

## The Oregonian

### Battling gentrification, paying for basics, struggling with technology: Portland City Council's busy day

By Brad Schmidt  
January 28, 2015

The Portland City Council on Wednesday tackled several big issues we've already highlighted. Here's a quick recap of what went down:

**Money for basics:**

The City Council took the rare step of eliminating one of its policies: a 1988 resolution that set a funding target of 28 percent of utility license fees for transportation.

Why delete it? The City Council never followed through with the money, yet the Transportation Bureau had been advised to ask for it in its annual budget request due next week -- a move that would have created choppy political waters.

In its place, Commissioner Amanda Fritz proposed a new policy to dedicate 50 percent of surplus money -- either one-time funding identified during the annual budget process or excess money carried from one budget to the next -- for transportation, parks or emergency management during the next four years.

That money would be spent on "infrastructure maintenance or replacement."

Hales called the new plan a "get real" policy with realistic targets that can actually be met.

If history provides context, it might actually happen.

Fritz's policy would create new restrictions on "one-time" money and double a 2008 directive to aside 25 percent of "excess" money moved from one annual budget to the next.

As it turns out, the City Council has followed through on the latter policy in all but two years -- putting all of its excess money, \$9.6 million, into a rainy-day account at the beginning of the recession in November 2008; then putting nothing from a paltry \$277,000 toward maintenance in November 2011.

Under two years with Hales at the helm, the City Council exceeded that 25 percent policy by a combined \$2.7 million.

But Commissioner Dan Saltzman voted against the changes in a 4-1 vote.

He said no one can predict the future and the City Council shouldn't tie its hands. He also said he found it ironic that the City Council would vote to set a new funding policy when it had "ignored" its 1988 policy for transportation funding.

"We're setting ourselves up to be criticized," he said.

Not to be outdone, Commissioner Steve Novick, who oversees that Transportation Bureau, played a snippet of Frankie Valli's 1965 hit, "Let's Hang On," in the City Council chambers -- reminding everyone about the importance of paying for "what we got" -- like paving city streets.

#### **Paperless permitting:**

The city's off-track paperless permitting system will probably be delayed into 2016, said Paul Scarlett, director of the Bureau of Development Services.

The project's estimated costs have already grown from \$8.2 million to \$11.8 million and any changes to the project scope will likely create more delays and drive up costs.

Commissioner Amanda Fritz said part of the problem is that a contract with Sierra Systems Inc. included specific deliverables but not corresponding dates for completing the work. The vendor is expected to present a new timeline next week, and the contract may be amended to authorize more payments.

"We're going to set to a realistic schedule so we can stick to it," Fritz said.

### **Affordable housing amid gentrification:**

A plan to spend \$20 million on affordable housing in North and Northeast Portland received widespread praise from community members who packed City Hall to testify, with the caveat that city officials haven't done enough over the years.

The City Council voted 5-0 to endorse an investment strategy with: \$8 million for affordable rental housing; \$5 million for homeownership opportunities; \$4 million for home repairs; and \$3 million to buy land for future housing.

That \$20 million comes on top existing affordable housing commitments and will be spent over the next five years, with specific projects and details to be worked out.

The money will come from the city's Interstate urban renewal district and can only be spent within the zone's boundaries.

### **What's next for Amanda Fritz? Take 3 For Politics ([video](#))**

*By Michelle Brence  
January 28, 2015*

Portland Commissioner Amanda Fritz changed her mind about seeking a third term on the City Council, telling City Hall reporter Brad Schmidt on Tuesday that she plans to run after all.

Fritz, Portland's most unusual and most populist politician, said she decided to try to stay in office after the death of her husband, Steve, in a September car accident. What does her decision mean for her and for the city? What has she accomplished at City Hall since she was first elected in 2008, and what's on her agenda for a possible third term?

Join Schmidt and City Hall reporter Andrew Theen as they talk about those issues and more in the latest episode of Take 3. Let us know what you think in the comments, and join us every Monday, Wednesday and Friday for another chat of about three minutes with The Oregonian/OregonLive's politics crew.

*-- Michelle Brence, with Brad Schmidt and Andrew Theen; taping and editing by Jessica Greif*

### **Homer Williams has eye on city project in Lents: Portland City Hall Roundup**

*By Brad Schmidt  
January 28, 2015*

Portland's urban renewal agency has lined up interest from four development teams -- including the high-profile duo of Homer Williams and Dike Dame -- to build new housing and retail projects in Lents.

With city subsidies and viable financial plans, any of the projects could move toward construction in the next two years.

The Portland Development Commission owns six acres that would be involved in the deals, and Mayor Charlie Hales has made getting projects off the ground in Lents a high priority. If any moves forward, it would mark a significant accomplishment with the investment of tens of millions of dollars in the east Portland neighborhood.

Lents leaders learned vague details of the potential projects at a neighborhood association meeting Tuesday night.

Two PDC representatives outlined the options and said they've forwarded recommendations to Patrick Quinton, the agency's executive director, to begin formal negotiations with the developers.

- Palindrome Communities, which includes Portland brewery owner Chad Rennaker, wants to build a mixed-use project with housing and office or retail space on baseball fields near Southeast 92nd Avenue and Harold Street. The development team also has expressed interest in the privately held New Copper Penny site and land around the Chevron gas station across the street.

- Williams & Dame Development is eyeing the northwest corner of 92nd Avenue and Foster Road for a mixed-use project with housing and retail. Williams is one of the city's most prominent developers, playing key roles developing the Pearl District, South Waterfront and Forest Heights.
- ROSE CDC is interested in the so-called "goat block," on that same corner, to build market-rate housing with retail and office space. The property earned its name when goats, which had been in inner Southeast Portland, moved to their new east Portland location.
- REACH Community Development and an Asian Health and Service Center are looking at land next to the Foster building with Assurety NW. The project would include senior housing, a community center, health services and a preschool.

Jesse Cornett, the neighborhood association president, asked the Portland Development Commission why any of these projects might pan out when others haven't in the urban renewal district.

"We have resources," said Kevin Cronin, a senior project manager. And, he added, "We've got qualified developers who are interested."

Next, the PDC is expected to begin negotiating memorandums of understanding or disposition and development agreements.

## The Portland Tribune

### Tabor reservoirs' fate up to City Council

*By Jim Redden  
January 29, 2015*

The City Council will have to decide the future of the open reservoirs at Mount Tabor. That became apparent after the Historic Landmarks Commission deadlocked on the question Monday afternoon.

The commission split 3-3 on an application from the Water Bureau to disconnect the reservoirs from the distribution system, as required by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Although the commission could either approve or deny the application at its next meeting if the absent seventh member shows up, both sides indicated they will appeal the decision to the council, regardless of how it ultimately goes.

As required by state land-use planning laws, the bureau has asked the commission to approve its land-use application for the work required to decommission the reservoirs. Many Mount Tabor-area neighbors oppose the application because they want the reservoirs to remain part of the city's water distribution system.

At Monday's hearing, the bureau indicated it was willing to accept a tie vote, which would have denied the application. Neighbors who attended said that meant the bureau believes the council will reverse the denial and approve the application. The council has promised the EPA the reservoirs will be decommissioned by the end of the year.

But the neighbors also believe the application is legally flawed because it does not include a plan for maintaining the historic character of the reservoirs, as required by preservation rules. If the council approves the application, the neighbors are prepared to appeal it to the state Land Use Board of Appeals, as allowed by state land-use laws.

"The application has flaws that give us grounds to appeal," says Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Association member Stephanie Stewart.

Ironically, Stewart and other association members had spent months trying to persuade the bureau to propose such a mitigation plan. Although they want the bureau to continue using the reservoirs, the activists had worked with the bureau to develop the best possible plan for preserving them if they are disconnected from the rest of the water distribution system.

Stewart and the others have served on a Community Advisory Committee appointed by the association since last April, negotiating with the bureau to improve its original plan to simply disconnect and drain the reservoirs. The bureau agreed to keep them filled with water, but did not offer a long-term maintenance plan that it promised to fund.

Persuading the bureau to fund a maintenance plan would have been more than a symbolic victory for the activists, however. It also could have saved millions of public dollars over the years. Maintaining the historic appearance of the reservoirs is probably the least expensive option for the area if they are decommissioned. Although ideas proposed over the years have included demolishing the reservoirs, reconfiguring the terrain, and building a park with public art.

### **Ban on open reservoirs**

The fate of the three reservoirs — and two others in Washington Park — has been a source of great citywide controversy for many years. Congress amended the Clean Water Act in 1996 to allow the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to ban all open municipal reservoirs in the country. The change happened after at least 69 people — mostly children, the elderly and AIDS patients — died during a 1993 cryptosporidium outbreak that went undetected for weeks and sickened more than 400,000 others in Milwaukee, Wis. The EPA signaled its intent to ban open reservoirs through new Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water (LT2) rules in 2000.

The next year, former Water Commissioner Erik Sten appointed a task force to study treatment options for the microscopic bacteria in the Bull Run Watershed. It soon became apparent that treated water also could become contaminated in the open reservoirs, however, a fear that increased after the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

But many Portlanders pushed back against the idea of potentially spending hundreds of millions of ratepayer dollars to change the water distribution system. They argued there has never been a documented case of anyone getting sick from drinking Bull Run water, even though it has only been lightly treated with chlorine at the dam in the watershed and stored in open reservoirs for more than 100 years at that point.

The task force recommended against treatment and proposed the city seek a waiver from LT2 rules, which were finalized in 2006. Although the city sought a waiver, activists called it a half-hearted effort, and the EPA did not grant it. Estimates of complying with the EPA requirement range up to \$350 million and more, including constructing new underground storage tanks to replace the capacity in the open reservoirs.

Although the council authorized the bureau to move forward with the replacement reservoir plan, many Portlanders continue protesting the decision, including a large number of people living in the Mt. Tabor area.

### **Historic preservation an issue**

Along the way, the Mt. Tabor and Washington Park reservoirs were placed on the National Register of Historic Places. This became important when the Water Bureau applied to the Bureau of Development Services for a land-use change to decommission the reservoirs at Mount Tabor last year. The original application called for disconnecting the reservoirs, draining them, and leaving them empty. The work would have required the removal of many large trees in the park.

This angered the neighbors, who contacted Commissioner Nick Fish, who is in charge of the Water Bureau, and Commissioner Amanda Fritz, who is in charge of Portland Parks & Recreation. They agreed the application needed to be reviewed and approved by the city's Historic Landmarks Commission, which is charged with protecting historic properties. The switch prompted the bureau to begin negotiating with the Citizens Advisory Committee about how to minimize the damage to the park and maintain the historic appearance of the reservoirs.

During a December hearing, the commission requested more information about the final plan from the bureau and postponed its decision until Jan. 26. By coincidence, last week the council approved seeking bids for a \$4.8 million contract to disconnect the reservoirs. At the time, Fish said he expected the commission's decision to be appealed to the council.

Voting to approve the bureau's application at the Monday meeting were Chairman Brian Emerick, Kirk Ranzetta, and Paul Solimano. Voting against it were Vice Chairwoman Jessica Engeman, Carin Carlson, and Harris Matarazzo. The absent member was Caroline Dao.

Staff members now are drafting the paperwork to formally deny the application for consideration on Feb. 9. Whatever happens, more controversy appears to lie ahead.

## **Sources Say: Mayors throw wrench in agenda on police issues**

*By Jim Redden  
January 29, 2015*

Events are overtaking Portland's agenda for the 2015 Oregon Legislature on police-related issues.

The agenda endorsed by the City Council has only two issues related to the police: allowing the use of fixed photo radar in high-crash corridors and authorizing police officers to wear body cameras. But last week the U.S. Conference of Mayors endorsed an even more controversial idea the Legislature likely will consider — requiring that police deadly force incidents be investigated for prosecution by someone other than district attorneys.

The requirement is being proposed in the wake of the police shooting in Ferguson, where the district attorney did not persuade a grand jury to indict a white officer who killed a black teenager. Critics says district attorneys across the country are too close to the police because they prosecute the cases put together by the officers.

### **Coincidental career changes**

Two prominent local politicians whose careers were cut short by scandal have gotten new jobs within days of each other.

Former Multnomah County Chairman Jeff Cogen has been hired by the Impact NW social service organization to manage its technical support division, called Impact Solutions. Cogen, who was considered a rising star within political circles, resigned in September 2013 after admitting to an affair with a county policy adviser who subsequently accused him of being a pot-smoking Deadhead. He worked for Democracy Resources, the state's largest petition signature-gathering firm, before taking his new job.

Cogen's hiring comes shortly after former Portland Mayor Sam Adams was named Director of the U.S. Climate Initiatives Program at the World Resources Institute, a research organization based in Washington D.C. Adams chose not to run for a second term as mayor after admitting he lied about not having sex with an 18-year-old former intern. Adams had been working as the executive director of the City Club of Portland.

### **May 19 election gets interesting**

Portland School Board races are heating up, even though candidates in the May 19 election cannot formally file for another week. Four of the seven board seats are up this year.

Incumbent Ruth Adkins, a community activist, announced last week that she will not run for re-election. She is endorsing Julie Esparza Brown, a Portland State University special education professor, for her seat. Also running is Andrew Davidson, a PSU student. In addition, parent activist Mike Rosen has announced he will run against incumbent Greg Belisle. And Paul Anthony, a CFO for a Beaverton-based financial services company, has declared for the seat held by Matt Morton. Belisle and Morton have not yet said whether they will run for re-election.

That only leaves incumbent Bobbie Regan without an opponent, and the final filing deadline is not until March 19.

## **City's paperless permit project to be delayed**

*By Jim Redden  
January 28, 2015*

The completion date for Portland's new paperless permitting system will likely be delayed beyond the end of the year, the City Council was told Wednesday morning.

The project is intended to allow online construction and other permit applications to be made to the Bureau of Development Services. It was originally budgeted at \$8.2 million but is now estimated at \$11.8 million and could go higher, according to a report presented to the council by the city's Technology Oversight Committee.

BDS Director Paul Scarlett told the council the original December 2015 completing date probably cannot be met. He said the contract working on the project will present him with a revised schedule next Wednesday. Scarlett did not say how much more the cost of the process was likely to increase, if at all.

Commissioner Amanda Fritz, who is in charge of BDS, said the project started with former Commissioner Randy Leonard was in charge of it. She said the paperless application process would be an improvement over the existing system, which she described as "paperwork being moved from desk to desk in shopping carts."

Mayor Charlie Hales said the fate of the project was a great concern to every member of the council because bureaus they all oversee are involved in the application process.

## **Monthly water, sewer bills now available**

*By Jim Redden  
January 28, 2015*

Portland utility customers can now receive their water, sewer and stormwater management fee bills every month in the mail instead of every three months.

The city made the change because some people complain they have a hard time budgeting for the quarterly bills that have always been sent out. The city has been allowing customers to pay monthly only since October 2013, but found that is a barrier to some.

To request monthly instead of quarterly bills in the mail, go to [www.portlandoregon.gov/utilitybill](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/utilitybill).

To discuss whether monthly statements are a good fit, call the Customer Service Center at 503-823-7770 or visit the Service Center in person at 1120 S.W. Fifth Ave. in Portland.

The city has already budgeted for the estimated \$246,300 in additional printing, mailing and processing costs.

"This option will allow older adults who wish to pay on a monthly basis but don't have access to electronic billing and payment the ability to do so," said Barbara Bernstein, Interim Executive Director for Elders in Action. "Our clients have asked for this option for years."

"Paying for sewer, stormwater, and water services monthly can help Portlanders manage their expenses right now," said Janice Thompson, the Citizens' Utility Board's consumer advocate for Portland public utility customers. "This is an important option that CUB has been pushing for."

"As Commissioner in charge of the City's two public utilities, good customer service is one of my top priorities," said Commissioner Nick Fish. "By expanding the monthly billing option, we are making it easier for customers to plan and budget for their water, sewer and stormwater services."

According to the city, "Monthly statements are a great option, helping households manage their monthly budgets and understand how their sewer/stormwater/water charges fit into their monthly expenses. A monthly statement is different from a monthly bill. When a household chooses monthly statements, their meter continues to be read quarterly, but charges are invoiced monthly. Monthly meter reads, which are not currently available for residential customers, also have their benefits. An automated meter reading system could give hourly data, providing households with more frequent information and allowing them to control their usage and proactively identify household leaks. But upgrading to a new meter system would be expensive — approximately \$40 million. In an effort to meet our customers' desire to pay monthly without incurring this cost, we developed this monthly statement option."

## **Fritz to seek another City Council term**

*By Jim Redden  
January 29, 2015*

Commissioner Amanda Fritz will run for re-election to the City Council in 2016 after all.

Fritz had said she would not seek a third term, but changed her mind after her husband, Dr. Steven Fritz, was killed in an automobile accident last September. Fritz had planned to retire from public life to spend more time with him.

"I said I was never running again. That has changed because of our family's tragedy," Fritz says.

Her husband worked at the Oregon State Hospital and was killed while carpooling there with mental health specialist Cary Fairchild, who also died. A car crossed the median on Interstate 5 and struck his distinctive zebra-painted car head-on.

Fritz says she will run on her record of accomplishments, which includes convincing the City Council to enact Portland's paid sick leave policy, establish an independent City Budget Office, and increase spending on infrastructure maintenance.

If re-elected, Fritz says her priorities will include overseeing the voter-approved Portland Parks & Recreation bond measure she sponsored and continuing to help implement the U.S. Department of Justice settlement agreement concerning the Portland Police Bureau.

"For 2015 and 2016, I will continue as I have in 2013 and 2014, dedicating my time and energy to serving the people of Portland who elected and then re-elected me. I hope Portlanders will agree that I have earned re-election in 2016," Fritz says.

Fritz says she announced early so that potential candidates can decide whether to run against her or seek another office. Both Mayor Charlie Hales and Commissioner Steve Novick also are up for re-election in 2016.

Although no one has yet expressed interest in her council seat, some community activists says Fritz has abandoned her neighborhood roots by supporting plans to decommission the open reservoirs in Mount Tabor and not doing more to prevent existing homes from being demolished and replaced with one or more larger houses.

Fritz says the replacement reservoir plan is required by federal environmental rules, and state law prohibits the city from telling people they cannot sell their homes for redevelopment.

For much of last year, Hales and Novick tried to persuade Fritz to vote for a new street fee without sending it to the ballot.

They proposed several versions of the fee between May 2014 and earlier this year without winning her support. Hales and Novick finally suspended debate over the proposal while the 2015 Oregon Legislature tries to develop its own transportation funding package. The council could take up the issue again after the session adjourns in July.

Fritz was first elected to the council in 2008 with public campaign funds and then personally paid for most of her 2012 re-election campaign.

She says her husband was covered by multiple insurance policies that have given her enough money to finance her 2016 campaign, if necessary.

"It's money I wish I didn't have, and I would give it back in a heartbeat if I could spend just one more day with my husband. But it's there, and I know Steve would completely support me as he always did, in choosing to invest it to win re-election in 2016 so I can continue to serve the people of this city we both love," Fritz says.

## **Willamette Week**

### **Portland City Commissioner Amanda Fritz Will Seek Third Term**

*By Aaron Mesh  
January 28, 2015*

Portland City Commissioner Amanda Fritz says she will seek a third term on the City Council in 2016. She hadn't planned to run again but changed her mind after her husband, Dr. Steven Fritz, died in a September car crash on Interstate 5 near Salem.

"I was hoping to be able to retire and spend time with my husband," Fritz tells WW. "I have lots of goals for the city, and I'm trying to make something good come out of this horrible thing that's happened."

Fritz won re-election in 2012 after a tough challenge from former state Rep. Mary Nolan (D-Portland). Multnomah County Commissioner Loretta Smith and former County Chairwoman Marissa Madrigal were both rumored to be interested in the City Council seat if Fritz retired.

Fritz—who has rejected large donations and PAC money—says she will fund her re-election campaign with the payout from her husband's life insurance.

## The Portland Mercury

### Blue Line, Gray Area

## Portland Cop's Facebook Posts Raise Questions about Lack of Social Media Policy

*By Denis C. Theriault*  
*January 28, 2015*

A PORTLAND COP flagged for poking at police accountability protesters on Facebook was briefly investigated by the Independent Police Review office, the Mercury has learned.

But in a curious gray area for the Portland Police Bureau—a sensitive place where free speech rights collide with concerns about community trust and an officer's credibility in the courtroom—the Mercury has also learned that the activity likely won't lead to discipline.

On November 29, hours before local protesters upset over the police killings of Michael Brown and Eric Garner faced flash-bang grenades and the threat of mass arrest, the officer offered some tart commentary on an article about another police killing, in Alabama.

"Waaaaaaait just one second," he posted. "A black police officer wasn't indicted for shooting an unarmed, naked, white teenager (in Alabama)? Why have no Americans lost their minds over this?"

Then, in December, he liked a Tea Party News Network post shilling for a "fantastic" T-shirt mocking Garner, who was choked by an officer, and his last words, "I can't breathe." The black shirt bears a generic badge and blue stripe between the words "BREATHE EASY" and "DON'T BREAK THE LAW."

(The Mercury, which obtained screen grabs of the officer's Facebook activity from a source, has decided not to identify him absent a more formal investigation.)

The decision not to pursue discipline comes, in part, because of the high bar governments face when attempting to regulate their employees' speech, on matters of "public concern," without being seen as punitive.

The cop didn't suggest he'd do his job differently or reference any local cases. Also, sources point out, the cop's posts simply weren't as inflammatory as those made by other cops whose comments earned national attention—including an officer in San Jose, California, who tweeted to police critics he'd be waiting in a movie theater with his gun.

"If anybody expresses an unpopular belief, it's still generally considered protected speech," says Sergeant Pete Simpson, the police bureau's lead spokesperson.

Moreover, unlike a recent case where a local Nordstrom fired an employee over a Facebook post in which he said, "every time an unarmed black man is killed, you kill a decorated white officer, on his doorstep in front of his family," courts have recognized that the government can have less leeway when firing someone over controversial statements.

That's not to say the case didn't cause some consternation. The city's Independent Police Review director, Constantin Severe, acknowledged the speech issues in play, but was troubled enough that he assigned it for a preliminary investigation last month.

And it points to another concern. Portland's bureau lacks something other police agencies have crafted in the wake of similar controversies: a firm social media policy telling cops what is—and what isn't—acceptable content.

"To my knowledge, [the police bureau] does not have a social media policy," Severe tells the Mercury. "I'm a big believer in having a social media policy, as it would provide clearer expectations than what currently exists for bureau members and the general public of [the bureau's] expectations."

Right now, a cop would have to run afoul of the bureau's directive on professional conduct, which generally prohibits "any act tending to bring reproach or discredit upon the bureau or the city," while also

ordering cops not to "make any written or oral statements which would impair or diminish the orderly and effective operations, supervision, or discipline of the bureau."

This case, of course, also echoes reports last year about three Portland cops facing discipline after posting pictures of a Portland badge wrapped in an "I Am Darren Wilson" bracelet, using official police gear to proclaim the innocence of the cop who shot Brown.

The bureau's strong response over those posts, however, wasn't about speech. It was about the unsanctioned use of a badge.

That's potentially confusing. And experts consulted by the Mercury say the most recent Facebook posts, especially after the "I Am Darren Wilson" incident, should persuade the bureau to pursue a policy focused solely on social media.

"It's a perfect example of the kind of online comments that would legitimately raise a question. And the response of looking into it is appropriate," says Traci Park, a California labor attorney who's represented police agencies and has written about social media concerns.

Calling the cop's Facebook posts "more mundane," she said police agencies would help their officers as much as the public in crafting a "specific policy related to officers' use of social media."

"This is the kind of case you're going to see coming up more and more frequently," Park says. "It's these borderline cases that raise the most questions."

And it's not as if the issue is all that new. In 2007, according to a 2011 article in the official newsletter of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, top cops in Lincoln, Nebraska, told officers not to post or write anything online that might be embarrassing. That same 2011 article was co-written by the chief of police in Boise, Idaho, and went on to detail that agency's work on crafting a policy.

Jann Carson of the American Civil Liberties of Oregon said it's not for nothing that the officer in Portland was posting "in his free time" and that his activity "had no bearing on the job that he was doing."

"Police officers, as with other public employees, should still have free speech rights and be able to comment on topical issues," she says. "I don't know that there's a clear answer as to where that line's going to be drawn."

So far the bureau doesn't seem very interested in trying to figure it out. While it has been regularly updating its policy directives, nothing has been written about what their officers should or should not be doing online.

Says Simpson the police spokesperson, "I'm not aware of any new or proposed policy changes regarding social media."

## **Hall Monitor**

### **Amanda Fritz Changes Her Mind**

*By Denis C. Theriault*  
*January 28, 2015*

WHETHER SHE WON or lost in 2012—the latter briefly seeming possible in her bitter fight against then-State Representative Mary Nolan—Commissioner Amanda Fritz was adamant that would be her last campaign. She wasn't even sure she wanted to run that race, let alone another one, for a third term, in 2016.

She already missed her family, she told anyone and everyone, having traded precious time with them for the long hours she spent doing the public's business. And after cracking into her and her husband's nest egg to win again in 2012—Fritz is famously allergic to fundraising—she found herself seeing the "love of her life," Steve Fritz, even less over the past two years.

To rebuild their savings, her husband, an Oregon State Hospital psychiatrist, worked more than the equivalent of a second full-time job, Fritz says. It was another sacrifice. But they wouldn't use that money to finance yet another campaign. Instead, they'd use it to finally retire.

But everything changed one tragic day last September. Steve Fritz, beloved by his patients and the city's arts community, was killed during his morning commute to Salem after a car heading the opposite

direction on Interstate 5 jumped a median and smashed into his famed zebra-painted Nissan Sentra head-on.

And now Fritz is running again—a difficult decision announced with bracing confidence on Wednesday, January 28.

"Things have changed," she told me in her office before making her announcement public. "It's all been since the crash."

Fritz's reversal was much discussed and long expected in political circles.

For months after her husband's death—a period that saw Fritz mourn him with black, white, and gray outfits, only recently returning to colors—it was clear her work provided her with a necessary anchor. She raised money for the parks bureau. She led efforts to build the civilian oversight apparatus around the police bureau's federal reforms.

Work shepherding along oversight of the federal reforms has been "one of the things getting me up in the morning," she says.

The only real question had to do with money. Would she stomach fundraising calls that might sap time away from the office? Or would she find some other way to run?

Turns out, the tragedy that left Fritz with the time to seek another term also left her with the means. Because her husband's death was an accident, Fritz received a substantial life insurance check. You'll be able to give to Fritz ahead of 2016 if you'd like. But she's not going to ask first.

"It's money I wish I didn't have, and I would give it back in a heartbeat if I could spend just one more day with my husband," she says in a statement announcing her intentions. "But it's there, and I know Steve would completely support me as he always did, in choosing to invest it to win re-election in 2016 so I can continue to serve the people of this city we both love."

She may not need all of it. Fritz is a stronger candidate now than in 2012, having fended off a well-funded challenger on her way to building a robust record in 2013 and 2014. She's pushed through paid sick leave, spent money on parks in East Portland, championed Right 2 Dream Too on West Burnside, created an independent city budget office, and crafted a new policy that gently forces her colleagues to spend more money on infrastructure.

In the next two years, she's looking at building on the work she's undertaken since January 2013, like lobbying Salem to pass a statewide version of her Portland sick-time policy and making sure parks continues to address equity disparities between neglected parts of the city and those that are richer with services.

She's also looking ahead—she hopes to continue working on homelessness issues and mental health, having taken some credit for the city's hiring of a liaison meant to work specifically on opening government's doors to people with mental illness. She also notes the police reform settlement with the Department of Justice lasts through 2020, which would be her revised final year on the council, assuming she wins.

Fritz, by the way, says she expects to keep control of the parks bureau in the short term, even if Mayor Charlie Hales shuffles some other assignments around this winter and spring—a reward for her efforts to stump for a \$68 million parks bond renewal. "I'd be miffed if the bureau was taken from me," she says, a message the mayor apparently was made to understand.

That's part and parcel with the blunt, assured attitude Fritz has carried throughout her second term.

She's thundered against Hales in public hearings—loudly and successfully demanding money for priorities like human trafficking and questioning his engagement with the police bureau's handling of protests. She's been willing to buck Hales on issues like reservoirs and the street fee (it's interesting to note, as she's settled on re-election, how her rhetoric has shifted away from her seeming certainty that a council-only vote would suffice).

Fritz knows her seat, if it opened up, would attract a crowd of would-be successors. She may yet face another challenger. But announcing so early will give others time to look elsewhere—and maybe stay some hands.

"They need to know what I intend to do," she says. She's convinced she waited too long to announce last time, not making things official until April 2011.

Besides, she says, running again is the best way to make sure the council still has at least one woman among its five spots. Fritz says there's no guarantee a woman would win in a scrum over an open seat.

Her decision also settles any rumors that she might have considered becoming mayor, whether or not Hales runs again. She confirmed she'd been approached by community members, but she convincingly pooh-poohed the job in the next breath.

"I like being a city commissioner," she says. "I feel like I'm useful."

## **Saltzman Forecasts Broken Promises, Votes Against New Infrastructure Spending Policy**

*By Denis C. Theriault  
January 28, 2015*

Commissioner Dan Saltzman was plainspoken this morning when standing apart from his Portland City Council colleagues—all of whom had enthusiastically backed Commissioner Amanda Fritz's new plan to spend more of the city's excess cash on painfully deferred maintenance.

"We're setting ourselves up to be criticized," the veteran commissioner said not longer after it was his turn to vote.

Fritz's spending resolution, announced last week in the weird city hall gloom over news that the street fee was on hiatus, does a few things—most of which gave Saltzman some heartburn. Saltzman, in fact, was the only commissioner not to sign on as a co-sponsor.

It requires the council to spend half of any money left unspent at the end of a fiscal year on maintenance—and imposes the same threshold on whatever one-time funding is in the city's five-year forecast. (That threshold, applying only to surplus money, was previously just 25 percent.) It also requires, until this provision expires in four years, that the maintenance money be divided between transportation, parks, and emergency management.

Further, it repeals a long-ignored 1988 resolution and policy that demanded the city seek new ongoing transportation revenue while also suggesting it spend 28 percent of utility fees on transportation maintenance. That policy was all but forgotten by 1990, about when voter-approved property tax limits in Measure 5 shattered local government finances.

"I do find it ironic we're considering a resolution to repeal a city funding policy that was ignored," Saltzman said, "and that we're replacing it with a new binding policy that equally has the potential to be ignored."

Saltzman cited Measure 5 as well as a 2012 vote to create a library taxing district, which wound up "compressing" away \$10 million in expected city revenue, because of property tax rules meant to cap the amount of taxes collected across various government entities

He said both "upset the apple cart" of the city's budget and wondered how the council would respond the next time something like that happened—perhaps forcing commissioners to grab some of that infrastructure money to patch a bleeding wound in the city's operating budget. He didn't want to, he said, "artificially restrain ourselves to priorities we might not be able to fulfill."

"I understand the popular appeal of this," he said. "I just don't think it's a wise policy."

Fritz and her colleagues, as well as the city's budget director, Andrew Scott, all disagreed. The council, in dividing last year's surplus, came close to spending half on maintenance.

"We need to start being very dedicated and disciplined in setting priorities," Fritz said, "and that's what this resolution begins to do."

And, at varying points, Mayor Charlie Hales and Commissioner Steve Novick, the architects of the street fee thus far, took turns being either quippy and/or lighthearted in announcing their support

"If this ordinance had a slogan," Hales says, "it would be 'get real.'"

Novick, who runs both the Bureau of Transportation and the Bureau of Emergency Management, reminded everyone that the resolution sets a "floor, not a ceiling," in that the council could freely spend the rest of its surplus money on maintenance, too. Then he used the room's loudspeakers to play a song: Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons' "Let's Hang On (to What We've Got)."

There are, of course, some lingering questions.

As council gadfly Joe Walsh pointed out, the council will still have to battle among themselves over how the 50 percent will be spent between three priorities listed by Fritz. Walsh fretted that commissioners, who oversee individual bureaus directly, might not keep a citywide perspective when making those decisions.

Fritz, who oversees parks, noted one of the mayor's singular powers: the freedom to realign bureaus whenever the mayor sees fit. That power can be used to punish, reward, or just make the city work better.

"I'm certainly always aware the bureaus I have today might not be the ones I have tomorrow," she said. "And the bureaus I'm assigned tomorrow might be even more poorly funded than the bureaus I have today."

Another citizen made what Fritz conceded was a "fair criticism." The policy that the city's repealing, on utility license fee spending on transportation, would have meant \$13 million more for transportation if it were followed this year. Fritz said the city didn't have \$13 million it could divert without cutting from parks, firefighters, police, or other programs.

"Rather than having an aspirational policy we haven't met," Fritz said, "let's have something we can stick with that's reasonable."

(Of course, the city might have more money if the council in 2004, as I reminded everyone last week, hadn't followed Saltzman's lead in cutting the share of utility fees paid by the city's water and sewer bureaus. Absent that change, the city would have an additional \$10 million in general fund revenue, the budget office told me.)

It's worth wondering whether Saltzman might have been more amenable if the policy change also included a focus on one of his bureaus: housing. Saltzman's made no secret he's going to ask for a substantial general fund investment in housing construction this spring.

Cash for housing was in Fritz's original plan, she said—until Hales nixed it when talking with her before it was announced. He reminded her that the city doesn't actually own the housing it helps build and subsidizes. (Saltzman's also been a fairly strident critic of Hales and Novick's street fee effort.)

"This resolution is focused on how do we take care of city-owned assets," Fritz said during the hearing, before suggesting she'd be interested in using the other half of the city's surplus cash to help.

"We certainly need to look at how were using the other 50 percent to help with the housing crisis."

## **The Skanner**

### **Portland Commissioner Fritz Seeks Third Term**

*By Lisa Loving  
January 29, 2015*

Portland City Commissioner Amanda Fritz announced this week she is running for a third term in office.

The former community organizer and registered nurse is the only official in office who was first elected through a publicly-funded campaign; that system was shut down by voters in 2010 by a margin of less than one percent.

"I plan to keep doing what I said I would do when Portlanders elected me in 2008, and re-elected me in 2012—prioritizing basic services and spending taxpayers' money wisely," she said Wednesday in a press statement. "I have been a consistent voice for fiscal responsibility, equity, community involvement, and common sense for the past six years."

Fritz said that she plans to fund her next campaign in part with the life insurance payment from her husband's tragic death in a car accident last year.

"It's money I wish I didn't have, and I would give it back in a heartbeat if I could spend just one more day with my husband," she said. "But it's there, and I know Steve would completely support me as he always did, in choosing to invest it to win re-election in 2016 so I can continue to serve the people of this city we both love."

Fritz said Wednesday that although she has stated many times that her current term would be her last foray into electoral politics, the death of her husband, Oregon State Hospital psychiatrist Dr. Steven Fritz, changed her mind.

“Prior to Steve’s death in September, many Portlanders had asked me to reconsider and run again. My response was that I believed I would have earned a long and happy retirement with my husband, at the end of eight years in office.

“My life completely changed on September 24th when Steve was killed.

“And now, I have the choice to make something positive out of this horrible loss. I’ve been thinking about this over the past few months. My kids and I went away over the holidays, and I discussed it with them. I want to continue to serve Portland, with their full support and that of Steve’s parents who live in East Portland.”

While Fritz is widely admired by liberal grassroots communities, she has also been under fire from police accountability activists opposed to the City’s appeal of the U.S. Department of Justice agreement regarding final say in court-mandated reviews of the Portland Police Bureau’s compliance with its terms.

Fritz, along with Mayor Charlie Hales, insists that the City Council should have final say; members of the Albina Ministerial Alliance for Justice and Police Reform argue that in the interest of keeping the review process independent of city control, a district judge should have the final say.

The issue is currently before a mediator of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

The Fritz campaign posted a list of priorities for the rest of her current term and possible future one, including plans to:

- Fully implement the Department of Justice Settlement Agreement police reforms
- Address income inequalities and help working families
- Identify funding to maintain basic infrastructure
- Fix local campaign financing to reduce undue influence by affluent donors
- Implement the Parks replacement bond measure
- Improve equity and opportunity within City government and across all Portland’s neighborhoods and cultural communities
- Help the most vulnerable people in our community, including people experiencing mental illnesses and people living outside

Her campaign listed accomplishments of the past two years including:

- Adoption of Protected Sick Leave, now cited by President Barack Obama as a national priority
- Establishing the independent City Budget Office, which she proposed at the end of 2012
- Securing ongoing funding to assist survivors of human trafficking, and to train women and youth on strategies preventing domestic and sexual violence
- Dedicating System Development Charge revenue (fees paid by developers) to build parks in parks-deficient areas of East Portland and SW Portland
- Passage of the \$68M Parks Replacement Bond, with the highest-ever level of support for a Portland Parks funding measure
- Averting the imposition of transportation funding fees that would have overburdened low-income Portlanders and middle-income families
- Coordinating the hiring of the Compliance Officer/Community Liaison and appointment of the Community Oversight Advisory Board for the Department of Justice Settlement Agreement on police accountability regarding treatment of people experiencing mental illnesses, in partnership with the Mayor’s office
- Changing City budget policy to prioritize spending on basic infrastructure maintenance
- Revising standards for notice to neighbors prior to demolition of single family homes, offering more opportunities for preservation of historic buildings.

## The Portland Observer

### Combating Displacement Bureau releases \$20 million housing plan

*By Olivia Olivia*  
*January 28, 2015*

After extended public input, the Portland Housing Bureau has a formal plan on how to use \$20 million in Urban Renewal monies to fight gentrification in north and northeast Portland.

The proposal comes before the Portland City Council this week after several months of planning and community meetings, including reaching out to faith leaders within the black community, and other neighborhood leaders and residents.

Less than two decades ago, housing in many inner north and northeast Portland neighborhoods provided homes to more African Americans than anywhere in the city—or in the state. But during the 1990s, city efforts to address problems of crime and blight by sponsoring economic development projects brought about profound neighborhood transformations, leaving many long-time residents with fewer and fewer affordable housing options.

Within the past decade, the percentage of African Americans in Portland's historically black neighborhoods had fallen by more than half.

In March, Mayor Charlie Hales, with the support of housing commissioner Dan Saltzman, dedicated an additional \$20 million in Tax Increment Financing dollars from the Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area to affordable housing in an effort to begin to address the on-going threat of displacement and gentrification.

The pledge followed a controversial proposal to subsidize development of a Trader Joe's grocery store for the corner of Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Alberta Street.

The Portland Housing Bureau determined that any plan to increase the affordable housing budget would need to be guided by the community itself.

The result is a five-year plan that proposes a set of new practices and policies to address the specific barriers to housing access, security, and economic opportunity.

The \$20 million budget has been cut up strategically. Accordingly, \$3.2 million dollars has been allocated to providing single-family home repair loans. These zero-interest loans of up to \$40,000 per home are expected to provide critical repairs for low-income homeowners. Approximately 80 households are expected to reap benefit and be prevented from displacement through these loans.

An additional \$800,000 has been budgeted as grant money, of up \$5,000 per home, also for critical repairs with an emphasis on seniors, people with disabilities, and those that make less than 50 percent of the median family income. This support is expected to help an additional 160 homes. Both of these grants and loans are set to start immediately if approved by the council and to be annually allocated over the course of the next five years.

In terms of creating new homeowners, \$2.4 million has been set aside to create a Down Payment Assistance Loan Program, assisting first time homebuyers with incomes up to 80 percent of the median family income. This also is set to start immediately and to be fully deployed in three years. The program is expected to help approximately 40 households. In addition, another \$2.6 million is being invested into creating new affordable homes. The Housing Bureau estimates this will help create an additional 32 households.

The city plans to invest \$4.5 million, plus land, into creating permanently affordable rental homes, especially for land already owned by the Portland Housing Bureau, including a plot on Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, between Northeast Cook and Ivy Street.

## **Despite Earlier Statements Fritz Announces Re-Election Run for Portland City Council**

*By Cornelius Swart  
January 28, 2015*

Portland Commissioner Amanda Fritz announced Wednesday that she will run for city council re-election in 2016. Under the Portland system of government city councilors also serve as commissioners of city bureaus.

In the past Fritz had said that she was “never running for anything ever again.” The death of her husband, Dr. Steven Fritz, on Sept. 24, 2014, led to her rethinking her plans, according to a statement released by Amy Ruiz of Strategies 360.

Fritz made the following statement:

*“Prior to Steve’s death in September, many Portlanders had asked me to reconsider and run again. My response was that I believed I would have earned a long and happy retirement with my husband, at the end of eight years in office.*

*When I was sworn in for my second term, I expected that I would have four more years of working long hours doing the public service I passionately believe in, while Steve pursued his vocation of compassionate patient care with the dedicated staff team at the State Hospital. My life completely changed on September 24th when Steve was killed. I am grateful to the many, many Portlanders who have reached out and offered their support and condolences, helping our family through the past four months.*

*And now, I have the choice to make something positive out of this horrible loss. I’ve been thinking about this over the past few months. My kids and I went away over the holidays, and I discussed it with them. I want to continue to serve Portland, with their full support and that of Steve’s parents who live in East Portland.”*

Fritz was first elected under the city’s now defunct public campaign financing system. If re-elected it would be her third term in office.

“I plan to keep doing what I said I would do when Portlanders elected me in 2008, and re-elected me in 2012—prioritizing basic services and spending taxpayers’ money wisely,” Fritz stated in a media release. “I will continue to be that citizen voice on the Council, working hard for the remainder of this term. I hope Portlanders will support me in 2016, to allow me to keep serving our community.”