

The Oregonian

President Obama's visit to Oregon: More than \$100,000 in Portland police overtime shifts

*By Andrew Theen
June 10, 2015*

When President Barack Obama visited the Portland area in May, local police stepped up to block streets, provide security and be a visible presence.

Those hours don't come cheap, and the federal government doesn't chip in to cover the costs.

According to the Portland Police Bureau, the city logged \$109,243 in overtime costs alone during the less than 24-hour period corresponding with the president's visit. That total includes associated payroll taxes connected to the additional hours.

Sgt. Pete Simpson said the expense doesn't include planning costs or other direct officer hours logged during what would otherwise be a normal workday.

Simpson said the bureau tracked an additional \$28,766 in overtime costs that officers took as comp time. "A portion of that may turn into payout expense later, depending on how officers elect to take those hours," Simpson said in an email.

When asked how many officers were involved, Simpson said the bureau can't specifically say. "Some would be specifically assigned, others would be pulled from their regular duties to block a street or sit on an overpass."

Obama came to Portland for a democratic fundraiser on a Thursday evening, then spoke Friday morning at Nike's world headquarters near Beaverton to tout the Trans-Pacific Partnership and related legislation.

The Portland Tribune

Deal to subsidize Zidell development, including affordable housing near waterfront, heads to City Council

*By Steve Law
June 10, 2015*

In a deal hailed as "historic" and "monumental," the Portland Development Commission board unanimously agreed Wednesday evening on a development agreement for the Zidell family's prime downtown riverfront property that took five years of off-and-on negotiations.

The deal, which commits the city to paying for new road, storm drainage, parks and affordable housing projects, now goes to the Portland City Council for final approval on June 24.

The final piece of the deal gives the city the right to acquire, at market rates, a site to be determined that could accommodate about 200 affordable apartment units.

Details of the deal were carefully structured, so that city subsidies only come after the Zidell family develops certain projects there. That's a necessity, because the city money to pay for infrastructure and affordable housing comes from diverting property taxes collected on new development in the Zidell's 30-acre site north and south of the Ross Island Bridge.

City funds will be used to extend Bond Street through the area, build a waterfront greenway and public park, and build the affordable housing, as well as other infrastructure. Zidell intends to develop about 1.5 million square feet of offices, commercial and residential space, depending on market demand. In the first two phases, the Portland Development Commission pledged to put up \$35 million; the Portland Housing Bureau will put up more money to build the subsidized apartments.

Margaret Bax, a former PDC and city housing specialist who has doggedly pushed her former colleagues to make sure affordable housing is part of the mix, praised the deal Wednesday. "It is definitely encouraging and welcome progress," she said, before the five PDC commissioners blessed the deal.

Hales calls for salary review as council approves increase

*By Jim Redden
June 10, 2015*

Mayor Charlie Hales says he will appoint a salary commission in the foreseeable future to address the large discrepancy in pay between city elected officials and bureau heads.

Hales made the comment when the City Council approved a 2/1 percent Cost of Living Adjustment for elected officials and non-represented employees. Elected officials have until June 2 to decline their increase, and Commission Steve Novick says he intends to do so. Several council members did not accept COLA increase during the Great Recession.

Commission Nick Fish noted COLA increases should not be considered pay raises because they are intended to offset inflation. Fish said not receiving a COLA increase is similar to receiving a pay cut.

If he accepts the increase, Hales' salary will increase to \$134,322 a year. The other council members will receive \$113,128 a year, except for Novick. After turning down COLA increases for the last three years, he is foregoing a cumulative increase of around \$10,000.

Despite the COLA increases, Hales and the rest of the council are paid far less than many of the bureau heads they oversee. For example, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability Director Susan Anderson receives more than \$191,000 a year. She is overseen by Hales. Former Oregon executive Michael Jordan was recently hired to head the Bureau of Environmental Service at \$185,000 a year. He reports to Commissioner Nick Fish. And Portland Bureau of Transportation Director Leah Treat is paid more than \$159,000 a year. She is overseen by Novick.

"It's an absurd imbalance but also a political hot potato for the council to take up," said Hales, adding he is considering appointing a commission to review salaries and make recommendations "soon." Any proposed increases for elected officials will not apply to current office holders, however.

The vote to approve the ordinance authorizing the adjustment was unanimous. According to a Bureau of Human Resources memo that accompanied the ordinance, city employees represented by unions will receive identical 2.1 percent salary increases on July 1: District Council of Trade Unions; City of Portland Professional Employees Association; Portland Police Association; Bureau of Emergency Communications; Recreation Employees (Municipal Employees Local 483); Portland Fire Fighters' Association; and Seasonal Maintenance Workers (Laborer's Local 483). The Portland Police Commanding officers Association and AFSCME Housing are still negotiating their increases.

Daily Journal of Commerce

Zidell Yards plan gets PDC board's OK

*By Beverly Corbett
June 11, 2015*

The Portland Development Commission's board of commissioners on Wednesday approved a resolution to adopt a long-awaited development agreement with ZRZ Realty Co. to develop Zidell Yards – 33 acres of south waterfront property. The plan, five years in the making, calls for ZRZ to develop close to 1.5 million square feet of "mixed-use, employment-oriented commercial and residential property" in the North Macadam Urban Renewal Area over the next 10 years. Development will eventually spur use of approximately \$23.7 million in tax increment financing for both public and private development in the URA.

PDC Board Chairman Tom Kelly called the development agreement "a historic thing." It will next go before Portland City Council for final approval.

Kelly said the agreement came about in part because of partnerships with ZRZ, Oregon Health & Science University, TriMet and city bureaus as "the foundation of this effort that will be vital as we move ahead on the first phases of this remarkable development."

As an early step, the board approved an intergovernmental agreement with the Portland Bureau of Transportation to pay up to \$500,000 for preliminary design of improvements to Southwest Bond Avenue from downtown to the waterfront.

PDC Commissioner Aneshka Dickson praised the Zidell family for its contributions to the planning effort and said the development must be monitored closely.

"I want the board to have input on the contracting plan and for the PDC to have monthly oversight," she said.

Although the measure passed unanimously, Debbie Aiona, action chairwoman for the Portland League of Women Voters, said the league was disappointed because there was not enough time to adequately review the development agreement.

"It is not advisable to tie the town to a time frame over which the city has no control," she said. "There is no obligation for ZRZ to develop anything."

But Matt French, managing director of Zidell Yards/ZRZ Realty Co., said in a statement to the board that the partnership with the city "signals a new era for the district, toward a thriving, vibrant and diverse neighborhood characterized by access to the Willamette River."

The PDC board's resolution is available at:

www.pdc.us/Libraries/Board_Resolutions/Resolution_7117_PDF.sflb.ashx.

GoLocal PDX

City Council Race Beginning To Heat Up This Summer

By GoLocalPDX News Team

June 12, 2015

In 1992, a young upstart candidate named Charlie Hales dared to buck the Portland establishment and challenged then-City Commissioner Dick Bogle. He won. In the over two decades since, nearly 60 candidates have taken on the challenge of trying to topple an incumbent on the Portland City Council. To date, none have succeeded. Winning an open seat on council is in itself a feat; running against an incumbent is near impossible. Yet, that doesn't seem to discourage the politically ambitious in Portland.

Every two years a crop of candidates arises to face the seemingly insurmountable challenge. Two years ago, the most serious challenge in recent history seemed to be likely. Then State Representative Mary Nolan faced one term incumbent City Commissioner Amanda Fritz. Nolan had served in the Oregon Legislature since 2001, rising to position of House Majority Leader. Fritz eschewed traditional fundraising, surprising everyone by ultimately loaning her campaign the bulk of funds necessary to win.

Nolan's decision to run against Fritz may have seemed like a wise political choice. Fritz won her seat using public financing, which had since lapsed. She seemed to have disdain for fundraising. The same year, then-Commissioner Randy Leonard announced that he would retire at term's end. Leonard's decision caught many in the political world and the public off guard, but not Steve Novick. Leonard had given Novick some weeks' notice, so he was able to quietly start organizing a campaign to launch as soon as Leonard made his announcement public. Novick faced token opposition normally afforded to incumbents. Some insiders thought Nolan should have run for that position, yet her political base and Novick's would have been too similar.

Commissioner Fritz narrowly outpaced Nolan in the primary yet with three other opponents in that race, it is notable that nearly 55% of Portland voters voted against the incumbent. During that race, nearly 20,000 additional voters returned a ballot but did not vote in this race. In the fall election, which was a presidential election, which both increases and significantly changes the electorate. Fritz went on to win by a wide margin, despite being outspent.

Next year's races seem to be shaping up as rather ho-hum by comparison, but that could easily change. Fritz will seek re-election again despite previously announcing she didn't intend to serve more than two terms. She lost her husband in a car crash last year, an incident that seems to have encouraged her to double down on her commitment to community. Thus far, she has not drawn opposition.

Novick, on the other hand, has drawn an early opponent. It is a surprise that his opposition is from the left and not the right. In announcing a plan to raise revenue to fix Portland's aging streets, Novick asserted "If the voters are really mad at us, we're both up for re-election in 2016. They can throw us out." His comments were made standing with the Mayor, who did not seem to share his élan for challenging the electorate. Novick also launched a crusade against Uber, the ride-sharing service, only to change course and support the pilot project that allows them to operate now. Both of these scenarios have earned Novick cheers and jeers. While his accomplishments in his first term are limited, that is not uncommon in City Hall and he seems poised to be even more of a power player in a new term.

The only candidate to officially surface thus far, Nicholas Caleb, seems to face long odds, yet he is not dissuaded. Caleb is an attorney and professor. He launched a last minute bid against Commissioner Dan Saltzman in 2014, earning just under 20% of the vote, despite limiting contributions. Though there is a state preemption on local minimum wages, Caleb ran on a platform to raise Portland's minimum wage to \$15 per hour, becoming the first candidate locally to champion the issue that has become the cause of the year in 2015. Caleb is humble about his role in igniting that conversation here, citing a national push and the success of Kshama Sawant, a Socialist who won a seat on the Seattle City Council in 2013.

This year, Caleb has continued to beat the drum while legislators in Salem consider legislation to remove the local preemption, something he can only assume as a huge victory in his ongoing battle. Caleb has used his candidacy this time around to highlight environmentalists concerns with a propane pipeline and terminal on the Columbia River. When asked about his advocacy, which seems to thwart the establishment, Caleb said he will "fight for protections for Portlanders in a way that City Hall has failed to do in recent years."

Potential candidate Charles McGee, founder of the non-profit The Black Parent Initiative, is also seriously mulling a run. McGee, a native of Liberia, has lived in Portland since he was five years old. His potential candidacy seems to have sent a ripple of excitement through the progressive community. While openly discussing a run, McGee hasn't indicated whether he would run against Commissioner Fritz or Novick.

When asked about what would prevent him from running, McGee repeatedly cited family and the importance of his decision being one made jointly with his family. When he uses the term "we" in talking about his decision, you immediately know it's not the royal we but a deeply devoted family man. As to the long odds, McGee only said, "for folks like me, nothing ever comes easy," adding that it would be worth it because "we are searching for the soul of our city and at a true turning point."

Both McGee and Caleb seem unfazed at the challenge they are up against. Each cited other leaders who faced long odds. For McGee it was President Barack Obama and for Caleb it was Senator, and presidential candidate, Bernie Sanders. Each faced insurmountable odds to earn their positions.

As for this race, one former candidate advises that would be candidates to have a solid campaign plan and to know where they are going to get the votes to win. While policy issues, rallies and relationships are important, having a technical plan to ensure you are reaching out to the right voters will be key to success.