

## The Oregonian

# Portland Police Want to Hire a Homeless Community Liaison

*By Maxine Bernstein  
December 17, 2018*

**Portland police want to hire someone to serve as a link between the bureau and the city's homeless.**

The civilian will be asked to develop a plan to guide police responses to the homeless community and help the training division instruct officers on how best to communicate, police and provide services to people living on the streets.

The salary will range from \$53,280 to \$98,796, according to the job posting.

The Police Bureau has set minimum qualification for the position. Those include: knowledge of existing social services available for the homeless, understanding of basic police procedures, knowledge of the homeless community and an ability to build relationships between different community leaders, social service groups and law enforcement agencies.

“This position is a critical component to our response to those in the homeless community,” Chief Danielle Outlaw said. “This person will influence how the Police Bureau responds to people in the homeless community and ensure the Police Bureau is in line with best contemporary policing practices.”

This fall, a group of advocates asked the Portland City Council to take steps to help keep homeless people from the criminal justice system. The group also presented a petition with more than 4,000 signatures that called for what advocates said would be a more compassionate, humane way to treat people living on the streets of Portland.

They asked that first responders who aren't police offer services; called for a moratorium on moving homeless people from one place to another all the time; hygiene infrastructure, such as showers, restrooms and garbage disposal; legal temporary camps on public property; and transparent data collection on police interactions with homeless people.

The concerns grew from an Oregonian/OregonLive report that found that 52 percent of all Portland arrests in 2017 were of homeless people. The vast majority of those arrests were for low-level and non-violent offenses.

The Police Bureau has had two officers assigned to Central Precinct's Neighborhood Response Team, who have until now served as the bureau's contacts to the city's homeless. They will continue their work in regards to officers' response to police calls.

The new position will be a civilian who won't be responding to police calls but focused on training and educating officers about community resources and services, said Sgt. Christopher Burley, police spokesman.

The city is accepting applications for the new job through Jan. 7. More information on how to apply is on the city's website.

# Controversy Greet New Committee Overseeing Portland Police Reforms

*By Maxine Bernstein  
December 17, 2018*

The second version of Portland's beleaguered community panel formed to help oversee federally ordered police reforms is already off to a rocky start with allegations of a hostile work environment and the resignation of a contractor who was supposed to create "group cohesion."

Brandon Lee didn't show up for the panel's first meeting and has since cut ties with the city.

The city granted Lee and his wife, Hun Taing, who run Training 4 Transformation, a \$100,000 one-year contract to help support Portland's new Committee on Community-Engaged Policing.

The city has been without community oversight of police reforms for almost two years after the first committee dissolved in acrimony and an exodus of leaders and members. The committee is a key part of the settlement agreement between the city and U.S. Department of Justice that followed federal investigators' finding that Portland officers too often used excessive force on people suffering from mental illness. It called for significant changes to police policies, training and oversight.

Training 4 Transformation was one of two firms hired by the city to work as facilitators for the new panel. Taing and Lee say they turned to civil rights advocacy to build partnerships between communities and police after personally experiencing racial profiling. Lee was born and raised in Oakland, the former home of Portland's new Police Chief Danielle Outlaw.

But before the committee held its first meeting late last month, Lee complained that a committee member was racially hostile to him and urged the city to intervene and address his complaint.

Not satisfied by the city's response, Lee and his wife severed ties with the committee.

A city official initially denied Lee's absence was tied to a hostile workplace allegation. Nicole Grant, senior policy adviser for Mayor Ted Wheeler, told *The Oregonian/OregonLive*, that Lee didn't attend the first meeting, solely because of a financial issue in the contract.

But emails obtained by the newsroom through a public records request show otherwise.

Taing wrote to the mayor's staff on Oct. 23, concerned that Lee's "experience of racism" with one of the committee members was "not called out." Taing wrote that the city accepted the committee member's concerns "as if Brandon's racist experience did not matter."

Committee member Patrick Nolen, who formerly worked as a community organizer for Sisters of the Road, had questioned city staff when one day of a two-day private retreat for the new citizen group was cut short in mid-October. He asked why.

The reason he had heard was because it was sunny that day. Nolen wasn't satisfied with that explanation and objected to the facilitators deciding the schedule for the committee's retreat and training without input from its members.

Lee called Nolen the next day and the relationship soured even further.

"I felt kind of like he was bullying me and trying to get me to recant my concern about the postponement," Nolen wrote to the committee's project manager. "He used terms like 'I have won cases against the police in Berkeley' and 'I have trained in this field, you wouldn't understand what we are doing.'"

Nolen also said the committee members had prepared to discuss the committee's governance that day "but the facilitators weren't prepared" and that adding another day to training to cover the subject was "an undue burden."

In turn, Taing complained that Nolen's concerns created a "hostile work environment" for Lee.

"As the CEO of T4T, I cannot expect him to continue to play a role in (the committee) until this is confronted and resolved in person," Taing wrote to city staff.

"Much like the settlement agreement, we responded empathetically with a mental health lens but were completely silenced on a racial lens," Taing continued.

She also wrote that the committee "will lose credibility from the black community if Brandon is out of the picture!" and characterized Lee as "the glue and hope" for people of color in the community to support of the committee's work.

The mayor's staff tried to bring in the city's Bureau of Human Resources and coordinate a mediation between Nolen and Lee.

On Nov. 19, Nolen indicated to the city he was willing to be involved in a mediation with Lee. Three days later, Lee asked to bring his "peer support specialist" to any meeting with city staff and Nolen. He also wrote, "Mental Health for people of color seems to have taken a backseat while focusing on Patrick."

As the city was dealing with Lee and Taing's complaint, Training 4 Transformation also sought more money. On Nov. 20, Grant, the mayor's senior policy adviser, asked other staff if the city could adjust the total amount of the company's contract, hoping to add another 25 percent.

That became moot.

In a Nov. 29 email, the morning after the committee's first public meeting, Grant told committee members that Training 4 Transformation would no longer serve as a facilitator.

Grant wrote that she didn't tell the members earlier about Training 4 Transformation's complaint because "similar dynamics irreparably harmed" the original community panel that disbanded in January 2017 amid internal conflict and frustration in part over lack of feedback from the prior mayor and previous police chiefs.

Grant said Taing acknowledged that Lee no longer was interested in mediation and their company wanted out of the contract.

"As of today, they are no longer facilitators for the PCCEP," Grant wrote.

Taing, in a brief interview with The Oregonian/OregonLive, said Monday that "we decided it was a good time to part ways."

The company spent most of the \$100,000 in the first six months of the contract "because Brandon spent a lot of time recruiting the members," Taing said.

Lee's concerns about his work environment also were never resolved, she said. "I believe the city is supposed to work through all this from a racial equity lens," she said.

"I think they could have been more involved in making that very explicit," Taing added.

Grant wrote to committee members last month that she valued Lee's and Taing's work in helping to form the committee.

The Portland Committee on Community-Engaged Policing was scheduled to hold its second public meeting Monday night.

## **The Portland Tribune**

### **Sources: Applications being accepted for police support personnel**

*By Jim Redden  
December 18, 2018*

#### **Plus, faith community affordable housing projects sought and west side water connection approved**

Portland has opened the hiring process for 12 newly approved Public Safety Support Specialists who will assist sworn Portland Police Bureau officers by responding to nonemergency calls for service. Online applications will be accepted until 100 completed ones have been received or by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 28.

The specialists will be under the supervision of a sergeant. The hourly salary starts at \$23.95. Applicants must be 21 years of age at the time of hire, have a valid driver's license and be able to pass a criminal background check, a medical exam, a psychological evaluation and a drug screening.

Applicants are being accepted by the Bureau of Human Resources at:  
[governmentjobs.com/careers/portlandor](http://governmentjobs.com/careers/portlandor)

#### **Faith community affordable housing projects sought**

The Bureau of Planning and Sustainability is requesting proposals from faith communities, such as churches and synagogues, to develop new affordable housing units on their properties.

Up to five proposals will be selected for a pilot program. Selected organizations will receive free one-on-one assistance from architects and development consultants to determine such things as the types of housing that can fit on the site, the financial feasibility of the proposed project, city policies or regulations that would need to be addressed, and the process for developing the housing.

Applications are due by Friday, Jan. 18. More information and an online application form is available at: [portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/705813](http://portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/705813).

#### **West side water connection approved**

An earthquake-proof water pipe from east to west Portland will be built under the Willamette River, following City Council approval of the project last Wednesday.

The council's approval of the \$73.5 million contract is intended to ensure water from the Bull Run Watershed, the primary source of the city's water, will still be provided to west Portland after the predicted earthquake hits. The contract will pay a Dallas, Oregon, company to bury a 4,500-foot-long pipe 80 feet under the river.

Portland already has six pipes crossing the river, but earthquake experts say they could fail in a large earthquake. The new project, called the Willamette River Crossing, is expected to start construction in 2022.