

The Oregonian

Field for Portland police chief narrowed to four finalists

By Maxine Bernstein

July 24, 2017

Four finalists remain for the Portland police chief job.

Current Portland police Chief Mike Marshman, 51, and Pittsburgh police Assistant Chief Larry Sciroto, 44, are two of the four who agreed to have their names released, according to the mayor's spokesman.

The other two finalists requested their names remain confidential until the process is completed, said Michael Cox, mayor's spokesman.

Mayor Ted Wheeler plans to conduct interviews with each of the four finalists in person this week, Cox said.

Community panelists interviewed six candidates last week, including former Portland Police Chief Charles Moose, though he declined to comment when asked by The Oregonian/OregonLive if he had applied for the job.

Moose, 63 and now retired and living in Florida, confirmed he was in the city of Portland last week and was seen downtown in a suit on one of the days the panel conducted interviews. Moose had served as Portland police chief from 1993 to 1999, and then went on to serve as chief in Montgomery County, Maryland. He worked as a Honolulu officer afterwards, before retiring to Florida.

Seattle Assistant Chief Perry Tarrant, 48, who also serves as president of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, also declined to comment when asked by The Oregonian/OregonLive if he was among the last six candidates. He referred questions to the city of Portland.

Sciroto, whose name was revealed for the first time Monday, was promoted from commander, where he headed the Pittsburgh police major crimes unit, to assistant chief in July 2016. As assistant chief, he was assigned to the Office of Professional Standards. During his promotion to assistant chief, he said police brass need to support programs and training to promote true partnerships between police and the community.

"You have to not just say it but believe it," Sciroto said, according to the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review.

When he's not working as a police supervisor, he's worked as a college basketball referee since 2010, according to his LinkedIn profile.

Sciroto said Monday evening that he spent about two hours with Portland's mayor in an interview earlier in the day. He grew up in public housing about 20 miles south of Pittsburgh, worked for smaller departments after college before joining Pittsburgh Police Department in 1995, where he's in his 23rd year there. He has a bachelor's degree from Ashford University and is seeking his master's degree through online courses from Florida State University, he said.

Pittsburgh police, which has an authorized sworn force of 940 officers, is one of six agencies identified through former President Barack Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing.

"When I read Mayor Wheeler's job description, I knew this was a fit for what we've been doing in Pittsburgh for the last 2 1/2 years," he said. "The desire to continue to expand upon relationships with all the communities in Portland was extremely appealing to me and seemed a natural progression in my career."

He said he'll bring his professionalism, accountability and respect to a job as chief of police, as well as energy. To address community distrust of police, Sciroto said, "The community and the police both have to let their guard down to facilitate that honest dialogue."

Sciroto said he loves to referee collegiate basketball, but if he got the Portland police chief's job, he said he'd take a leave of absence to allow his focus to be foremost on the chief's position. He said he's eager to impact policing on a national level, and believes leading a major metropolitan police force will allow him to do so.

Portland's mayor has described the perfect candidate: Someone who has remarkable leadership skills to effectively manage the nearly 1,000-member force and develop strong ties with the community, holds significant law enforcement experience and shares his vision of restoring community-based policing where officers don't drive through neighborhoods but have time to get out of their cars to get to know the residents and business people they serve.

The city earlier this year scrapped a plan to hire an outside firm to run the national search after only one agency put in a bid. The city opened recruitment in mid-May, seeking a "highly qualified and transformative" leader who has served as a chief or assistant chief in a large metropolitan law enforcement agency.

The successful person, according to the job description, must have the "capacity and commitment" to improve relationships with members of minority communities, "ensuring that equity is a bedrock of policing." The description said Portland has a history of "legally sanctioned systemic racism with legally enforced exclusionary practices."

The salary range is \$143,312 to \$205,379 a year.

The Portland Tribune

Lack of homeownership deepens minority divide

*By Jim Redden
July 25, 2017*

City Club of Portland series concludes with calls for more to be done to help minorities close the wealth gap with whites by increasing homeownership opportunities

Despite hundreds of millions of dollars spent by state and local governments to address

the affordable housing crisis, much more needs to be done, especially to help more people of color become homeowners.

That was the message the City Club of Portland heard on July 14 during the last of four presentations in a Friday Forum series on homeownership challenges facing minorities.

"Sixty-one percent of white households own their own homes, but only 31 percent of African-American households. That's unconscionable," said Margaret Salazar, director of Oregon Housing and Community Services, one of three panelists.

The other panelists were Ernesto Fonseca, the new executive director of Hacienda Community Development Corp., and Maxine Fitzpatrick, executive director of Portland Community Reinvestment Initiative. All of them praised the Oregon Legislature, the Multnomah County Commission and the Portland City Council for recently increasing their commitments to homeless services and affordable housing projects.

But Fonseca said that homeownership was especially important for minority households.

"Homeownership brings stability. If we don't do more to help that, we're setting people up for failure in the future," he said.

Having recently moved to Portland from Phoenix, Fonseca said he was surprised at housing costs here.

"And I thought Phoenix was expensive," Fonseca said to laughter from club members.

All three said their organizations were committed to creating more homeownership opportunities for minority households. The most ambitious proposal came from Fitzpatrick, who announced an initiative called Pathways 1000 intended to build and sell 100 affordable homes a year to minority households displaced from North and Northeast by gentrification in recent decades over the next 10 years..

"It's a \$300 million (price tag) that will have a big impact," Fitzpatrick said to applause from club members.

Fonseca said Hacienda was planning on building 137 new housing units next year, while Salazar said Oregon Housing and Community Services is working on a statewide housing plan that will be released for public comment in September.

Salazar said the legislative session that adjourned on July 7 made an "historic investment" in affordable housing by committing \$135 million in new revenue, including \$80 million for the sale of bonds that previously had been reserved for public facilities. But all three panelists said club members should be prepared to lobby the 2018 Oregon Legislature to do even more.

The series on the affordable housing crisis was titled "We Call This Home: Wealth, Home Ownership and Race." Sponsored by a variety of organizations — including the Agora Journalism Center at the University of Oregon School of Journalism — it brought national leaders together with local experts to explore the depth and complexity of wealth inequality, race and homeownership in our region.

The series was based on research conducted by EcoNorthwest that shows if the region's current trend continues, there will be no affordable homes available for a median-income

household in any Portland neighborhood within five years. This will have effects for many Portland residents, but is particularly difficult in communities of color.

Portlanders won't be informed of police chief finalists' names

*By Nick Budnick
July 25, 2017*

Some candidates requested their names be withheld, causing Mayor Ted Wheeler to reconsider plans to introduce finalists to the public for full vetting

Mayor Ted Wheeler is prepared to pick a police chief without disclosing all the finalists' names — a departure from his earlier plan to allow public vetting of the finalists before he decides who to hire.

The more secretive process means that next month, when Wheeler is expected to announce his pick as top cop, it may be the first time Portlanders learn that person was a candidate for the job. The mayor's change in plans was based on feedback from some candidates that they would apply only if promised confidentiality, and is intended to ensure the best candidates are considered, said Wheeler spokesman Michael Cox.

On Monday afternoon, Wheeler announced the names of two of the four finalists for the job. Two other names were not released because the candidates requested confidentiality, Cox said.

In January, however, Cox told the press that Wheeler intended to release names to allow for "some public vetting of the candidates."

Officials in Portland are well aware what a background search can miss. In March, Portland Public Schools released the name of its "sole finalist" for superintendent, Donyall Dickey, only to have school board members become concerned by what they considered a lack of candor about some blotches in his record, as first reported by the Portland Tribune.

And in 2000, a local activist and writer, Dave Mazza, disclosed recordings showing that Portland's then-police chief, Mark Kroeker, had — years before — lamented the failure of criminal laws to heed the Bible's teachings, and calling homosexuality a "perversion" that should have been outlawed. The news marked the start of a prolonged period of turmoil for the city's police.

While Wheeler's plan to allow public vetting of candidates was aired in January, his subsequent about-face largely escaped discussion.

Dan Handelman, who tracks the bureau closely for Portland Copwatch, said he understands why candidates would want their application in Portland to be a secret, to avoid negative consequences in their current job.

But "we're talking about one of the most important positions in our community," he said. "We need to know what our options are to make sure that the final choice that's made isn't the wrong one."

Cox expressed confidence in the backgrounding research under way. "We have processes in place we believe will provide significant background on the finalists, and the offer/acceptance of employment will be contingent on the satisfactory completion of a background check conducted by the Oregon State Police."

Joseph Wahl, the city official who is leading the backgrounding process, said the mayor is mindful of what happened with the Portland schools job and instructed him to do a thorough job.

Some input taken

Cox noted that Wheeler has taken some public input on the factors that should be considered when choosing a chief, and that community members conducted initial confidential interviews of six candidates before the four finalists were chosen.

"We conducted an online survey asking Portland residents the qualities and characteristics in the next police chief. We held invited community focus groups to help us with the same questions. And we formed interview panels consisting of community stakeholders to forward their recommendations to the mayor."

Cox said the decision to allow confidentiality was not intended to ease the way for any particular candidate.

And he noted that Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill has the authority under the Oregon public records law to order disclosure of chief candidates' names. That process typically allows as much as two weeks of delay. The Portland Tribune has filed a formal request for all finalists' names and has asked Underhill to order disclosure of the information. His office has asked Wheeler to respond by July 28, and intends to decide the issue August 3.

That may be too late. Wheeler intends to interview the finalists personally before making a decision and extending an offer to one of them, expected in early August.

The decision not to hold a community forum or allow public vetting of finalists is contrary to how Portland did it for its last national search. In 1999, then-Mayor Vera Katz announced the finalists for the chief's job and held a community forum where the public could ask questions of them.

Having even less scrutiny than that process which led to Kroeker's hiring, doesn't seem like a good idea, said Mazza, the activist who dug up the recordings from Kroeker's past 17 years ago. He said candidates' requests for confidentiality don't bode well for their future performance.

"Secrecy is anathema to good government," he said. "A candidate who wishes to be shielded from public scrutiny is a candidate whose commitment to making police operations more transparent is suspect."

Not all cities announce the names of finalists for police chief to enable public consideration. But many do, based on a quick internet search. Those include Seattle; Dallas; Mesa, Arizona; Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Chattanooga, Tennessee; Kansas City, Missouri; Fairfield, Ohio; and Fayetteville, North Carolina.

Wheeler pledged a national search while campaigning for mayor last year. Then his

predecessor, Charlie Hales, named Mike Marshman to be chief, replacing embattled Larry O'Dea.

Wheeler has said he will consider keeping Marshman, and Marshman has said he is one of the current candidates.

The Oregonian has reported that former Portland Chief Charles Moose has applied for his old job, and that an assistant chief in Seattle, Perry Tarrant, may also have applied.

Capt. Bob Day, who previously had been considered the likely successor to O'Dea, told The Oregonian that his application for the job had been rejected.

Day, who is in charge of training officers and managers for the Portland Police Bureau, told The Oregonian that the city informed him he didn't demonstrate "an understanding of 21st-century policing."

City Hall Update: Council wants to develop more brownfields

By Jim Redden

July 25, 2017

Also, the City Council gives bureau managers more authority to approves contracts on their own and Biketown offers a wider range of bikes for those with different abilities

To encourage redevelopment of brownfields in Portland, the City Council on Wednesday directed the creation of a property tax incentive for owners who clean them up and return them to useful purposes.

The incentives will be a reduced property tax rate proposed by the Bureau of Environmental Services, the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability and Prosper Portland (formerly the Portland Development Commission), to be approved by the council within a year.

According to the city, there are over 900 acres of brownfields throughout Portland, including former industrial sites, gas stations and dry cleaners. They are three times as likely to be found in underserved communities, and nearly half are close to environmentally sensitive areas like wetlands and streams.

Managers can approve more contracts

The City Council voted Thursday to increase the value of contracts that can be authorized by managers without formal council approval.

The value of expert services contracts was increased from \$100,000 to \$500,000. The value of public improvement contracts was increased from \$500,000 to \$1 million. The funds must come from existing budgets approved by the council. The change covers the vast majority of contracts that have come before the council in the past.

The change was made to increase the speed of contract approval. City staff testified that seeking council approval adds two months to the contracting process. All four council

members approved the change except Commissioner Amanda Fritz, who was absent. Commissioner Nick Fish noted there is no easy way for the public to find all city contracts at this time.

Biketown expands, caters to more abilities

On Friday, the Portland Bureau of Transportation announced its Biketown bike rental program is now offering bikes for people with different degrees of abilities.

Adaptive Biketown now has a mix of tandem, hand-cycles and three-wheeled bicycles for rent by the hour with the goal of increasing access to cycling. It is the first city-sponsored program of its kind in the country.

The announcement was made at a Friday morning news conference that included transportation Commissioner Dan Saltzman, members of the disability community, and representatives of two of the program's sponsors, Nike and Different Spokes.

Fish to seek re-election

By Jim Redden

July 24, 2017

Long serving Portland City Council member tells the Portland Tribune he is focused on several of the most important issues facing the City Council

Commissioner Nick Fish tells the Portland Tribune he will run for re-election in 2018. Although Fish has previously announced on KGW-TV's public affairs program "Straight Talk," it did not receive any other coverage.

Fish, who is in charge of the Portland Water Bureau and Bureau of Environmental Services, told the Portland Tribune editorial board last week that he is working on a wide range of issues. They including complying with the U.S. EPA requirement that Portland treat the cryptosporidium parasite in the Bull Run watershed and the related affordable housing and homeless problems.

Fish has not reported raising any campaign funds so far this year, but has retained Hilltop Public Solutions to manage the campaign and says he will begin raising money later this summer. Even though he was not on the ballot last year, Fish raised over \$20,000 which he donated to other campaigns and advocacy organizations.

A non-practicing lawyer, Fish was elected to fill the unexpired term of Commissioner Erik Sten, who resigned mid-term, with 61.4 percent of the vote in 2008. He was re-elected to a full four-year term at the May 2010 primary election with just under 80 percent of the vote. He was reelected at the May 2014 primary election with 73 percent of the vote.

So far, affordable housing advocate Margo Black and environmental advocate Julia DeGraw have announced against Fish. They cannot officially file for another month and a half.

NIGHTMARE ON 88TH AVENUE

By Jim Redden and Lyndsey Hewitt

July 25, 2017

'Zombie house' in Southeast Portland fuels neighbors' protest. The city has over \$11,000 in liens and other fines against the property, and demolition could cost up to \$50,000.

The smell of grilled hot dogs and hamburgers filled the air at Lents Park on Sunday, across the street from an eyesore known as a "zombie home," equally charred from numerous fires over the years.

A group of about 15 fed-up neighbors in Southeast Portland staged a protest and cookout across the street from the dilapidated property at 5017 S.E. 88th Ave. in an attempt to bring awareness to the problem of zombie homes, long-vacant properties abandoned by their owners. Officials estimate there are still 700 of these homes throughout Portland, at a time when there is a major housing shortage.

Lara Storke is tired of living next door to the dumpy property, which has a massive hole in the roof, boarded-up windows and no-trespassing signs — akin to something out of "A Nightmare on Elm Street."

The city Bureau of Development Services has scheduled a hearing to obtain an order to demolish the house on Aug. 2 — nearly three years after it first began responding to complaints about it.

"We really just want the process to move much faster. We've been living with this for far too long," Storke says. She belongs to a group called Lents Neighbors for Justice, which organized the event following a fire last month at another zombie house on Southeast Holgate Boulevard.

"This is not the only one in the neighborhood; we've got lots of them. We need to have the city intervene. That's all there is to it," Storke says.

A nuisance for years

The property is an example of the serious problems a zombie home can cause in a neighborhood and how long it takes the city to resolve them if the owner is irresponsible. According to Storke, the problems actually started six or seven years ago, when the woman who owned the home died and her son, who lived there, opened it to people who caused havoc in the neighborhood. Since then, nearby residents have been forced to put up with squatters, piles of trash, discarded needles and condoms — and even threatened by a series of fires at the house that could have spread to adjacent homes. It was only fenced off by the city in the past few months.

The Bureau of Development Services (BDS) documented the lengthy and extensive problems in an April 19, 2017, memo. "5017 SE 88th Avenue has been a criminally infested nuisance hub for over three years," Portland police Officer Andrew Hearst was quoted as saying, noting that multiple dealers have used it to openly sell drugs, and prostitutes have repeatedly used it to conduct sex acts. "I do not have the ability to add up every time police have visited the home, but over the last three years there are scores

upon scores of police responses, totaling or exceeding 100 responses."

Neighbor Bob Santangelo, who attended the protest, says that at one point there were an estimated 30 people living inside the house. Storke says she would have "stuff disappear from my property" daily, and had to put padlocks on her gates.

Zombie RV as well

At one point, there was also a "zombie RV" parked in the home's driveway. Abandoned and barely-functional RVs with people living in them have also become problematic in many Portland neighborhoods, as the city's Bureau of Transportation tries to keep up with complaints.

"There would be fights in the RV. I've watched people squat right there and go to the bathroom," Storke says.

In the memo from earlier this year, officer Hearst says the home, which could collapse because of damage caused by multiple fires, "continues to present a real and present danger to the public. A curious child finding his way into the home via a breached door or window could be seriously injured by the burned-out structure, needles and any criminal secluded inside."

Although police may be the first to respond to neighbor complaints at zombie homes, BDS is the agency with the authority to compel them to be cleaned up, evacuated and secured, or demolished.

BDS can inspect properties for code violations and order them to be repaired, fine owners who do not comply with the orders, have unauthorized occupants evicted and properties boarded up if they are abandoned, and have them demolished if they are determined to present health and safety threats.

BDS also can refer particularly difficult properties to the City Auditor's Office for submission to the City Council for a foreclosure and sale auction.

Notices take time

But as the situation at the Lents house shows, all of this takes time and frustrates neighbors who do not believe the city is moving fast enough. Some delays are required by law, however. For example, owners must be given opportunities to respond at public hearings before some steps can be taken, including boarding up and demolishing properties.

"If that's still here in the wintertime, even though it's a disaster like that, they'll crawl back in there and find places to sleep. And someone's going to wind up getting killed or hurt."— Bob Santangelo, Lents neighbor

"Our goal is not to take homes away from owners and demolish them, but to preserve properties and return them to their intended purposes," says Mike Liefeld, BDS enforcement program manager. According to Liefeld, most property owners respond to the first contacts from the bureau.

But thousands have not over the years, and the worst offenders are placed on a list maintained by the bureau's Extremely Distressed Properties Enforcement Program. The list has included the Lents property since a major fire in 2015.

But there are no firm deadlines for making repairs or maximum dollar amounts for fines that automatically push troublesome properties to the next enforcement phase. Instead, city employees are free to consider a wide range of factors before deciding when to initiate eviction, closure, demolition and finally foreclosure options, including hardships facing property owners.

"Each property is different," Liefeld says.

According to BDS records, inspectors have either visited the Lents property or mailed notices to the owners over 40 times in the last three years. The first visit was a response to a neighbor's complaint on Aug. 21, 2013, where a notice for a code violation was posted. A man who identified himself as Stan Olson called back on Sept. 6, 2013. He identified himself as the son of the owner who had died, and said he was unemployed and had no money to clean it up.

The most recent visit was on July 7 of this year, when a notice of the upcoming demolition hearing was posted. In between, inspectors encountered squatters living in the housing and in an RV on the driveway and documented trash, needles and condoms strewn throughout the properties on many occasions. The property changed hands at least once, possibly through foreclosure. BDS eventually obtained an order to board up the house and, more recently, fence off the entire property, pending the demolition hearing.

The city currently has over \$11,000 in liens and other fines against the property. Demolition could cost the city between \$30,000 and \$50,000, which would become an additional obligation against the property owner. Although the city could initiate foreclosure proceedings at this point to sell the property at auction to recover its costs, it has not yet done so.

Santangelo is worried that the house will still be there come wintertime, when many homeless people seek shelter.

"If that's still here in the wintertime, even though it's a disaster like that, they'll crawl back in there and find places to sleep. And someone's going to wind up getting killed or hurt," he says.

Willamette Week

City Commissioner Nick Fish Draws a Challenger for 2018 Election

Environmental advocate Julia DeGraw has declared her candidacy very early.

*By Rachel Monahan
July 24, 2017*

An environmental advocate and political novice is making a bid for Portland City Hall with a Facebook announcement that she'll challenge incumbent City Commissioner Nick Fish in 2018.

Julia DeGraw is Northwest organizer with Food and Water Watch, a nonprofit that has helped fight a Nestle water-bottling plant in the Columbia River Gorge town of Cascade Locks.

"From beating back Nestle's plan to bottle public water in the Gorge, to organizing resistance to big chemical corporations in rural Oregon, Julia knows what it takes to bring Oregonians together to win for each other," her announcement states.

She lives east of 82nd Avenue and, if elected, would be the only city commissioner to live on the outer eastside.

"Julia's campaign is about building power with the people to make real change in our community," the announcement on Facebook says. "It is no coincidence that outer east Portland has no representation on City Council—electing Julia means being part of a real shift in City Hall."

Her announcement was first reported by [KGW](#).

She grew up in West Linn and has been working for the last 12 year as an environmental advocate.

The first day candidates can officially declare for the 2018 election is Sept. 7. De Graw is getting an early start.

Last year, City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly was the first candidate to successfully challenge an incumbent at City Hall in 24 years. But unlike Steve Novick, who lost to Eudaly, Fish has broad popularity and has previously fended off challengers.

The 2018 city elections will test whether the Eudaly-Novick race had more to do with Portland's displeasure with Novick or a larger anti-incumbent sentiment.

DeGraw says she believes the coming election will be about change.

"Nick Fish represents business as usual at City Hall and solutions that aren't working for Portlanders," she tells WW. "In the Trump era people are fired up for change, and they're ready for someone who will work with them."

The Daily Journal of Commerce

Portland Building renovation plan approved

*By Kent Hohlfeld
July 24, 2017*

The **Portland Historic Landmarks Commission** voted 4-0 on Monday to issue conditional approval to a plan to renovate the Portland Building.

Carin Carlson, Annie Mahoney, Wendy Chung and Matthew Roman all voted in favor of the \$195 million proposal that includes installation of a rain screen. Conditions for the approval include matching the color scheme to existing tile and moving some of the ventilation equipment from the rooftop to a different location in the building.

If Portland city planners and architects with **DLR Group** find they can't abide by the conditions, they may still appeal the decision to the City Council. Individual conditions can't be appealed.

Erica Ceder, a project architect with DLR Group, said the team would have to examine the commission's decision further before deciding how to move forward.

OPB

2 Portland Police Chief Candidate Finalists Identified

By Amelia Templeton

July 24, 2017

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler will conduct in-person interviews this week with four finalists for the city's chief of police position.

Two of the candidates have asked not to be named. The other two did not request confidentiality.

They are Portland's current police chief, Mike Marshman, and Larry Sciroto, an assistant police chief with the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police.

Marshman was promoted to chief in June 2016 after his predecessor, Larry O'Dea, resigned.

Marshman previously served as the bureau's liaison to the federal Department of Justice. He was charged with managing implementation of the city's settlement with the DOJ over excessive police use of force.

Sciroto manages the Pittsburgh Police Office of Professional Standards. It's in charge of internal investigations, policy and training. He started his career as an officer in Pittsburgh in 1995 and worked his way up the ranks, according to a [biography](#) of him posted on a Pittsburgh government website.

The Oregonian reported former Portland Police Chief Charles Moose was in the city last week but would not say whether he was in the running for the chief position.