

## **The Oregonian**

### **Why the search for a new police chief must begin outside Portland (Guest opinion)**

*By Guest Columnist, Edward Hershey*

06/05/2017

It was always important for Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler to seek the best candidate to run the police bureau rather than hiring only from within it. Now that the police union has attempted to impact the search by demanding Wheeler retain Chief Mike Marshman and challenging the city's job description, it is almost imperative.

One reason is rooted in Portland's century-old government structure, empowering the mayor to assume the role of police commissioner and to lead the council that governs all municipal agencies. That is tantamount to requiring him to oversee himself. He cannot change the system. (The last mayor who tried, a former police chief, failed by a 3-to-1 referendum vote.) But Wheeler can find a chief willing and able to chart a course without political interference, independent of vested interests and free to lobby for more resources as Chief Rosie Sizer did in 2010. That stance earned her a pink slip for perceived disloyalty from a mayor who replaced her with the friend of a council ally -- and disbanded the citizen advisory panel that took her side.

Another problem with elevating chiefs from within the bureau is that they tend to be steeped in its culture and traditions to the exclusion of other experience. That can foster a level of insularity that limits perspective and innovation in decision-making and can impede efforts to eliminate bias and achieve equity in policing. Nor does the practice necessarily promote stability. While Marshman and his three assistant chiefs have a total of 93 years in the Portland Police Bureau, Marshman is Portland's sixth permanent chief in 13 years. Contrast that with Seattle, which has had three since 2000, and Los Angeles with two since 2002.

Other jurisdictions routinely look elsewhere. When San Francisco's chief of police, a 30-year veteran of its department, left amid an uproar over officer-involved shootings, the city found his successor in Los Angeles. Seattle reached all the way to Northern Ireland for a former Boston police chief who was revamping the national police force. And while LA hired from within in 2009, it chose a protege of Bill Bratton, who spent seven years cleaning house after arriving from New York.

Seeking promising talent elsewhere is not new to Portland. Transportation Director Leah Treat was hired in 2013 after stints in Washington, D.C., and Chicago. Fire Chief Mike Meyers emerged from a national field of 31 candidates.

So why the controversy? The union finds comfort in the status quo. The same union that has a history of resisting change, including an infamous march to support the officer who pelted a 12-year-old girl with a beanbag gun three years after his role in the death of a mentally ill man that led to a \$1.6 million settlement.

I support unions, having served as chief spokesman for Oregon's largest, SEIU Local 503, and having spearheaded the drive that established one at my newspaper in New York. We fought for

better pay and working conditions but would never have thought to dictate who should run the paper.

## **Dueling Portland rallies end without major violence, but police intervene**

*By Brad Schmidt*  
06/04/2017

Dueling rallies engulfed five blocks of downtown Portland on Sunday as hundreds of Trump supporters and counter-demonstrators hurled insults but largely avoided physical confrontation during a tense standoff just days after police arrested a known extremist in the grisly killing of two good Samaritans.

Officers in riot gear prevented a full-scale clash between protest blocs by restricting access to Terry Schunk Plaza, where Trump backers and free-speech advocates rallied for hours in a self-contained bubble within this liberal city.

Three distinct groups of counter-demonstrators overtook the surrounding blocks, forming a perimeter along streets and sidewalks while chanting anti-hate messages and sometimes taunting Trump supporters under the watchful eye of police.

Officers deployed explosives and pepper balls to scatter the antifascist crowd gathered in Chapman and Lownsdale squares just north of the pro-Trump rally. By 6 p.m., each demonstration had subsided without any significant violence and police had arrested 14.

"The mayor would like to thank those who peacefully protested today in Portland," Michael Cox, a spokesman for Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler, said Sunday. "He is grateful that there were no reports of major injuries, and that arrests were minimal."

Wheeler last week tried to derail the pro-Trump rally, fearing it would exacerbate anger and tension in the aftermath of the May 26 stabbings of three men on a light-rail train. Authorities charged Jeremy Christian with two counts of aggravated murder and one count of attempted aggravated murder in the knifings.

Christian, 35, admitted to police that he stabbed three men after they came to the aid of two teenagers he ridiculed with racist speech. Christian, who previously had been recorded making Nazi salutes during an April rally, told police the stabbings made him "happy."

The organizer of Sunday's free-speech rally, Joey Gibson, urged attendees to be civil as others in the crowd held signs distancing themselves from Christian. Several times, speakers called the victims of the stabbings, Rick Best, Taliesin Myrddin Namkai-Meche and survivor Micah Fletcher, heroes.

"Mayor Wheeler says I spit out hate speech," Gibson told the crowd. "We've got to prove them wrong."

A string of speakers inside Schunk Plaza espoused a pro-conservative, pro-Trump, pro-Christian

agenda while simultaneously calling the government corrupt. Onlookers carried American flags, Trump banners and signs suggesting that "diversity is a code word for white genocide."

John Durano, donning a shiny body suit decorated with a cross made from American flag stickers, flew from Los Angeles to attend the rally. "I do have white pride," he said. "What's wrong with that?"

Police, meanwhile, surrounded Sunday's demonstration and limited access to Schrunk Plaza. Officers stood along the park's perimeter, blocking Trump supporters from the discrete rallies nearby.

Union organizers gathered on a Southwest Third Avenue sidewalk and chanted across the street. "Immigrants are here to stay! Nazi scum, go away!"

On Southwest Fourth Avenue, counter-protesters gave speeches in front of Portland City Hall while others spilled into the street to keep tabs on the pro-Trump rally. A collection of teenagers and gray-beards united. At times, a band played.

For the most part, the crowds didn't mix. But sometimes antagonists slipped by.

One of them was Josh Reed. Police escorted Reed away from Schrunk Plaza, and back to Chapman Square, after he began asking Trump supporters about the patches they wore.

"I'm really not OK with this element having an unopposed platform in our city," he said.

Meanwhile, antifa decked out in black clothing collected along Southwest Madison Street, in the two city parks north of the pro-Trump rally. Some were observed lobbing water bottles, rocks and eggs toward officers and the free-speech gathering.

Just after 3:30 p.m., police deployed loud explosives and pepper balls and began clearing Chapman Square of protesters. Thirty minutes later, officers cleared out neighboring Lownsdale Square as agitated antifa pulled newspaper stands into city streets.

A march through downtown ensued. Police eventually surrounded and temporarily detained a large group at Southwest Fourth Avenue and Morrison Street, about a quarter-mile away from the demonstrations.

In all, police considered their enforcement efforts a success.

"We feel like things, overall, were successful in that we had a lot of people that didn't really get along with each other, at least philosophically, and we were able to keep the groups separated for the most part," said Sgt. Pete Simpson, a police spokesman.

Simpson credited that separation, plus a deliberate response by officers, for helping maintain relative order among demonstrators with diametrically opposed beliefs.

"We certainly were more measured," he said. "And that doesn't mean we were excessive in other events. It just means the dynamics in this event were very different."

As Sunday afternoon gave way to evening, protesters and Trump supporters began scattering.

William Jones, wearing camouflage pants, a bulletproof vest, a T-shirt and carrying an American Flag on a pole, sat along a concrete barrier in front of City Hall, conversing with anti-Trump protesters about whether socialism can exist in a capitalist society and whether Trump will make life better for anyone not wealthy.

Jones came for the pro-Trump rally but ended up spending most of his time with the protesters in front of City Hall. Jones said he likes to keep an open mind and debate people, trying to change opinions or let others change his.

"I'm a conversationalist," he said.

Madison Dines was in the protest at City Hall but met Jones in Schrunk Plaza. They reunited at day's end. "You certainly have humanized a fair number of your allies," Dines said.

They largely disagreed about politics. But they did find some common ground.

Jones said he felt good about how the protests ended.

"There was a lot more intelligent people than I thought," he said. "Hopefully everybody came out of the situation better."

## **The Portland Mercury**

### **Help Right 2 Dream Too Move This Weekend**

*By Dirk VanderHart*  
06/02/2017

Right 2 Dream Too is finally on the move, and you can help.

The well-regarded homeless rest area—which for six years sat beneath the city's Chinatown gate—began the laborious process of relocating to its new Rose Quarter home last week.

The Portland Bureau of Transportation-owned lot was identified by the city in a last-ditch effort in early April, and has since been set up with water service (though not power). The city finally gave R2DToo permission to begin moving in on May 26, according to Trillium Shannon, a board member with the nonprofit rest area.

Since then, R2DToo's moved 10 tiny houses onto the land. They'll be offered to the members who stay on-site at all times (and they were provided through a Benson Polytechnic High School program we've written about). The rest area still needs to set up the large communal tents where homeless residents can spend the night away from the street.

"This weekend's a big work weekend for us," Shannon tells the *Mercury*. "I don't want to pull anybody way from important things like opposing hate speech, but tomorrow's a big day."

Which means, if you have the time on Saturday, you can help! Shannon says skilled laborers can report to R2DToo's new digs, just across North Interstate from the Moda Center. If you're less skilled, but want to help move the old camp, you can report to Northwest Fourth and Burnside.

Incidentally, Shannon says the Rose Quarter has been welcoming to R2DToo as the parties work to hammer out a good neighbor agreement. Property owners in Chinatown had sued to get the camp to move (though the Old Town Chinatown Community Association voiced support for the organization).

"It's just a whole different game now," Shannon says. "We actually have a neighborhood that wants us to be successful instead of shunning us."

Still, the camp's perch in the Rose Quarter is tenuous. R2DToo will need to move in October, if Portland City Council doesn't extend its declaration of a housing emergency, since that declaration lets officials skirt zoning rules. Even if the emergency is extended, though, a usage agreement says R2DToo has to be out by September 2018.