

## The Oregonian

### Charles Jordan, former Portland city commissioner and parks director, has died at 77

By Anna Griffin

Charles Jordan, Portland's first African-American city commissioner and one of the godfathers of its nationally renowned parks system, has died.

Jordan, 77, died at home Friday morning after a long illness.

"As Portland's first African-American City Commissioner and Portland Parks & Recreation Director, Charles was the champion for much of what we love about Portland's parks," Mayor Charlie Hales said in a statement. "Charles Jordan was most of all about access to parks and recreation programs for everyone. He was passionate about that principle, and the rest of us caught the inspiration from him."

We'll have a longer story about Jordan's contributions to the city this afternoon. Meanwhile, here's the notice put out by the City of Portland:

Beloved former Portland Parks & Recreation (PP&R) Director and City Commissioner Charles Jordan passed away in his home this morning after a long illness.

Charles Jordan was a pioneer for Portland Parks & Recreation, and implemented lasting and landmark programs for all Portlanders. Jordan's legacy has and continues to enhance the lives of current and future generations. Just a few hallmarks of Jordan's tenure include popular PP&R programs such as the free annual series of Movies in the Park, plus innumerable youth initiatives. Jordan gained public support for critical parks bond and levy measures. He oversaw 44 new Portland parks and natural areas during his tenure. Charles Jordan's leadership, commitment to Portland, and innovative policies are anchors of Portland Parks & Recreation's mission and philosophy now and going forward.

"Charles Jordan is established in history as one of the heroes of Portland," says Portland Parks Commissioner Amanda Fritz. "His many contributions to our community live on, and his memory will inspire others to reach beyond ordinary goals to achieve greatness. "Charles Jordan epitomized the best in community-building leadership in Portland."

"Charles Jordan was one of my heroes," says City Commissioner Nick Fish, a former Parks Commissioner. "One of the greatest moments in my public service was honoring Charles at the dedication of the Charles Jordan Community Center in the Portsmouth neighborhood. He was a national leader in the parks movement. Today is a sad day for the Portland Parks & Recreation family."

Portland Mayor Charlie Hales has ordered all City flags to fly at half-mast from today through Saturday, April 12.

"As Portland's first African-American City Commissioner and Portland Parks & Recreation Director, Charles was the champion for much of what we love about Portland's parks," says Mayor Hales. "Charles Jordan was most of all about access to parks and recreation programs for everyone. He was passionate about that principle, and the rest of us caught the inspiration from him."

"Charles Jordan inspired us all," says PP&R Director Mike Abbaté. "His energy and positive attitude were contagious; he drew people to him and motivated people to help themselves, and their community. At Portland Parks & Recreation, Charles transformed us from a bureau to a family. We continue that tradition even today among all "Parkies". His loss leaves a hole in our hearts, but Charles' legacy lives on."

Jordan's memorial service will be private, for family only.

## Portland Commissioner Amanda Fritz requests more funding for day laborer center, city 'at the table' discussing long-term plan

*By Andrew Theen*

Voz Workers' Rights Education Project, the city-sanctioned day laborer site in Northeast Portland, could receive more funding starting in July.

Commissioner Amanda Fritz requested an additional \$5,000 for the nonprofit group to help pay cost of living increases for staff. Fritz made the special budget request earlier this week. Voz currently receives \$25,000 annually from the city, which helps pay operating expenses at the day laborer and workers' education center.

The Martin Luther King Jr. Worker Center opened on land owned by the Portland Development Commission in 2008 thanks to \$200,000 in public funding.

A campaign promise of then-Mayor Tom Potter, the City Council decision was unanimous and celebrated by Commissioner Dan Saltzman. "I would have supported a much greater amount," Saltzman said at the time.

The center offers low-wage manual workers, often from immigrant populations, a safe and dry place to wait for work. Voz leaders say 60 to 120 workers typically use the site each day, with roughly 20 picking up work on a daily basis. The numbers typically go up during the summer months.

Last July, Voz's original five-year lease at the city property transitioned to a month-to-month agreement. PDC officials agreed to give the organization a six-month grace period if and when they were asked to relocate. That raised some concerns from Voz employees about city support for a long-term solution. PDC leaders deflected those concerns last fall, saying the city wasn't planning on selling the property or having Voz relocate anytime soon.

Now, it appears PDC and Voz are both at the negotiating table trying to figure out a long-term solution.

John Jackley, PDC's Communications and Social Equity Director, said there's been a lot of "positive momentum" in the past month. "Everybody's at the table, including the Hispanic Chamber and Latino Network," Jackley said in an email. "Communication is clear and transparent, and together we're in the process of identifying opportunities and resources available."

Ranfis Villatoro, Voz's development director, said the relationship between the day laborer center and PDC "has improved."

He said although there hasn't been any concrete agreements yet, Voz is finalizing a business plan, hoping to restructure the lease and also receive assistance in helping build and plane a permanent structure on the property.

Currently, the day laborer center has two buildings, including a temporary trailer, on the 5,500-square-foot parking lot between Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Northeast Grand Avenue on Northeast Everett Street.

Jackley said PDC is awaiting the group's fundraising plan and business plan. PDC leaders will meet with the Voz board in the next few weeks.

## Commissioner Steve Novick pushes \$650,000 request for Southwest light rail, 'high capacity transit' study: Portland City Hall Roundup

*By Andrew Theen*

Commissioner Steve Novick said the city must take the necessary steps to make Barbur Boulevard in Southwest Portland "a better place."

One of those steps, a \$650,000 budget request to further study light rail and other high capacity transit options in car-clogged Southwest Portland. In a departure from other studies looking at potential light rail projects, Novick wants to tap Portland's general fund, the city's discretionary money pool, to pay for the study.

Novick and Portland Bureau of Transportation leaders talked about the budget request Thursday afternoon, toward the end of a week of marathon work sessions for the City Council.

Commissioner Amanda Fritz responded to Novick's request by pointing out the general fund is already facing few resources and many requests. She said that previous light rail projects and studies were funded by urban renewal dollars.

Novick is asking to use \$650,000 from the city's discretionary general fund as part of a matching contribution to a draft environmental impact statement. He said Portland's share of the overall cost is "just a fraction." If approved, Portland would be expected to contribute a total of \$1.05 million for the two-year study.

In contrast to other light rail projects, PBOT officials pointed out the Southwest Corridor doesn't run through urban renewal areas and can't rely on those funds. Fritz asked why the request didn't go through PBOT's revenue stream.

"This is about the future of the city as a whole," Novick said. "It's not just a transportation project."

But Novick said urban renewal dollars are, in reality, general funds that have been diverted by the tax increment financing mechanism.

PBOT has a huge maintenance backlog, as outlined by a city audit last year. Novick and Mayor Charlie Hales continue to hold public meetings to hear what community members say should be a top priority. The city conducted a poll recently asking residents if they could stomach an \$8 - \$12 a month transportation.

Novick's request came in city documents in February, first reported by Willamette Week. He

"If we were being asked to make a commitment this year to pay \$40 million for a Southwest Corridor high-capacity transit project -- I would say we can't do that until we've figured out a way to pay for basic maintenance and safety features."

Requests for general fund dollars total more than \$34 million across city bureaus, despite the presence of just \$2.4 million in one-time cash plus \$3.6 million in ongoing program dollars to play with, according to city budget forecasts.

In major infrastructure projects, the plans come in waves. Last year, the city adopted the Barbur Concept Plan, a look at land use policies along the six-mile chunk of the congested and inefficient boulevard. All of this fits into Metro's ongoing Southwest Corridor Plan, outlining what to do in terms of transit and development throughout that same region.

The Metro-led plan to bring TriMet MAX service, or high speed buses, along 99W and into Tigard and Tualatin, is years away. That plan is already sparking outrage from some in Tigard and other communities.

Andy Duyck, the chair of the Washington County Board of Commissioners, attended Thursday's hearing. Novick said Washington County is expected to chip in for the study, too. "I certainly wouldn't be pushing this," Novick said, if nobody else was backing the study.

Hales said "it's never convenient to find the money to do the planning work" in projects such as the Southwest Corridor Plan. But, he added, it's important the city is ready, so Portland can lock down crucial federal transportation dollars when the moment arises.

Fritz asked Novick how the \$650,000 request shapes up with another general fund request from PBOT, \$1 million for sidewalks along Powell Boulevard in Southeast Portland.

Novick said "that's a tough question," and added that he wasn't sure how he would choose between the two requests.

Another general fund forecast will be released later this month. In May, the City Council will be presented with a proposed budget. Final city budgets are adopted in June, with the next fiscal year starting July 1.

## **Portland parking-lot tax? Controversial proposal pits connected developer against prominent Goodman family**

*By Brad Schmidt*

A politically connected downtown developer wants the city of Portland to ignite construction in Old Town Chinatown by taxing and eventually prohibiting surface parking lots in the historic Skidmore district.

The contentious proposal puts developer John Russell on a collision course with another prominent and powerful name in Portland real estate, the Goodman family.

Russell owns several Old Town buildings wedged between parking lots tied to the Goodmans. He's not a fan.

"Parking lots are the worst neighbor that you can have," said Russell, who developed the PacWest Center in 1984 and rehabilitates historic buildings. "I've joked that I'd rather have a brothel, because there's at least something going on."

Greg Goodman's family handed off management of its parking lot empire to another company last year but still owns the land. As a result, Goodman said he wouldn't pay the tax directly. But he still finds Russell's disdain for parking lots an affront.

"Frankly, for somebody who's done close to nothing in 20 years to say it's the problem, I find agitating," Goodman said. "And if there's a parking tax, I don't pay a dime."

Goodman said rather than taxing parking lots, the city should be subsidizing development in an area where projects currently don't pencil out.

The competing concepts from two Portland heavyweights have drawn attention, irritation and intrigue from the Portland Business Alliance to the offices inside City Hall. To help push his pitch, Russell has bankrolled opinions from two high-powered law firms that say the city legally could move forward if there's political will. (Read the opinions from Garvey Schubert Barer and Stoel Rives).

An advisory group of business owners, developers and neighborhood leaders is now considering Russell's proposal as part of the long-range planning process for downtown.

It would seem that Russell has found a sympathetic ear in Charlie Hales, although Portland's mayor isn't tipping his hand.

Wrestling with parking in the West End as a city commissioner 12 years ago, Hales said of the Goodmans' parking lots: "I'm not interested in putting the Goodmans out of business, and I'm not

interested in enriching them. I'm interested in having them have reason to convert their surface parking lots to better and higher uses."

Asked about Russell's proposed parking tax, the mayor said in a statement that it's worth considering.

"I'm not sure John Russell is right," Hales said. "But on any proposal, if you can prove that it will get something going in Old Town, then it deserves a discussion. And if you can prove that it will get nothing going in Old Town, then it's dead. But let's have those conversations."

### **Russell is confident**

Russell is a major player in city politics and real estate. Beyond his role developing the PacWest Center, he owns the 200 Market Building and served for a time as chairman of the Portland Development Commission, the city's urban renewal agency.

Since December 2006, Russell has individually or through his companies made campaign contributions exceeding \$185,000. He contributed to the campaigns of everyone on the City Council, including \$6,450 to Hales.

Three weeks ago, Russell and Hales shared a lengthy conversation in a ballroom at the Sentinel hotel after the mayor delivered his annual State of the City speech.

Russell said he first spoke with Hales about his proposal after Hales took office in 2013. Russell wants the city to create a tax on income from surface parking lots in the Skidmore district. Eventually, his plan would use the zoning code to eliminate the lots altogether.

Portland needs a thriving historic district, Russell said. But without strong financial disincentives, parking lot owners won't voluntarily kill off their cash cows and build atop the asphalt.

Russell has a financial interest in seeing new development in Old Town Chinatown. He owns about one-third of a block between Naito Parkway and First Avenue, including an 1800s-era building he wants to restore.

Late last year, he wrote to a city advisory panel to say that "my restoration can't succeed" with parking lots surrounding it.

City planners are now considering formal recommendations from a group that Russell assembled, including: former city planning chairmen Bing Sheldon and Rick Michaelson; urban planner Ethan Seltzer; historian Chet Orloff; and Peggy Moretti, executive director of Restore Oregon.

The group also supports taking a portion of taxes collected from parking lots and pumping that money into development projects in Skidmore, to help accelerate construction on parking-lot properties.

"We are confident that we will ultimately prevail," Russell said.

### **Goodman finds ally**

For more than 50 years, the Goodman name has been synonymous with parking in Portland.

But last year the family sold its City Center Parking business, which included operations of 198 facilities and about 30,000 parking stalls, to Imperial Parking Corporation of Vancouver, B.C.

Separately, Imperial now manages or leases about 30 properties owned by the Goodmans, who are focused on development projects of their own.

Any new tax wouldn't have a direct impact on the family unless a parking lot shut down, Goodman said. But he still doesn't like the idea.

Goodman's opposition to the parking-lot tax is shared by the Portland Business Alliance.

Earlier this year, the business group's 45-member board of directors voted unanimously to oppose the tax plan.

To justify construction costs, developers would need to charge rents that are double what tenants in the neighborhood currently pay, the alliance concluded. Tax collections wouldn't be enough to bridge that gap.

"Instead, property owners would be more likely to simply close parking lots and leave the property vacant exacerbating blight," Sandra McDonough, president of the alliance, wrote in a letter to the City Council last month.

Goodman also said that unlike Russell, his family's Downtown Development Group has been plenty active in real estate market.

They've landed big tenants such as Tasty n Alder, Nike and Sephora in existing or redeveloped buildings.

The family also shuttered a parking lot and contributed the land for Twelve West, a 22-story tower in the West End developed by Gerding Edlen in 2009. Goodman said his family was the largest investor in the \$137 million project.

Those efforts, he said, should more than demonstrate his family's willingness to build.

"There's not demand for that area," he said of Old Town Chinatown. "Because if there was, we'd be doing something."

## **The Portland Tribune**

### **Hales offers \$3.5 million in new revenue for city and county**

*By Jim Redden*

Mayor Charlie Hales told the City Council it could generate \$1.8 million in additional general fund dollars by approving some of his proposed changes to Portland's urban renewal areas on Thursday.

Hales made the announcement during a council work session on the budget for the next fiscal year, which will take effect on July 1. Hales said the changes would also generate an additional \$1.7 million for Multnomah County.

Among other things, Hales wants to shrink the boundaries of the River District URA that includes the Pearl District and Old Town/ Chinatown. He also wants to eliminate the Education URA around PSU but expand the North Macadam URA to the university's eastern boundary to help support it.

"We've used URAs as ATMs. They were never meant for that. They were meant to address blight, to create jobs, to create affordable housing, and to grow the tax base," says Hales.

The council has to approve the changes to generate the additional general fund dollars, which has not spending restrictions.

"This plan protects affordable housing. It gets money back on to the taxing districts. It shrinks the percentage of the city locked up in Urban Renewal. And it changes the budget picture, for the better, right now," says Hales.

The council currently expects to have about \$6 million in additional general fund dollars next fiscal years. Bureaus overseen by council members have requested around \$32 million in additional general fund spending, however. Hales proposal would raise the available money to \$7.8 million.

Hales met with Multnomah County Chair Madrigal before the work session to brief her on the proposal. They have been discussing how to better divide program responsibilities between the two governments.

Hales has also discussed the proposal with the League of Women Voters, which has been critical of how the city's historic approach to its URAs.

## The Mercury

### Hales' Office: Time for Last Thursday Vendors to Start Paying Fees... "Probably" This Year

By Denis C. Theriault

Pressed by Commissioner Amanda Fritz to show some of his cards during a budget work session this afternoon, Mayor Charlie Hales laid out his office's "nutshell" strategy for tamping down—and not paying for—the NE Alberta bacchanalia known as Last Thursday.

Some of it's familiar: The city wants out of the business of mustering volunteers and paying for cops and street closures at the beloved/accursed street-art event—which brings out families and culture-lovers on the last Thursday of the month, starting in May, but also attracts choking traffic and rowdy types who drink too much and pee too much.

But some of it's not: While it hunts for a neighborhood or community group to take the event over, the city wants to start collecting fees from the vendors who set up at the event—not right away, but "probably" at some point this year. Hales' spokesman, Dana Haynes, says the mechanism and particulars have yet to be vetted with the city attorney's office or the city's revenue bureau. But that's just a hiccup on the way to change.

"He doesn't want this forevermore to be paid for by the taxpayers at large," Haynes says of his boss.

Hales took on the conflict over Last Thursday last year, to mixed success. He was following in the footsteps of his predecessor, Sam Adams, who also made attempts in his final year in office to raise money and control the event.

Hales' staff tried enforcing Last Thursday's hours of operation and started tracking nuisances tied to the event. But the new controls led to a falling out with the grass-roots community group that had been traditionally been seen as leading the event, Friends of Last Thursday. FoLT resigned in protest over the changes, and the mayor's office ran things for the rest of the season. The monthly event has cost the city at least \$10,000 a month and often more.

In today's work session, said he hoped to do a hand off to a community group in time for next year, with that group stepping up to pay for the event and collect vendors fees.

Rumors abounded last year that Hales' staff wanted to get the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods to take things over. Talks this year haven't gotten that far yet—they've mostly involved figuring out the fee mechanism and running interference with city commissioners, the city's noise control officer, and the bureaus, like police and transportation, most affected by the event.

"But that's what we need to get to," Hales said. "The city needs to work its way out of that role."

Haynes said the one-year timeline is likely "aspirational" but not impossible. If the city starts collecting fees, he says, that might blaze a trail and ease concerns for a skeptical nonprofit or neighborhood group.

Asked if FoLT might re-enter the picture, Haynes said it was his understanding that last year's falling out has shown no signs of thawing. On either side.

"We took them at their word," Haynes says, "when they said they resigned in anger."

# Police Union: Cutting Drugs Unit "Like Pulling Out Your Front Teeth To Save Money on Toothpaste"

*By Denis C. Theriault*

Earlier this week, Commissioner Steve Novick stirred a rare public conversation about drug policy and Portland's role in a dubious and expensive 40-year national crackdown—holding a hearing on his well-reasoned call to scale back the Portland Police Bureau's \$4 million Drugs and Vice Division.

Police Chief Mike Reese, meanwhile, was definitively firm in defending the drugs unit—which he led a decade ago, just before his ascent into the bureau's inner circle. He lamented the cuts his old unit has already taken in recent years, calling it a "shell" of itself. And he warned of an explosion of crime if the unit were eliminated (even if that's not quite what Novick is asking).

There might have been more drama. But Reese is a cool cucumber in public—only rarely letting his frustrations (never rage) show through. He should have invited another DVD alum to speak in his stead: Portland Police Association President Daryl Turner.

Turner, as he does, sent out a slightly more impassioned defense of the unit and its work to his nearly 1,000 rank-and-file members the day of the hearing. His argument? Chaos and iniquity would return to Portland without a drugs unit (again, not quite what Novick is advocating). And the city might also lose millions in property forfeitures from drug cases—which might be a bigger reason for opposition than anyone would be willing to admit.

Getting rid of the Portland Police Bureau Drugs and Vice Division would be like pulling out your front teeth to save money on toothpaste.

During the early to mid-1990's, the Drugs and Vice Division worked with the Portland Police Bureau Gang Enforcement Team and uniform Patrol Officers and were a crucial player in helping clean up the gang drug trade, thus helping reduce the gang violence that was then rampant in Portland. In the late 1990's and early 2000's, the Drugs and Vice Division was a majority player in the war on meth houses and meth labs in the Portland Metro area. Over the last year, the Division has amassed approximately \$2 million in forfeitures. As a member of the Drugs and Vice Division for a number of years, I remember going into meth labs in homes where children and elderly people lived. I remember feeling sick the day after and wondering how those exposed to the labs every day had any kind of quality of life. And I remember the case where we caught the drug dealer who dealt a lethal case of Ecstasy to a nursing student who was the single mother of a young child. If these aren't livability issues, then what are?

Catching the mid and upper-level drug dealers may not have a noticeable effect on the drug smuggling trade coming into the country, but it has a huge impact on the street level drugs that hit the streets of Portland, school yards, and neighborhoods. Seeing the work of the Portland Police Bureau Drugs and Vice Division first hand, both as a uniformed officer and as a member of the Unit, gives me and people like the cops who have worked in the Drugs and Vice Division, first-hand knowledge of how ugly it could get if the funding for the Drugs and Vice Division was reduced or cut out all-together. The streets of downtown Portland and Northeast Portland were once an open air drug market; homes, apartments, hotels, and businesses in Southeast Portland neighborhoods were infested by meth labs of all types. The Drugs and Vice Division played a big part in cleaning that up and still today is as active as ever in keeping drugs off of the streets and out of the neighborhoods and school yards, helping to make Portland one of the safest, most livable cities in the United States. Saving a little money now will surely cost much more later!

Turner sent out the statement with a picture of him, post meth bust, wearing a hazmat suit. He actually gives a better argument than Reese did, or the police officials who spoke with Novick before the hearing: That the work of the officer who do deal with neighborhood level crimes (the drugs unit only handles mid-to major investigations) would find their work much more difficult.

It would be interesting to see if that's supported by data. But the ease of that kind of argument illustrates the political hurdle Novick's facing. A lot of people probably agree with it, even though the bureau's own analysts have written about the "limited" role the DVD plays in disrupting local supplies.

## **The Observer**

### **Former City Commissioner Charles Jordan Dies at 77** African American leader made many contributions to city

*By Michael Leighton*

The renamed Charles Jordan Community Center - a building made possible by his efforts - was dedicated on Sunday, July 22, 2012 with a free public celebration.

After spending his early life in rural Texas, Jordan served as an officer in the U.S. Army. He received his B.S. from Gonzaga University in Education, Sociology, and Philosophy. In 2001, he was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Law degree by the University of Vermont.

Jordan spent 10 years as Portland's first African-American City Commissioner beginning in 1974. He served 14 years as Director of Portland Parks & Recreation and retired in 2003. Jordan literally changed Portland's landscape by overseeing 44 new parks and natural areas during his tenure.

Jordan was the force behind Portland landmarks such as Pioneer Courthouse Square, the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center, Delta Park, Southwest Community Center, renovations to Tom McCall Waterfront Park and Matt Dishman Community Center, and many more public projects and successes.

As City Commissioner, Charles Jordan was noted for his innovative and unconventional approaches to problem solving. He developed the Community Juvenile Officer Program that put Portland Police officers in local schools to engage youth through positive interaction and activities. As Fire Commissioner, he developed an outreach training program to recruit people of color to the Fire Bureau.

On the national stage, Charles Jordan broadened the agenda of the environmental movement and land conservation to make it more inclusive. He is known for his groundbreaking approach to putting people - particularly people of color - at the heart of the American Conservation Movement.

"His great saying was 'Parks are more than just fun and games,'" says Michelle Harper, who worked with Jordan for years in several capacities. "He is a spiritual person with a strong connection to his church, and he saw us all as being connected. Portland's parks were where we could come together to build community and family."