

The Oregonian

Spokesman for Mayor Charlie Hales resigns

By Brad Schmidt
November 3, 2015

Dana Haynes, one of the last remaining original staff members for Portland Mayor Charlie Hales, is stepping down, according to the mayor's office.

His final day will be later this month.

Haynes has worked as Hales' spokesman since January 2013. No reason was given for Haynes' departure, although Haynes writes fiction books in his spare time.

Sara Hottman, the acting spokeswoman, didn't immediately respond to a message for comment.

Haynes, 55, was among the final two high-ranking staff members still with Hales, who last week announced he would not seek re-election in 2016. The other employee, Josh Alpert, was elevated to Hales' chief of staff earlier this year.

"Dana has been with me since before I was sworn into office," Hales said in a statement. "I am grateful for the work he has done on behalf of this office, and wish him well on his future endeavors."

Haynes served as a gatekeeper for Hales, often responding to reporters' inquiries with lengthy emails. Last year, he violated state election law for writing a press release in "clear opposition" to a ballot measure that would have stripped utility oversight from the City Council.

In a statement, Haynes -- who earned about \$85,000 in fiscal 2014 -- said it has been a "great honor" working under Hales.

"He has been an outstanding mayor and he is served by an outstanding team," Haynes said. "I have no doubt that everyone will continue serving the community well."

Judge delivers split decision on Portland utility lawsuit

By Brad Schmidt
November 2, 2015

A Multnomah County judge last week delivered another mixed-bag ruling on how Portland spends utility ratepayer money, and the decision could affect next year's budget.

City officials didn't have the authority to spend about \$2.1 million on Hurricane Katrina relief efforts in 2005, Judge Stephen K. Bushong determined Friday. But they did have the authority to spend some \$12 million on decorative water fountains from 1990 to 2013.

Both sides claimed victory – just as they did last year, when Bushong issued his first split decision.

"We think that the judge got it right on one count and wrong on the other," Water Bureau spokeswoman Jaymee Cuti said Monday.

The utility lawsuit began in 2011 when a small group of ratepayers accused the city of improper spending of dedicated water, sewer and stormwater money. Last year, in a key ruling, Bushong determined that utility money must be spent on efforts "reasonably related" to utility services.

As part of the 2014 decision, Bushong blessed utility relocation efforts tied to light-rail projects and acquiring land for stormwater purposes, which totaled about \$10.4 million. But he rejected about \$1.2 million spent on outdoor public restrooms and publicly financed political campaigns.

Last week, Bushong determined that Portland officials didn't have the authority to spend \$2,079,000 sending about 35 employees to help with Hurricane Katrina relief efforts in 2005. Of that, the city received \$1,810,459 in reimbursements for a total hit to ratepayers of \$268,541 -- money that will need to be repaid from the general fund if the ruling stands.

"It's not really a big number," said attorney John DiLorenzo, who has been fighting the city for four years over utility spending. "It's more the principle."

DiLorenzo said he is emboldened by Bushong's decision on Katrina, hoping it paves the way for challenging an estimated \$55 million in Superfund-related charges.

"It places us in a great position to go after the giant gorilla in the room, which is Superfund," he said. "That, of course, makes me call it a win."

Bushong's decision on decorative water fountains, meanwhile, could mean changes in next year's budget. Portland Parks & Recreation covered expenses for about two dozen decorative fountains until 1988, when the City Council shifted responsibility to the Water Bureau.

In 2013, Mayor Charlie Hales transferred fountain expenses back to parks, to the tune of about \$466,000. It increased to nearly \$568,000 for the current fiscal year.

If Hales decides to move those costs back to water ratepayers, it would free up more than half a million dollars in next year's general fund -- just as he tries to make good on a \$20 million pledge to help fight homelessness.

Sara Hottman, a spokeswoman for Hales, wouldn't say whether Hales will propose shifting costs back to the Water Bureau.

"He'll consider his recommendation and proposal during the budget process," she said in an email.

Next month, Bushong will review a third round of spending: parks-related improvements on Water Bureau land.

The Portland Tribune

Hales' spokesman Haynes leaving City Hall post

By Pamplin Media Group

November 3, 2015

Dana Haynes, communications director for Mayor Charlie Hales, plans to leave his position later this month.

Haynes, 55, made the decision public Tuesday afternoon.

“It’s been a great honor serving this mayor and serving Portland,” Haynes said. “He has been an outstanding mayor and he is served by an outstanding team. I have no doubt that everyone will continue serving the community well.”

Haynes was named to the position nearly four years ago when Charlie Hales was elected mayor. Hales said in late October that he would not seek a second term in office.

“Dana has been with me since before I was sworn into office,” Hales said. “I am grateful for the work he has done on behalf of this office, and wish him well on his future endeavors.”

Haynes spent 20 years in Oregon newspaper newsrooms as a reporter, editor and columnist. He formerly served as communications director for Portland Community College.

Haynes is an author of several thrillers and mysteries, including “Crashers,” “Breaking Point,” “Ice Cold Kill” and “Gun Metal Heart.” He also wrote three mysteries using the pen name Conrad Haynes.

He lives in Portland with his wife, novelist Katy King.

Daily Journal of Commerce

City’s approval of Pearl Block 136 project upheld by LUBA

By Stephen Alexander

November 3, 2015

One of the loudest voices for Preserve the Pearl LLC, an opponent of Security Properties’ Pearl Block 136 project, is no longer a spokesman for the organization. Burton Francis did not want to discuss specifics, but said that the Preserve the Pearl “directors wanted to take it in a direction I didn’t want to go in. I declined and stepped down from any position I had.”

Even though Francis, an Edge Lofts resident, is no longer affiliated with Preserve the Pearl, he was dismayed by the Land Use Board of Appeals’ decision to uphold the city’s approval of the Pearl Block 136 project. Two buildings – a five-story office building and a 15-story residential tower – are planned on property formerly occupied by the Pacific Northwest College of Art. The developer is Seattle-based Security Properties, and the designer is Seattle-based Mithun.

“It was an unfortunate opinion in the sense that the plain language of the zoning code says there should be step-downs toward the Willamette River, in order to preserve our

connectedness to the river,” Francis said. “To gloss over it and say, ‘The provisions of that particular zoning code are not singular in their enforceability; they’re just to be interpreted generally with the respect to that overall zoning code provision,’ weakens the code and weakens the design guidelines that everybody thought were the basic rules of the game.”

Security Properties did not immediately return a call seeking comment.

The only remaining possible challenge of the project would be before the Oregon Supreme Court. The appeal could be brought by Preserve the Pearl, or any other interested parties. Preserve the Pearl did not respond to a request for comment.

“As a lawyer, I have much more faith in the courts and the court system enforcing issues of procedural due process than I do with administrative bodies,” Francis said.

Francis believes that Pearl Block 136 is an example why action needs to be taken that changes the development process in the city.

“The public needs to be more involved,” he said. “Maybe there needs to be a referendum, or some sort of ballot initiative or some sort of direct action process that occurs where Portlanders are asked, ‘What direction do you want your city to go in? Do you want Portland to retain its character? Do you want to ‘keep Portland weird?’ I would just wish that the voice of Portlanders can be heard through a direct democracy vehicle. Let the people decide.”

Portland Business Journal

Pembina propane terminal still in play as Hales, Wheeler push for a fossil fuel ban

*By James Cronin
November 4, 2015*

The Pembina propane pipeline will take center stage today at Portland's City Hall.

Portland’s City Council will hear two related resolutions aimed at preventing infrastructure expansion for transporting or storing fossil fuels in Portland or its adjacent waterways.

The proposals were created after Mayor Charlie Hales blocked Pembina Pipeline Corp.’s planned \$500 million propane terminal at the Port of Portland this summer. Hales' decision came after the Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission had recommended the city council approve an amendment and also that it levy a \$6.2 million first-of-its-kind climate charge on the project.

The charge would have effectively labeled propane as a fossil fuel.

Now, the council will hear from all parties.

Pembina hasn’t lost all interest in the project. Indeed, in an email response to a Business Journal inquiry into the company’s plans, a company spokesperson said Pembina “looks forward to its opportunity to present to the Portland City Council. As for any proposed resolutions before the city council, it would be inappropriate for Pembina to comment on the

city of Portland's business, other than to encourage them to pursue local economic growth and new job creation."

Mayoral hopeful Ted Wheeler, Oregon's treasurer, came out in support of Hales' measures on his Facebook page, saying he supports the principles underlying the two related resolutions being proposed. The second resolution would set the city in opposition to all project proposals that increase the amount of crude oil transported by rail through the Portland and Vancouver.

"[The proposals] are reflective of the community's values," Wheeler wrote on his social media page.

GoLocalPDX

What Would the Gas Tax Be Used For?

By Brendan Murray

November 3, 2015

As GoLocal reported, Portland Commissioner Steve Novick has proposed ballot initiative for the May elections that would enact a gas tax to pay for badly needed repairs to the city's streets. A spokesman for Mayor Charlie Hales initially told GoLocal the Mayor was against such a tax, but Hales ultimately came out in favor of the measure a few weeks later. Now, Hales is suggesting that the tax may not be used to fund street repairs, but instead to pay for raises for the city's seasonal workers.

At a union-organized town hall meeting last month, Hales told the assembled crowd that he supported raises for the city's seasonal workers. When asked how he would fund the pay increase, Hales pointed to the proposed gas tax.

Novick Says Street Repairs Still the Plan

As GoLocal reported, Novick released a list of potential projects that the tax could be used to fund in September, along with polling results that he claimed show that Portlanders embraced the idea of a gas tax. It included major street repair projects, funding for safe routes to school throughout the city, and traffic safety improvements in high crash corridors.

In that breakdown, \$32.5 million would be used for paving projects, including more than 30 lane miles of busy street paving. \$7.2 million would be used for safe routes for school projects, which including school crossings, paths and missing connections, sidewalks, traffic calming, and bicycle route connections. \$6.3 million would be used to repair the city's busiest sidewalks.

The remaining \$12 million would be split among other projects, including improvements to bike lanes, crosswalks and high crash areas.

Bryan Hockaday, a spokesman for Commissioner Novick's office, told GoLocal that Novick still intends to use the tax to fund street repairs in the city. Portland officials have struggled with the question of how to fund repaving projects for the city's cracking roads, which have long been a concern.

“Additional transportation revenue would be dedicated to transportation safety and maintenance improvement projects,” Hockaday said.

Hockaday also said that any additional revenue that is left over after planned street repairs have been completed would be directed to other street safety projects, rather than to other departments or uses, such as pay increases for seasonal workers.

Wheeler Weighs In

Ted Wheeler, the leading candidate to become Portland’s next Mayor after Charlie Hales bowed out of the race last month, is in favor of the gas tax.

"Reversing the years of neglected maintenance to our streets will depend on the public's confidence that we are spending their money wisely," Wheeler told GoLocal. "I am glad that Commissioner Novick is looking to take a proposal to the voters, something the Mayor should have advocated for from the beginning. A gas tax should be on high on the list for consideration."

Jake Weigler, spokesman for the Wheeler campaign, said that while Wheeler continues to support the gas tax for the purpose of replacing the city’s streets, he is opposed to using as tax revenue for other uses.

"Ted has consistently made clear that we need to give the public confidence in how their tax dollars are being spent," Weigler said. "That is why he believe that any revenue from a gas tax should be directly tied to making the needed repairs and improvements to our streets."