

## The Oregonian

### Elections reform can build trust in our government (Opinion)

*By Guest Columnist Steven Carter*

*December 7, 2016*

If anything is clear from the recent election, it's that the public is increasingly distrustful of government, angry over big money in politics and convinced that the common interest takes a back seat to special interests with large wallets.

Here in Portland there's an opportunity to fight these perceptions with a City Council vote to approve the Open and Accountable Elections reform.

AARP Oregon and many other civic groups are backing this proposal because it will encourage the kind of government we all would like to see: elected representatives who reflect the increasing demographic, cultural and economic diversity of our city. The proposal would enable ordinary Portlanders to run competitive campaigns for mayor, City Council and city auditor and allow small donors to amplify their voices in elections.

#### **Hear more on the proposal**

City Council public hearing

Wednesday, Dec. 7, 3:30 pm

Portland City Hall

Potential vote

Wednesday, Dec. 14, time to be determined

Portland City Hall

The proposal would empower qualified candidates who opt in -- and prove they have a wide base of public support -- to receive a six-to-one match for every dollar they raise up to \$50 per donor. In return, candidates would face strict limits on who they could accept donations from - not political groups or corporations - and how they could spend it. In addition, requirements for reporting contributions and expenditures would be tightened, producing greater campaign transparency. Only donations from Portlanders would be matched, and donations larger than \$250 per individual would be banned.

Candidates using the system would have every reason to spend their time campaigning among and listening to a wide spectrum of Portlanders because individuals with limited means would have the ability to magnify their donations with public dollars. It will help bring balance to our political system so that big donors don't have the loudest say.

Small-donor matching is a proven way to create more open and accountable elections. In New York City, for example, the matching program has led to much wider array of candidates for office, a greater number of citizens contributing to campaigns and an increase in the percentage of small donors.

Thirteen states have some form of small-donor funded elections, as well as local governments like Seattle, New York City, and Albuquerque. In November's election, voters in Berkeley, Calif., and South Dakota passed public financing.

The new proposal is a great improvement on Portland's earlier experience with publicly financed elections. Candidates won't get all their public money once they qualify, rather they'll have to prove they have broad community support to receive matching funds. Expenditure reports are required more frequently, and campaign violations can result in stiff fines - up to \$10,000.

The City Council would control how much public money is used in the program, and it would require no new taxes. The program may take no more than two-tenths of a percent of the city budget. In return, voters will get a government accountable to everyone.

AARP Oregon believes the Open and Accountable Elections reform is a big step in the right direction toward more open, fair and accountable Portland elections. We believe it will create a wider array of candidates for city positions and make the voices of ordinary Portlanders count much more in our elections. We urge the Portland City Council to approve this program when it votes.

## The Portland Tribune

### Business leaders offer deal: tax increases for PERS reform

*By Paris Achen/Capital Bureau  
December 7, 2016*

PORTLAND — Emboldened by victory in defeating a corporate sales tax measure last month, business leaders at the Oregon Leadership Summit Monday offered state policymakers and public unions a bargain: They will support new taxes if lawmakers find ways to reduce the state's pension costs.

"We all want to invest more in those programs and services that will produce outcomes for Oregonians, but in order to do that we have to be able to demonstrate to taxpayers that the dollars will, in fact, be invested in ways that will drive meaningful outcomes," said Patrick Criteser, president and chief executive officer of the Tillamook County Creamery Association.

State budget writers face a \$1.7 billion shortfall in 2017-19. In lieu of new revenue, they are forecasting cuts across state government, from higher education to human services.

The increase in costs stem largely from scaled-back federal funding for health care subsidies under the Affordable Care Act, increasing caseloads for people with disabilities and higher costs to cover the nearly \$22 billion unfunded liability in the Public Employees Retirement System.

The corporate sales tax, devised by a public employee union-backed group and contained in Measure 97, would have raised an additional \$3 billion per year, eliminating next year's revenue shortfall.

Voters rejected the tax measure after a bitter and costly battle between opponents from the business community and the union-backed coalition, A Better Oregon.

The state's relatively generous pension plan for public employees has long been a sticking point for business leaders.

"If we don't address PERS, any new taxes will not be invested in helping more kids graduate from high school," Criteser said. "It will be invested in paying existing obligations, and skepticism about the value of government will grow rather than diminish."

Oregon Supreme Court rulings have restricted lawmakers to two options for PERS reform, said Tim Nesbitt, former adviser to Govs. Ted Kulongoski and John Kitzhaber and past president of the Oregon AFL-CIO.

"We can reduce benefits yet to be earned by current and future employees, or we can ask employees to pay at least some of the cost of their future pensions," Nesbitt said.

"These options demand a shared responsibility among all stakeholders."

Several members of SEIU Local 503 and Oregon AFSCME gathered outside the leadership summit at the Oregon Convention Center Monday to highlight how PERS benefits public employees.

"Many of us are working for less than we would in the private sector," a pamphlet from the unions states. "We agreed to that with the understanding that we would have secure retirement. Now we are facing further retirement cuts. That breaks the promise made to us."

Business leaders gave no specific proposals they would support for raising taxes on business. One example of a possible revenue source is a proposal from early 2016 by Sen. Mark Hass, D-Beaverton, to levy a small commercial activity tax on corporations, Criteser said. Hass said last week that he is running numbers on how much revenue could be raised from the tax. His proposal last year would have raised about \$500 million.

Gov. Kate Brown, who gave the keynote speech at the summit, challenged business leaders to bring her revenue proposals they can support.

"You might think that that puts a tremendous burden on me as your governor to find another way to fund Oregon's future," Brown said, referring to Measure 97's defeat. "But I'm here today to state that the price of victory is responsibility — both for me and for you."

Brown and House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland, both endorsed Measure 97 during the campaign.

At last year's leadership summit, Senate President Peter Courtney, D-Salem, urged lawmakers, unions and business to reach a compromise on Measure 97 before the election. On Monday, he continued his message of collaboration.

"A state whose political and economic forces are always at odds will never be all that it can be," Courtney said.

The leadership summit marks the Oregon Business Council's release of its annual Oregon Business Plan. The plan makes recommendations for statewide policy on issues that affect business, including taxes, state spending, labor regulations and educational outcomes. In the past, the summit has focused on a variety of issues. This year, however, the agenda was "laser-focused on the state's long-term fiscal future," Criteser said.

## **Fritz, Novick cut deal to support each others' 'progressive' measures**

*By Jim Redden  
December 6, 2016*

Commissioners Amanda Fritz and Steve Novick announced Tuesday they will support controversial programs they have each introduced. That means they now need just one more vote on the five-member City Council to pass both of them, although it is not clear where the other members stand on them.

Fritz has proposed a public campaign financing program that would be capped at \$1.2 million a year. She wants it to be administered by the City Auditors Office, but current Auditor Mary Hull

Caballero says she does not have enough employees to do so. A previous public campaign finance program supported by Fritz was repealed by Portland voters.

Novick has proposed imposing a tax surcharge on publicly traded companies that pay their CEOs more than 100 times their median workers. It would raise an estimated \$2.5 million to \$3.5 million a more, more than twice the cost of Fritz's program. The proposal is opposed by the Portland Business Alliance.

Both proposals will be heard by the council on Wednesday, Dec. 7.

"I am excited to be championing Open and Accountable Elections, a new and improved public campaign finance system," Fritz said in a joint press release with Novick on Tuesday. "This program will allow candidates to reach out to a broad cross-section of Portlanders to help fund their campaigns, and add accountability and transparency requirements for all candidates, whether or not they choose to use public financing. I am also pleased to support the CEO tax which will provide needed revenue to make funding the campaign system more feasible, while also highlighting an economic inequality that needs to be addressed."

Novick said in the release that both proposals address inequality.

"According to international inequality expert Thomas Piketty, outrageous CEO pay is not just an example of, but a major contributor to, extreme inequality," Novick said. "And of course a system of private campaign contributions creates political inequality. I'm proud to support Commissioner Fritz's proposal."

In the release, Novick dubbed the Fritz-Novick proposals, "A progressive agenda to remember for December."

## **Willamette Week**

### **Margot Black Wants to Take on the Landlords and Portland City Hall**

*By Rachel Monahan  
December 7, 2016*

It's the morning of Monday, Nov. 28, in Room 120 of the Multnomah County Courthouse, where tenants go to resolve eviction cases with their landlords.

There's an air of quiet desperation under the cold fluorescent lights, because tenants usually don't stand a chance.

Two tenants, huddled in the back corner of the first-floor courtroom, are about to flip that script.

The reason is wedged between them, and she stands out in this chamber of last resort: young, white and professionally dressed—red leather boots with heels and a black trench coat over an elegant dress.

Margot Black, 38, is not a lawyer. She is, however, a founder of a renters' rights group, Portland Tenants United. She is bundle of contradictions—a fighter who is quick to laugh, friendly and outgoing but also blunt. And she has been remarkably effective at making renters a political force for the first time in recent Portland history.

In eviction court, unlike criminal court, no one is entitled to free legal representation. Landlords have the upper hand. But Black found a lawyer with 40 years of experience to handle this case.

At 9:10 am, that lawyer, Craig Colby, arrives. He's only dimly aware of Portland Tenants United, but that's about to change.

The landlord has issued two improper eviction notices, the tenants allege.

Out in the hall, Colby exchanges business cards with Black, asking her where she works.

"I teach math at Lewis & Clark College," Black says, as she digs through her faded green leather purse. She's collected so many business cards in pursuit of her goal she sometimes confuses them with her own.

For the past year and a half, at least a few times a week, when the married mother of three wasn't teaching, she was shuttling her silver Honda Odyssey minivan not between soccer matches but between court, rallies or meetings in backrooms of bars and nonprofit offices.

Black's decision to get Colby involved won the tenants an extra four months—and she moved onto her next battle.

Her cause took a dramatic step forward in November. On Election Day, Portland did something it hasn't done in 24 years—it tossed out an incumbent.

City Commissioner Steve Novick, until recently a darling of the left, lost his well-funded re-election bid to Chloe Eudaly, a bookstore owner with no political experience and almost no money.

What Eudaly did have was a single, overwhelming focus—housing.

Tenants—and Black—stand to benefit more from that victory than any other group in town.

A year ago, Black was unknown. Now she's a driving force and the face of a new tenants' rights movement that combines the energy of Portland street protest with policy research, lobbying and campaigning.

Rents have increased more than 30 percent in the past four years while renters' wages, adjusted for inflation, have fallen. Housing is the most important political issue in Portland.

It's no accident, then, that Black and Eudaly rode renters' discontent to political power.

Many politicians rightly view K-12 parents as a potent voting bloc, but fewer than 20 percent of Portland households have kids in public schools. More than twice that number are renters.

Portland is changing rapidly, and battles over where and how people will live are central to that change. Black has stepped into a leadership vacuum for a previously impotent group—renters—who now realize they have a say in what happens to them. She combines a powerful intellect with a hard-edged approach unusual in Portland activism. And she's grabbed hold of two issues that concern everybody: money and a place to sleep.

"There were a lot of people who were searching for solutions," says Eudaly.

"Until the Legislature overturns the ban on rent control and our elected officials get it together to protect renters, renters need to use their collective power to bargain with landlords—and know their rights. [Black] has made this happen. Without her, it would never have materialized. She's just relentless, righteous in her anger. She is passionate and extremely intelligent."

While Black now has the ear of Eudaly, who says she will push for a rent freeze and an end to landlords' right to evict tenants without reason, Black also has developed a relationship with Mayor-elect Ted Wheeler.

The prevailing conversation in the housing crisis has been about increasing supply, but Portland Tenants United extracted promises from Wheeler during the campaign centered instead on tenant protections.

At Black's urging, Wheeler adopted a Tenants' Bill of Rights, including a key provision to restrict "no-cause" evictions, in which landlords aren't required to give a reason for kicking out tenants.

"PTU and Margot in particular are giving voice to the housing anxiety being felt across the city," says Wheeler. "I'm listening."

Portland Tenants United is guided by a 15-member organizing committee. The union formed its first two affiliates at buildings where tenants got together to negotiate collectively with their landlords. It counts 100 organizers as its core, and landlords have already taken note.

"They do not appear to be a bunch of amateurs," says John DiLorenzo, a lobbyist for Portland landlords. "They have certainly been successful in getting people to notice them. Obviously, they have [House Speaker Tina Kotek's] attention. I am treating them like a group of pros who know what they're doing."

Advocates have floated the idea of rent control in Portland before, but it got no traction.

"Back in the '90s, there was not any appetite; people were not ready to hear it," says Margaret Bax, who was housing policy adviser to then-City Commissioners Gretchen Kafoury and Erik Sten.

Portland Tenants United isn't flying solo. They are a left flank to groups across the state that are seeking an end to no-cause evictions and to overturn the state's ban on rent control.

Bax says today's tenant advocates are a new breed.

"They're better organized," she says. "They're more engaged in coming up with workable solutions."

But Black wants to go a step further—she wants a rent freeze in Portland now until the state creates more restrictions.

That's an example of the aggressive tactics Black and PTU employ.

"They've raised the volume on the issue," says Portland State University professor Lisa Bates.

The tenant union's protests have alienated some. In February, PTU was part of a protest, banging on the doors of the Oregon Legislature to little avail. The group made no headway with the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners after shutting down an April commission meeting. There are advocates who fear the way Black has pushed for tenants' rights will backfire.

Black's agenda faces real opposition: Powerful landlords raised \$310,000 for their newly renamed political action committee—Equitable Housing PAC. That's more than 15 times the amount they raised in any year since 2009.

DiLorenzo says the landlords' record fundraising was easy after Kotek's announcement she wants to lift the state's ban on rent control. "Maybe I owe her a hug," he says.

DiLorenzo's group has been using cash to fight PTU's rent-control proposal in Salem.

But there are a lot more renters than landlords, and as Eudaly's victory showed, they can be mobilized.

Black is fully aware of their combined might: She says she'll escalate the stakes if lawmakers fail to protect tenants in the 2017 legislative session that begins in February.

"The nuclear option," she says, "would be a rent strike."

Ultimately, a tenants' union is about demonstrating its collective power.

"For anyone who acts likes it's insane and crazy: Have you heard of the labor movement?" Black says. "This is how we got the weekend."

Black says her adult life has been shaped by landlords' power over her.

At age 19, Black was a single mom with a 7-month-old baby when she was first evicted—from an apartment in Portland's West Slope.

Her boyfriend had recently moved out, and she was still paying the rent. Then, seemingly for no reason, she was evicted.

"I was so confused," Black says. She sought an explanation.

Eventually, an onsite property manager told her, "We're not running a warehouse here, Margot."

That didn't make sense. "I was this frumpy girl who didn't really have any friends," she says. "I was in a total panic."

Eviction sent her into a tailspin: She found a new apartment, but it was far from her job waiting tables at Red Robin. She had no car, and after repeatedly arriving late for work, she was fired.

"I got a ticket on the express train to poverty," Black said at a September rally.

Black was born in Salt Lake City to a struggling family. Her mother, who has schizophrenia, was 21 when Black was born. Black never knew her father and was raised by her grandmother.

When she graduated from high school, Black was 18 and pregnant. That's when she moved to Portland.

"She's the poster child for someone who should be a homeless drug addict," says Sammy Black, her husband of 10 years and a co-founder of PTU.

What saved Margot Black? "She's really good at judging people's character," her husband says.

She also met Doug Stewart, now 61, a Unitarian church youth group director from Salt Lake City who'd also moved to Portland. Stewart essentially adopted Black, offering her a place to live for a few weeks that turned into a few years.

Against Stewart's advice, Black quit a receptionist job to return to school full-time.

"The high energy and going-for-it are part of her personality; that and putting herself out there," Stewart says. "It also seems to work out for her."

Black graduated cum laude with a math degree from Lewis & Clark College in 2003. She then earned a master's degree at the University of Oregon.

While in Eugene, she married Sammy, a fellow grad student. And she argued with her landlord.

"Here's my weakness: When someone is targeting me in a clear way, that fight-or-flight thing, I fight," Black says.

Five years ago, Black and her husband moved to Portland with their three kids and took jobs teaching math at local colleges.

Soon Black was hit with another no-cause eviction, this time from the landlord of a house she was renting in the Maplewood neighborhood. The landlord's daughter was unexpectedly moving back to town.

The landlord told Black she was "just a renter."

The comment stuck with her. "I felt so keenly aware of not mattering, not being important," she says. "It was becoming aware of what a classist system it was."

Black began writing to politicians, including then-Gov. John Kitzhaber, asking for changes to state law to protect renters. She also wrote to U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-Ore.) and Portland City Commissioner Nick Fish.

She wasn't yet an organizer, but she was on her way. "I will be working very hard to make sure this doesn't happen to other families in the future," Black emailed Mainlander Property Management in August 2012. When her husband's two-year academic post ended without another job in sight, they downsized to an apartment, but not before surrendering their security deposit on their previous rental because the landlord said the house was damaged.

That financial penalty helped tip them into bankruptcy in 2014, Black says.

She delayed aspirations of homeownership—which she now calls a "pyramid scheme."

"I don't want to join the country club; I want the country club to be open to everyone," she says.

More than two years ago, Black started a Facebook group for renters, PDX Renters Unite!, after hearing numerous stories of no-cause evictions. Now it has about 2,700 members.

In classic Portland fashion, Black made the leap from virtual to real-life advocacy because of an art installation.

In early 2015, artist Tori Abernathy held a series of renters' assemblies at HQ Objective gallery on West Burnside Street. Participants sat (uncomfortably) on neon-colored rocks. Abernathy, who would leave Portland after a no-cause eviction, wanted to raise the profile of the issue.

Black, who attended the assemblies, wanted to do more than that.

She attended Legislative Lobby Days at the state Capitol in spring 2015, and discovered to her surprise there was no group working on rent control.

Then WW published a story examining common misconceptions about apartments and rent control ("The 5 Myths About Portland Apartments," WW, June 10, 2015). In the story, tenants were described as "wild-eyed" and "tie-dyed" and having just moved their "drum kit."

That characterization became a rallying cry, Black says: "The article came out, and we were like, 'Fuck that.'"

On June 18, 2015, Black convened the first meeting of what would become Portland Tenants United at KBOO radio station. At the meeting, Black said she rejected the polite discourse that defines Portland politics. She wanted a rent strike immediately. She proposed that thousands of tenants not pay rent until they were given protections that would keep them in their homes. She learned quickly how much she didn't know about organizing.

"She has a very strong will," says former City Council candidate and housing activist Nick Caleb, who attended the first meetings of PTU.

Black soon connected with Eudaly, before Eudaly entered the 2016 race and became a long-shot, little-known challenger to Novick. They first met at Eudaly's store, Reading Frenzy, on July 21, 2015, when San Francisco author James Tracy came to discuss his book about tenant activism in the Bay Area, *Dispatches Against Displacement*.

In late September, Black and Eudaly sat down to discuss the plight of renters. They met on a rainy day near Black's house "for a huge download"—driving together to Marco's Cafe in Multnomah Village and later moving to Village Coffee to continue the discussion.

"We talked about tenants' rights," Black says. "It was validating to have those conversations."

Says Eudaly: "We've been through a real intense learning process this last year."

Black joined the City Club of Portland's committee on housing affordability and maneuvered her way onto then-mayoral candidate Ted Wheeler's housing committee.

It's been hard to be a Portland renter in recent years. The median income for Portland renters is \$30,000, according to the Portland Housing Bureau's 2016 State of Housing report; median rent for a two-bedroom apartment is \$18,240 a year, and vacancies are rare.

In January 2016, Portland Tenants United won its first victory for renters, forcing a landlord to back down from evicting a tenant of 33 years.

"Game on," Black says. "There was no turning back. The word is 'intoxicating.' The idea that we could mount this threat and stop this eviction. The sheriff's note was on his door. I guess we have power; how about that? That's pretty cool."

The victory won acclaim—and publicity. At a Portland Tenants United open house a few weeks later, 300 people renters showed up, eager to learn more.

Black had struck a chord.

The increasing awareness of the city's tight housing market makes it easy for Portland Tenants United to grow. They're gaining members by the week. The group is still working to set up a website, and doesn't have a precise count of its members, but they are now a regular presence at rallies and when housing is on the City Council agenda. Their black-and-white T-shirts read, "I Rent. I Vote."

Novick, the first council incumbent to lose since 1992, can attest to that. Many observers attribute his stunning defeat to the energy and visibility Eudaly and Black have given tenants' concerns.

"The anxiety around housing is real across all spectrums of our community," says Israel Bayer, executive director of Street Roots. "Obviously housing was key issue for voters."

At PTU's first official press conference Nov. 18, Steven Demarest, president of Service Employees International Union Local 503, mentioned that Eudaly's successful critique of Novick should put the other city commissioners on notice.

"The message they should take is, they can be replaced," said Demarest. "The message they should take is that they need to get their priorities straight and assign the correct urgency to the humanitarian crisis that is facing our city right now. The message they should take is to do their jobs."

Portland Tenants United's strength is that it can work both an outside game—with rallies and direct action—and an inside game, using access and strong relationships with elected officials.

In August, the group organized a tenants' union affiliate at a apartment building in East Portland, where tenants faced a 45 percent rent increase.

It's the sort of crippling hike that in the past might have activated a halfhearted response from advocates but nothing more. PTU members rallied outside the A&G Rental Management company, taking their list of demands straight into the office. They camped outside landlord Landon Marsh's house.

The results were small wins. The tenants got to stay an extra month before they moved and were allowed to use their security deposits for a month of rent.

"That public shaming hasn't been used in housing advocacy before," says Andrew Riley, who works at 1000 Friends of Oregon and is a PTU member. "I'm a policy wonk, but this kind of direct action gives tenants an opportunity to come together."

Landon Marsh says Black is "disorganized" and running an "amateur group" that kept demanding more and more. He says he had tried to keep rents low, but will not do so for new tenants.

"She's creating a problem for Portland," he says. "Now we're having to increase rent solely because of Margot Black."

Academics who've studied housing say Black's push for rent freezes and rent control would only reduce the supply of housing and make a tight market even tighter.

"The idea is that there are faceless, enormous Trumpeque landlords who are basically sitting on huge wads of cash; it may be fashionable," says Ethan Seltzer, director of the Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies at Portland State University, noting Portland is trying to promote small-scale development throughout the city. "If you want that kind of housing production, and you make the life of your landlords miserable, it's not going to happen."

Black is skeptical of such arguments.

She points to New York City, where advocates accustomed to renter protections view Portland as the Wild West, where landlords do whatever they want.

"Rent control and rent stabilization are the biggest way to protect tenants and keep families in homes," says Jonathan Westin, executive director of activist group New York Communities for Change, which is starting a national campaign to bring rent control to cities across the country. "No other solutions have been able to keep up with gentrification."

Regardless of who's right about what renter protections would do to supply, it's clear that Black has altered the political landscape.

Today, House Speaker Kotek, the most powerful Democrat in the state Legislature, wants to cap rents for a year and ban no-cause evictions.

And Black is far from finished. Galvanized by Eudaly's victory, tenant activists are already looking for candidates to challenge longtime incumbent city commissioners Nick Fish and Dan Saltzman, the former and current housing commissioners, in 2018.

Might Black be one of the new candidates?

"My intention is to run," she says. Noting Saltzman was already widely expected to face stiff competition, Black says she'll take on Fish:

"He needs a strong challenger."

# Hotseat: Mary Hull Caballero, Portland's Elected Auditor, Wants More Independence

By Beth Slovic  
December 7, 2016

Next month, Portland's elected auditor, Mary Hull Caballero, will ask the City Council to refer a charter amendment to voters in May 2017 that she says would give the auditor more control over the office's budget—and help it avoid conflicts of interest.

The change, if approved, would enshrine the auditor's Independent Police Review and ombudsman in the charter, insulating them from political pressure. Right now, the mayor and City Council can theoretically abolish the IPR or ombudsman; putting them in the charter would require a vote of the people.

Hull Caballero, who took office in 2015, sat down with WWto talk about what's driving her proposal—and what Portlanders would get out of the change.

**WW: Broadly speaking, what are you seeking?**

**Mary Hull Caballero:** Portlanders elected a city auditor to hold the government accountable, and organizational independence is the bedrock of our ability to do that work. Since I've been here, I've run into several examples where the organizational structure of the city undermines our ability to do that.

**Uber must offer an example, right? Last year, you investigated Mayor Charlie Hales and Commissioner Steve Novick for violating city rules by not reporting a meeting with Uber lobbyists, correct?**

As an elected auditor, I was investigating two other elected officials, and at the beginning of that, all three of us were being advised by the City Attorney's Office. It quickly became apparent to me that was not serving the investigation well.

**Right now, you need permission from the city attorney to get outside counsel. You want to be able to do that without seeking approval. Why?**

The mayor and City Council hire and supervise the city attorney, and I don't have any role in that decision-making. By human nature, she would be responsive to the people who hire her and hold her accountable for her performance. So there's just an inherent conflict there.

**The last major charter change concerning the auditor's office happened 30 years ago, before the office launched the Independent Police Review.**

It's just a different office than it was 30 years ago, and it often is taking positions that are adverse to other city bureaus and other elected officials.

**Walk us through what happened last year when Mayor Hales directed bureaus to cut 5 percent from their budgets so he could redirect money to affordable housing.**

That's a fine priority to have. I don't have any objection to that. But they were lumping this office in with other bureaus as if it were just another bureau instead of a co-equal elected office just like theirs are. They exempted their offices from the 5 percent cuts but they fully expected the accountability function to cut its budget 5 percent so they could take that money for their legislative policy choices.

**But you were ultimately spared the cuts, right?**

I was spared some cuts. But my budget was cut and theirs were not.

### **Is the goal to make it so they can't cut your budget?**

As the government grows, this office should also grow, because the need for accountability never diminishes. It actually increases when there are more expenditures, more programs, more employees. If Portland's fortunes decline and revenues decline, we think this office should also decline in its size and function.

### **What's the outcome you hope for?**

The ultimate goal that we're trying to get to is that the mayor and council, when they sit as the budget council, respect this office's needs for resources to do its work and neither reduce the auditor's office budget to fund something else they like better nor engage in some sort of retribution if they're unhappy with something we're doing.

## **The Portland Mercury**

### **Higher Scrutiny Leads to Lower Morale For Local Cops**

*By Doug Brown*

*December 7, 2016*

FOR A BUREAU that's hemorrhaged employees and struggled to recruit new ones, the results of a survey of current Portland police officers may signal even worse news.

According to that survey, administered by a group of Chicago academics overseeing Portland police reform, cops feel burned out, emotionally hardened, and increasingly unsatisfied satisfied working for the Portland Police Bureau (PPB). Most feel they are more disrespected by the public and the media compared to 2015, and nearly all feel more reluctant, because of criticism, to use force when "appropriate."

"Officers described an intense sense of scrutiny that prohibits them from 'doing their job,'" says a report on the survey. "A number of officers stated they fear for officer safety because of such scrutiny."

And for civil rights advocates and police watchdogs, the survey reveals even more hurdles to true police reform.

A vast majority of those surveyed believe that the city's settlement agreement with the United States Department of Justice (DOJ)—stemming from the federal investigation of the PPB's mistreatment of mentally ill people—is just a "distraction" from their jobs that would not improve the bureau. Most said that "stop and frisk" policing, which was ruled unconstitutional (though not officially implemented here, as Portland Police Association President Daryl Turner points out to the Mercury), has a "bad reputation for no reason at all." And a majority of cops do not believe civilian oversight of the bureau is a good thing.

The survey, released last month, was conducted this summer during a particularly turbulent period for the police bureau: Then-Chief Larry O'Dea went on leave in May after news broke he shot a friend in the back during a camping trip in rural Eastern Oregon in April.

"It might have different findings next year because they were incredibly pissed at the double standard—that [O'Dea] shot someone off-duty and there was no internal investigation and

there seemed to be no accountability for the higher ups,” says Portland Copwatch’s Dan Handelman, who’s been closely following the bureau for more than two decades.

Much has changed since cops were polled: Chief Mike Marshman has taken over the bureau and a new contract with the Portland Police Association union—featuring a significant 9 percent pay raise—was recently ratified. Still, the results indicate barriers Marshman will have to overcome to appease his officers, the feds, and groups eagerly awaiting reform.

The so-called Compliance Officer-Community Liaison (COCL) team, a group of mostly Chicago-based academics keeping tabs on DOJ-spurred reforms to the bureau, conducted the survey. They sent out emails to every one of the PPB’s employees, and got answers from 421 sworn officers (out of a possible 880) and 144 civilian employees (see the full report below).

The main takeaway from the survey, according to Handelman, is that more officers are “disengaging” from potentially physical encounters with people with perceived mental illness, “not because it’s the right thing to do,” he says, but to cover their own asses and avoid criticism.

“This concept of liability and negative image has caused many officers to feel that inaction is preferable to action,” the COCL report says, concluding that because of “all the criticism directed at the police today,” 99.2 percent of officers are “more reluctant to use force on a person with mental illness when it is appropriate.”

But isn’t that a good thing for police watchdogs? Not necessarily, says Handelman, who compared it to a mechanic refusing to do needed maintenance on your car so as not to be held responsible when it breaks down in the future.

“They’re disengaging to the point where they’re not doing things we ask people to do in our society,” he says. “It’s kind of like an all-or-nothing game for them: ‘If I can’t beat up people in mental health crises, then I’m not going to deal with them at all.’”

The survey also reveals general attitudes of Portland police officers:

- Only 21 percent of officers are satisfied working for the PPB. This is a massive drop from last year’s survey, when 57 percent professed satisfaction.
- A stunning 82 percent say the DOJ settlement won’t improve the PPB. Even more, 92 percent, say it’s a distraction keeping them from doing their job.
- Just 5 percent of officers never feel burned out from their profession (compared to 9 percent last year). Only 6 percent never feel emotionally drained because of it (compared to 4 percent last year). And 87 percent believe “this job is hardening me emotionally,” compared to 78 percent from the year before.
- Regarding “stop and frisk”—when officers question and search people on the street, fishing for evidence of a crime—72 percent of PPB officers said it’s “gotten a bad reputation for no reason,” compared to 61 percent last year. In 2013, a federal judge ruled the New York Police Department’s use of the practice unconstitutional and racially discriminatory.

# Advocates Are Making Their Strongest Pitch Yet for New Homeless Villages

*By Dirk VanderHart  
December 7, 2016*

IN A FRIGID ROOM off of North Mississippi, Mark Lakeman had come to give a pep talk.

“We’re done playing around, and we’re trying a little psychological warfare,” the Portland architect told 20 or so people gathered on December 2 to plot a new model for easing the city’s homelessness crisis. “We’re trying to break the resistance.”

Lakeman was addressing the Village Coalition, a collection of homeless residents, advocates, activists, faith leaders, architects, and more.

For most of this year, the group has been working to create small communities for the houseless. Now it’s on the verge of a major public showcase: the display of more than a dozen attractive, innovative, and portable “sleeping pods” in downtown Portland—many of them created by premier Portland architecture firms.

It’s a high-profile and increasingly mainstream argument for rethinking how Portland addresses its ongoing homelessness crisis. And as winter sets in and the city’s homeless population appears to be growing, it’s also the strongest push yet to convince a skeptical public that shelters aren’t enough, and affordable housing takes time.

The Village Coalition believes a vital component of easing the strain will be a series of “villages” made up of these pods on sites throughout the city—communities distinct from Portland’s many tent camps, with onsite services and active management. To that end, its members helped create a project known as the Partners On Design (POD) Initiative, a collection of architects, design students, and others, all bringing their best ideas for small structures the public might accept in their neighborhoods.

“If you show this can be done in a beautiful and dignified way, they can become part of the fabric of the community,” says Todd Ferry, an instructor with Portland State University’s Center for Public Interest Design, which recruited many organizations into the initiative.

Similar arguments have been made with increasing frequency in the last year and a half, but they’ve not resulted in much progress. Mayor Charlie Hales has so far allowed organized camps like Hazelnut Grove and Forgotten Realms to remain in North Portland—and even asked high school students to build tiny homes for similar sites—but his repeat efforts to find land for new projects have been fought by neighbors.

Still, it appears the village concept won’t die when Hales leaves office at the end of the month. Mayor-elect Ted Wheeler, who on the campaign trail said encampments like Hazelnut Grove weren’t “humane,” is now “highly supportive” of the push for these new communities, his office says.

“The reason Ted supports a tiny house pilot project is to see if we can create something that is more flexible than what is currently allowed, that has high design standards and conforms to community standards and public expectations,” Wheeler spokesperson Michael Cox says.

That’s precisely what the POD Initiative wants to hear.

Using \$35,500 in city funding, and leveraging ideas from some of Portland's top design minds, the effort has been working since early October toward an exhibition in the city's North Park Blocks from December 9 to 11. In all, 14 innovative prototypes will be on display.

The small huts range in size from 48 to 96 square feet. Some resemble backyard sheds. Others incorporate innovative foldout porches and hideaway beds, or are able to connect with other structures to comprise a larger unit. But they all have to meet a list of standards that the city's Bureau of Development Services has signed off on, ensuring they won't need further city inspection before they're set up. The units would be allowed on plots of land zoned to permit "group living," officials say.

Firms that built the structures include Scott Edwards Architecture (designer of the Portland Mercado), Holst Architecture (Bud Clark Commons), SERA Architects (Burnside 26, anyone?), and more. PSU students also helped design two of the pods.

Here's the question no one's able to answer, though: What happens to the pods when the showcase ends on Sunday?

"We're looking for a home for these homes," Hales said Monday, December 5, in an event unveiling the designs. "It is not easy to site homeless people."

That's a lesson the mayor has learned too well. Earlier this year, for instance, his office convinced an organized camp of homeless women to move from city-owned property in Lents, promising another plot within weeks. That plot never turned up.

The mayor's office now makes vague reference to potential land where the POD Initiative's tiny homes—and others like them—might take root. It won't offer specifics.

"We're continuing to work in my office and I know the next administration will as well," Hales said.

Whether the success of that work is bolstered by this week's unprecedented showcase remains to be seen. And regardless if reactions are positive or negative, the Village Coalition is hoping its efforts will get people talking seriously about the city's utter lack of housing resources.

As Lakeman told the Mercury: "This is a battering ram with a different kind of tip."

## **Hall Monitor—In Under the Wire**

*By Dirk VanderHart  
December 7, 2016*

CITY COUNCIL dynamics are a tricky thing—presenting occasional glimpses of beauty and hilarity amid all their dull utility.

Take our current, fast-expiring council, which since 2013 has earned a reputation as one of the more discordant bunches ever to take the dais. Relations were so strained at one point that the council held a special retreat to air grievances and repair bruised feelings.

And now look at them! Roughly three weeks before Mayor Charlie Hales and Commissioner Steve Novick are slated to bid City Hall adieu, this council is putting together its most ambitious single week of policy discussions yet.

Should Portland enact a new publicly financed campaign system without letting voters decide? Will we require developers of condo and apartment buildings of more than 20 units to

include affordable housing? Should we penalize companies that pay their CEOs audacious salaries? Will the city seal itself off to major new fossil fuel terminals?

Any one of these questions would be the central policy discussion the council takes up in a normal week. Instead they're being shoehorned into a mishmash of hectic glory.

Pity me.

So why's this happening? Largely because of that expiration date I mentioned up above.

This council, for all its occasional harrumphing, has found an equilibrium where it looks like each of these Very Big Deals can pass—if not unanimously, at least by the requisite 3-2 margin. But it's got to get them in under the wire, lest Mayor-elect Ted Wheeler and Commissioner-elect Chloe Eudaly come in and muddy things up.

Commissioner Amanda Fritz, architect of the Open and Accountable Elections proposal that would see millions in city dollars funding political candidates, needs her two departing colleagues. Hales and Novick are widely expected to be the two crucial "yes" votes that ensure the proposal passes—notably with no say from voters, who in 2010 killed the city's last campaign finance plan. The prevailing sense is that Wheeler is skeptical of the plan (not Eudaly).

Two more of the proposals are priorities Novick and Hales are hoping to notch before leaving office.

Before being ousted by Eudaly, Novick had called his idea to tax companies that pay their CEOs at least 100 times the average employee salary a legacy issue. Council already held an initial hearing on the plan, meaning it might vote it into place Wednesday afternoon.

The same goes for a fossil fuel proposal from Hales, who's been frank about using his position to combat climate change in any way he can. The mayor's hoping to convince his colleagues to approve a ban on new fossil fuel terminals on Thursday. It would be the strictest measure taken by any city in the nation, if it passes. A big deal.

Then there's Commissioner Dan Saltzman's "Inclusionary Housing" proposal, which would force developers to include affordable housing on big new projects. It is probably the most fraught of the four items I'm mentioning here—and should amount to hours of conflicting testimony on Thursday afternoon.

Also, there are at least 25 other items council will take up—many notable.

As I say: Pity me.