

PRESS RELEASE
PORTLAND MAYOR TED WHEELER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City Prevails in Anderson Ratepayer Case

Court agrees that Council has acted appropriately in its use of ratepayer funds

PORTLAND, OR – Today Multnomah County Circuit Court Judge Stephen Bushong issued his opinion on the remaining claims in the Anderson ratepayer case. The City prevailed on every major claim.

Judge Bushong upheld the use of Bureau of Environmental Services (BES) funds in the investigation and defense of the Portland Harbor Superfund Listing. The City was named as a potentially responsible party primarily due to its operation of the BES conveyance system.

The City will continue to defend the interests of ratepayers and taxpayers by working to ensure that those primarily responsible for the contamination pay their fair share to clean up the river. As the City Council has indicated, once the allocation process is complete Council will re-allocate costs as appropriate.

“Commissioner Fish and I share a vision for our utility bureaus that focuses on the responsible use of public resources,” said Mayor Ted Wheeler. “I am pleased that the Court agrees that Council has acted appropriately in its use of ratepayer funds.”

Additionally, Judge Bushong upheld the use of BES and Water Bureau funds for grants related to those bureaus’ missions, such as the Water Bureau’s sponsorship of the Sandy River Basin Watershed Council, which partners with private landowners, residents and others to improve the health and habitat of the Sandy River and its tributaries, including the Bull Run River. The judge also approved of BES’s sponsorship of public outreach initiatives required as part of the Portland’s State-issued stormwater permit.

Finally, Judge Bushong found that the Water Bureau’s grant of System Development Charge exemptions is authorized by the Portland City Charter.

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