

Willamette Week

Portland Commissioner Dan Saltzman Will Re-Open Investigation into Hazing of Maintenance Employees "With a View Toward Termination"

Earlier finding resulted in slap on wrist of supervisor who shot numerous subordinates with high-powered air gun.

*By Nigel Jaquiss
June 1, 2017*

City Commissioner Dan Saltzman today reacted forcefully to a *WW* story published Wednesday that described violence, hazing and other abuses in a Portland Bureau of Transportation maintenance operations shop.

Initially, Saltzman's office declined to comment on an investigation into Jerry Munson, who ran a group called the "liner crew" within the maintenance operation, because it was a personnel matter.

After reading the story, however, Saltzman issued a statement yesterday.

"As Transportation Commissioner and member of this community, I want to express my disgust by the behavior and culture described in the report and the *WW* article," he said. "I have a zero tolerance policy for bullying and hazing of any kind and will be developing an updated HR policy for PBOT that makes that clear for both employees and supervisors. I will not tolerate this."

Today, in a telephone interview, Saltzman explained he had not been made aware of all the facts of the investigation initially and is now taking action.

"I am going to re-open the investigation with a view toward the termination of Mr. Munson," Saltzman tells *WW*. (A city investigator recommended in January that Munson be fired, but after his union Laborers Local 483 protested, Munson was instead demoted and transferred elsewhere within the maintenance operation.)

Saltzman, who took charge of PBOT in January, after the alleged abuses occurred, says he will also re-examine the bureau's decision to terminate Russ Wilkinson, a probationary employee on the liner crew who cooperated with the investigation of Munson but was then fired two days before his probationary period ended. That firing raised the possibility of retaliation against Wilkinson.

"We're going to take look at Mr. Wilkenson's situation, as well," Saltzman says.

The Portland Mercury

A Proposal to Allow Rent Control in Oregon is Probably Dead

By Dirk VanderHart
May 31, 2017

The rent control dream appears dead.

After the Oregon House of Representatives earlier this year passed a bill that would kill the state's pre-emption on local limits on rent hikes, a Senate committee this afternoon chopped that provision before moving the legislation before the full Senate.

The removal came in a **package of amendments** taken up by the Senate Committee on Human Services during a work session. The amendments' passage means cities and counties likely won't win permission to adopt so-called "rent stabilization" policies that limit what landlords can charge. Legislators had heard from hundreds of renters, advocates, and landlords embroiled in the heated debate over the state's soaring rent costs.

The vote diminished the hopes of activists and advocacy groups who'd seen their cause championed by House Speaker Tina Kotek in this year's legislative session, but could not find much muscular support in the Senate.

"Extremely disheartening," Katrina Holland, executive director of the Community Alliance of Tenants, told the *Mercury* this afternoon.

Margot Black, a founder and leader of the activist group Portland Tenants United, said she'd known for weeks that legislators might make such a decision.

"That's been the rumor in town," she said. "We had a little come-to-Jesus talk where we asked if we could survive without [getting rid of] the pre-emption."

Both Holland and Black still see promise in **the bill** that's now before the full senate. It would prevent landlords from issuing no-cause evictions to tenants who are at least nine months into a month-to-month tenancy (a more lenient standard than six months, which had been in the bill), instead only allowing eviction for a set of "just" causes. The bill would also prevent no-cause evictions within 60 days if a tenant asked for necessary repairs, and prevent a landlord from raising the rents on a tenant more than once every 12 months, among other things.

Those are wins, Black says, but they won't allow the City of Portland to create a policy for limiting rental increases within the city, which local leaders had pushed for and had been one of PTU's main goals of the session.

Black says advocates in her coalition had a discussion where they came to the conclusion: "If we had two bills that were rent control and just-cause, and we lost rent control, we would still support just-cause."

Holland found similar reason for optimism.

"We always knew that rent stabilization was going to be a heavy lift," she said. But she noted that "at the end of the day Oregon did make history" when the House passed a version of the bill killing the rent-control pre-emption. "That to us is a win."

The changes inserted into HB 2004 today appeared rooted in the calculus of a full Senate vote. For days, advocates had been sending out warning flares that Sen. Rod Monroe, D-Portland,

might refuse to approve a bill that included rent control. As *Willamette Week* **noted** in a piece earlier this year on the sparse margins of the senate, Monroe is a landlord and appeared to have an outsize say in whether a bill passes or fails.

It was telling, then, that each of the three Democratic senators who approved the amendments today—Sara Gelsler and Michael Dembrow of Portland and Laurie Monnes Anderson of Gresham—expressed regret for doing so.

Housing was the highest priority for constituents when Monnes Anderson ran for election last year. "I don't think this goes far enough in helping many of those tenants," she said, acknowledging that she's the landlord of a duplex.

"I've just heard from so many people who've had sudden unexpected spikes in their rent in the 30 percent, 40 percent, 50 percent range, and in some cases even higher," Dembrow said. "I assumed that the bill was going to be amended, but I hoped it would be amended in a way that would find a reasonable cap on what a tenant could discover when they got that letter in the mail."

Gelsler, who requested the amendment package, bemoaned the fact that the vote she was about to cast wouldn't "give more tools to local jurisdictions." But she added that her hope in modifying the bill was that it might make it past the Senate, suggesting it had no shot with a rent control provision still in place.

Advocates are cautiously watching what happens in the full Senate, and aren't yet counting on the bill passing there.

"We didn't have an influential enough of a leader in the Senate to twist arms on this," Black said. "We just need to do more education. We still just don't have anything that really talks about what modern rent stabilization looks like."

Remember, Portland currently **has a renter relocation fee policy** in place that local landlords claim is effectively rent control. It's being challenged in court.

Quanice Hayes' Family Got an Unprecedented Hearing at City Hall. Here's the Full Transcript.

By Dirk VanderHart
June 1, 2017

On Wednesday, May 24, Portland City Council did something unprecedented. At the request of the family of Quanice Hayes, the 17-year-old **shot and killed by Portland police** in February, the council held a formal hearing simply to listen.

There was no ordinance or resolution to consider, no council decision to be made. Commissioners Amanda Fritz and Chloe Eudaly instead had blocked off two hours of council time and handed the floor to Hayes' grandmother, Donna, to call witnesses and speak as she saw fit.

The hearing wasn't unanimously praised—there were grumblings in City Hall about the precedent it set, and whether every person with a grievance with the city would be allowed to demand a listening session from here on out (they won't). We're told members of the Portland Police Bureau had concerns, too. But the meeting also, hopefully, helped family members and

others gain some small measure of catharsis in this city whose fraught racial history is making itself seen and heard so often these days.

If you missed the hearing, there's still a video **online**, but we thought it would be worthwhile to post the full transcript here. This is a draft of the official transcript, with errors and punctuation not yet corrected. It's worth your time.

The Daily Journal of Commerce

Design Beyond Borders: Marea Alta

By Kent Hohlfeld

June 1, 2017

San Francisco Bay Area residents looking for the unicorn that affordable housing has become in the region now have one more option thanks to **Bridge Housing** and **Ankrom Moisan Architects**.

The developer and architecture firm teamed up with Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), the city of San Leandro, California, and Cannon Constructors North Inc. to build the Marea Alta development. The first phase of the 200-unit affordable housing complex was completed recently; it offers 115 units reserved for families. The second phase, expected to open in 2018, will provide 85 units for seniors.

“There were over 10,000 vetted applications,” said Robert Lecher, project manager at Ankrom Moisan. “It was amazing.”

The \$80 million project is geared to serve Bay Area residents who make 30 to 50 percent of the area median income. That is \$41,750 for a family of two in the Bay Area. Marea Alta is located near the San Leandro BART station and bus lines. Easy access to transit was a major selling point for the project.

“It helps that Bridge Housing has a partnership with BART,” Lecher said. “It’s directly across from the (BART) station and it is at the termination of the East Bay (bus) transit line.”

Marea Alta’s two-story underground parking garage will have 406 spaces, 240 reserved for BART riders. Because the site previously held a surface parking lot, replacing as many of those spots as possible was crucial in the car-centric Bay Area.

“What is really interesting is that residents may not have a car when they move in,” Lecher said. “With the extra money they save on rent, a lot of residents or their kids may get that first car.”

One of the project’s unique aspects is its modular pre-fab construction. While early site work is taking place, the prefabricated units are built off-site. Each unit is a series of modules that are built, packaged and shipped by truck to the site. They are hoisted into position with a crane.

“When this is done, you can’t tell it’s a modular,” Lecher said. “You have a stucco façade. Most of the units are multiple structures stitched together.”

Units from the first phase were built by ZETA Design + Build in Sacramento, California. That company went out of business in March 2016, and Guerdon Modular Buildings in Boise, Idaho, picked up the project to build the remaining 85 senior housing units for phase two.

“This isn’t new stuff for us,” said Randy Duggan, Guerdon Modular Buildings business development manager for the Pacific Northwest. “We do hundreds of them. This is what we do every day.”

The units’ ability to withstand being shipped 644 miles is a testament to their durability, Lecher said.

“They are sturdy,” he said. “They have to survive bouncing down the road.”

There are several advantages to using prefabricated units at Marea Alta. The construction phase will be 30 percent shorter and cost approximately \$1.5 million less.

“One of the big reasons people come to us is difficulty finding people in the skilled trades,” Duggan said. “Everyone is looking for an advantage. One of our advantages is our speed.”

The Portland Business Journal

Portland council says yes to 100% renewable energy by 2050

By Pete Danko

June 2, 2017

Portland late Thursday joined Multnomah County in committing to relying completely on renewable energy by 2050.

The move, accomplished by a 4-0 vote of the City Council, was colored by President Donald Trump’s decision just hours earlier to withdraw from the Paris climate agreement, and by the MAX killings last Friday that shocked the city.

“I hope that people will look back on this and say, in the middle of one of the hardest weeks in this city’s history, we did something great,” Mayor Ted Wheeler said.

“It’s even more magnified by the fact, as my fellow commissioners said, that it’s happening on the very same day that the United States is effectively turning its back on the rest of the world and their decision to go forward with the climate accords in Paris. This will serve as a beacon of hope.”

The city's resolution tracks tightly with the one passed by the county earlier Thursday, setting a goal of 100 percent renewable electricity by 2035, then bringing in transportation, heating and other energy uses by 2050. It applies to all of Portland, not just city facilities and functions.

Like the county, the city included provisions that emphasize equitable implementation of the policy; the resolution states that "a renewable energy transition is an opportunity to redress historical inequities in our community and must be just."

Wheeler acknowledged that passing the resolution was "the fun part" and that "the hard work is actually what comes with implementation," requiring work on multiple fronts and advances not entirely knowable at this point.

The resolution sketches out a vision that calls for more of a lot of things: energy efficiency, demand-control technologies, community-based renewables, electric cars and electrified public transportation among them. It also asks the state and the utilities that serve the city to step up their renewable-energy games.

As they told the county earlier in the day, Portland General Electric and Pacific Power testified that they would work with the city to try to help it meet the goals, though exactly how it would all happen was unclear.

"We don't know the technologies the future may bring," Deane Funk, manager of local government affairs for PGE, told the council. "But despite that uncertainty, we are committed to helping our region lead the way in an effort to combat climate change."

The Portland Observer

Rebranded for Equity

Urban renewal agency becomes 'Prosper Portland'

By Christa McIntyre

May 30, 2017

"Prosper Portland," is the new name for the Portland Development Commission. The city's longtime urban renewal agency has re-launched itself this month with a new name to reflect a new strategic shift in direction that focuses on building a shared and equitable economy.

"Part of the reason we chose to change our name, and the way that we are engaging in the public, is in recognition that in the future, urban renewal will be a much smaller portion of what we do," Prosper Portland Executive Director Kimberly Branam, explained in an interview with the Portland Observer.

The shift follows the adoption of a 5 year plan in 2015 that called for the agency to prioritize employment and new business projects benefitting those traditionally underserved, such as lower income groups, minority populations and communities of color.

Residents may feel skeptical since many of Prosper Portland's long term plans involve changes in struggling neighborhoods that were left behind in the past.

Lents, one of the most diverse neighborhoods of working class Portlanders, for example, is where Prosper Portland has partnered with local agencies and businesses to establish the "Portland Mercado" near SE 82nd where you can "eat, shop and drink while supporting 40 local businesses, many from the Latino community.

Recent community input on the agency's N/NE Community Development Plan showed that residents want Prosper Portland to strengthen its outreach, communicate better about programs and access to them and be accountable and transparent with funding.

One program which Prosper Portland is now promoting is an Inclusive Startup Fund where 25 percent of the investments have gone to new businesses started by African American women, and another 15 percent by Latino entrepreneurs.

"As our economy was recovering from the recession, the inequities that existed before the recession had been exacerbated," Branam said. "We really needed to focus on supporting communities of color, and supporting communities in east Portland, to insure that who had not seen positive gains from the recovery were connected to and prioritized in our economic development activities."

GoLocalPDX

Protests Expected in Downtown Portland on Sunday

By GoLocal PDX News Team

June 1, 2017

The Portland Police are warning of protests that are expected to take place in downtown Portland on the afternoon of Sunday, June 4.

The intent of law enforcement is to provide a safe environment for all participants, non-participants, and community members while ensuring the peaceful exercise of the First Amendment.

Sunday Afternoon Protests

A planned event by one group is scheduled to take place in Terry Schrunk Plaza, located at 364 Southwest Madison Street.

There are other events involving different groups expected across Southwest 4th Avenue at City Hall, and across Southwest Madison Street at Chapman Square.

There are no specific indicators that the events will disrupt traffic or transit flow, but the Bureau encourages road users to be aware of the potential and to plan for alternate routes.

There will be a large law enforcement presence due to online threats of violence between different groups.

"The Federal Protective Service stands with its partners within the Portland community to ensure the peaceful exercise of individual freedoms of demonstration and speech, while preserving and protecting the safety of all individuals on federal property," said Robert Sperling, Director of Communications and Engagement for the Federal Protective Service.

Due to these threats and the potential for violence, people attending any of the events are discouraged from bringing any weapons (firearms, knives, etc.) or items that can be used as weapons (sticks, bats, poles, rocks, fireworks/incendiary devices, etc.) to any of the events.

Prohibited items may be seized by police and, if in violation of city, state or federal law, the possessor may be arrested and charged criminally.

Anyone with information about criminal behavior being planned at any of these events is asked to share it by email to CrimeTips@portlandoregon.gov.

OPB

Portland Wants All Renewable Energy By 2050

By Laura Klinkner

June 1, 2017

Portland leaders say all of the city's energy will come from renewable sources by the year 2050.

The City Council established this goal to move away from fossil fuels at Thursday's meeting — just a few hours after President Donald Trump announced his intention to pull the United States out of the Paris climate agreement.

In 1993, the city of Portland became the first in the country to adopt a climate action plan. But Mayor Ted Wheeler said the city could be doing more.

“No matter which way the winds are blowing in D.C. our community has always continued to innovate and implement ambitious new policies to achieve a low-carbon pollution future,” he said. “Now our climate leadership is needed more than ever.”

The new resolution calls for 100 percent renewable electricity in the city by 2035, and 100 percent renewable energy — including fuel and gas — by 2050. Multnomah County passed a similar resolution earlier Thursday.