burns from a flash-bang munition that hit her arm and chest.