

# The Oregonian

## Central City Concern names new leader

*By Molly Harbarger*

*August 14, 2017*

One of Portland's largest nonprofits serving the homeless announced a new president Monday. Rachel Solotaroff, a doctor who is moving from her role as the group's chief medical officer, will assume the top position at Central City Concern at the end of September.

Solotaroff replaces Ed Blackburn, who worked at Central City Concern for 25 years. He will transition out of his role to an emeritus position at the end of September, but his last day with the agency is still not set.

She takes over at a time when Portland's homeless population has ballooned to more than 4,000, with housing prices up and federal funding down.

Solotaroff, 46, joined Central City in 2006 as the medical director of the Old Town Clinic. She took on more leadership positions over time. She also taught at Oregon Health & Science University from 2007 to 2014.

Before that, she worked as a staff physician at the Portland Veterans Affairs Medical Center, which serves many homeless people.

Solotaroff was chosen after a national search that included 300 applicants, Central City officials said.

"There is no greater honor than serving as the leader of such an extraordinary organization as Central City Concern," Solotaroff said in a statement. "I am humbled and excited to partner with our staff, clients, stakeholders, and community members to advance our collective mission of ending homelessness in our community."

Central City Concern has 11 facilities, offering health care, mental health services, addiction services and employment programs. The agency grew from about 80 to more than 800 employees during Blackburn's tenure, as Portland's homeless population grew. It now serves about 14,000 people per year.

The agency also builds and runs housing to help people transition from the streets to permanent homes. Blackburn is remaining at the nonprofit to oversee a project that will produce almost 400 new units, funded by donations from local health care providers.

"I have had the wonderful opportunity to work closely with Rachel for eleven some years," Blackburn said. "She has consistently demonstrated a remarkable devotion to our mission, a highly intelligent approach to organizational development, a special ability to communicate to a diversity of people and a truly impressive work ethic."

"While we always knew that Central City Concern had top talent, it was an illuminating experience to have this knowledge vetted and confirmed by a rigorous, national process," said William Wiechmann, chairman of Central City's board.

# Portland responds with sympathy for Charlottesville, criticism for Trump

*By Olivia Dimmer*

*August 14, 2017*

Members of Portland's Jewish community added to the criticism of President Donald Trump for waiting to denounce the KKK and neo-Nazi groups involved in the Charlottesville protest that turned deadly when a man plowed his car into counter-demonstrators, killing a Virginia woman and injuring 19 more people Saturday.

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Portland released a statement Monday morning calling on Trump to "directly denounce, in no uncertain terms and without equivocation, the white nationalist marchers and to make fighting hate a number one priority of his administration."

A few hours after the statement was issued, Trump did come out with a more specific statement condemning the KKK and neo-Nazis and saying "racism is evil."

But threats from hate groups still stand, said Bob Horenstein, a spokesman with the Jewish council.

"The Unite the Right protesters are equal opportunity bigots," he said. "Jews, African-Americans, other people of color will always be the target of their hatred. ... Our community knows that where any one group is targeted — be it Jews, Muslims, African Americans, or LGBT people — it won't be long before others are targeted as well."

In the initial statement, members of the council took issue with Trump's initial response to the attack in which he referenced "violence on both sides."

"There is no comparison between the protesters, who brought hate and violence to the streets of one of the symbolic birthplaces of American democracy, and the counter protesters," Horenstein said. "The rally was one of the largest showings from a hate group in decades. We stand with people of goodwill from all walks of life who are speaking out against hate. We must drive it back into the underground and to the margins of society."

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler tweeted his response to the violence on Sunday, calling for unity against bigotry.

The NAACP Portland chapter also assembled a small group Saturday for an outdoor speech and Don't Shoot PDX followed with a rally Sunday afternoon. The largest of the rallies took place Sunday night outside City Hall, when about 300 people turned out for a peaceful gathering.

# The Portland Tribune

## Permanent supportive housing in the works

By Jim Redden  
August 15, 2017

### Homeless advocates working to make sure affordable housing bond helps fund units with social services

The City Council is not scheduled to approve a framework for spending the \$258.4 million affordable housing bond approved by Portland voters last year until October.

However, homeless advocates, including city and Multnomah County officials, are already working to ensure that at least 300 units be reserved for the chronically homeless who need intensive social services to stay off the streets.

Commissioner Nick Fish is among those behind the push. He says the most recent homeless count in the county shows a sharp increase in the percentage of those with self-declared mental health and substance abuse problems.

"Over 70 percent identified themselves as those we consider chronically homeless, who are the hardest to get into housing. That's up from around 50 percent in 2015, the last time the survey was taken," says Fish.

According to the February 2017 survey, the total also increased from 3,081 to 4,177, although some experts say such counts traditionally undercount the actual number of homeless.

The actual need is far greater than 300 units, however. A recent report found that 2,888 such units already exist in Portland and Multnomah County. But, the report says, another 1,800 units are needed, just based on the 2015 homeless count. Fish expects the number to total 2,000 when the report is updated to reflect the 2017 count.

"We will not be able to significantly reduce the number of chronically homeless until we fund more permanent housing for them.

The cost of such an increase is large, however. The report estimates it at up to \$330 million over the next seven to 10 years, including construction, operation and service costs.

### Need for both housing, money

The official term for such units is Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH). Physically, they are no different than traditional government-supported affordable housing units. But they are dedicated to those earning 30 percent or less of the median family income and needing one-on-one social services to remain in them.

"We are already on our way to building the housing," says Fish, noting that, in addition to the affordable housing bond, city and country officials have approved tens of millions of dollars for new affordable housing projects in recent years. "The challenge is finding an ongoing source of revenue for the services."

According to the report, service costs average \$10,597 a year per tenant. They include social services, clinical services and residential services. Some may be onsite, while others can be coordinated off site.

Fish says he is working on a resolution for council approval that will commit the city to the goal of building and supporting 2,000 PSH units over the next 10 years. It will be discussed during a

Sept. 5 council work session of the Joint Office of Homeless Service, a city-county initiative to reduce homelessness. Fish says he will ask the council to adopt the resolution on Sept. 11, one month before it is scheduled to approve the affordable housing bond spending framework.

Multnomah County Commission Chair Deborah Kafoury is working on a similar resolution, Fish says. She wrote to the Stakeholder Advisory Group drafting a framework for spending the bond money on July 7, urging it to prioritize such units.

"Dedicating 300 housing bond units as Permanent Supportive Housing would go a long way to closing the gap, and would give hope to hundreds of people who are sleeping on our streets," Kafoury said.

Also involved in the discussions are Metro Councilor Sam Chase and Oregon Housing and Community Services Director Margaret Salazar, along with a number of homeless and affordable housing advocates in the region.

"Everyone has to be part of the solution," Fish says.

### **Some say emergency shelters aren't the answer**

The report was prepared by the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH), a national nonprofit organization founded in 1991 that argues such units are the most effective means for reducing chronic homelessness. "Supportive housing can solve complex and costly social problems while improving the lives of the most vulnerable members of our communities," the organization's strategic plan reads.

The report was prepared by Heather Lyons, the CHS director for the Pacific Northwest and Hawaii. Her organization has prepared similar reports for other cities designated as priorities for reducing homelessness of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Using financial modeling, it compared different combinations of publicly-supported and leased housing projects to meet the goal. All total more than \$300 million over seven to 10 years.

The report was presented March 3 to the Executive Committee of A Home for Everyone, a joint city/county initiative to create more affordable housing. Fish was in attendance and struck by the findings. Although he supports the current efforts to increase emergency shelters, Fish says they do not provide a reliable path off the streets, especially for the chronically homeless.

The issue will be discussed again at a PSH Summit organized in Portland on Sept. 14 by CHS and Enterprise Community Partners, a national affordable housing advocacy organization. It will feature representatives from Los Angeles and Seattle/King County who will talk about their efforts to increase resources for supportive housing. About 90 people across many sectors are being invited, including funders, providers, people with lived experience, advocates, and others.

The Affordable Housing Bond Stakeholders Advisory Group was created in February to draft a framework for spending the \$258.4 million approved by voters at the November 2016 general election. The money is intended to create and preserve 1,300 units of affordable housing.

Fish wrote the group on Aug. 8 to urge that it recommend that 300 PSH units be created among the projects funded by the bond.

"You have been tasked with the responsibility of recommending the highest and best use of precious public resources. I hope you will use this opportunity to close a glaring gap in our system — and address a persistent crisis on our streets," Fish said.

The group was scheduled to refer its recommendations to the council on Aug. 14. The final version was not available by press time.

# **City Hall Watch: Police shooting interview rule still in flux**

*By Jim Redden  
August 15, 2017*

## **Plus, the Safari Showcase strip club will be replaced with affordable housing and the City Council tentatively approves a controversial Southwest Portland subdivision**

The City Council unanimously agreed on Wednesday that police who use deadly force should speak to internal affairs investigators within 48 hours. It will consider a revised police directive with that requirement later this month or in early September.

The Portland Police Bureau recently had adopted a directive that did not include the deadline after Multnomah County District Attorney Ron Underhill warned that compelling such statements could jeopardize criminal prosecutions of officers who break the law. But the council rejected that argument and requested the directive be revised to reinstate the requirement that a statement be made within 48 hours.

The requirement was key to the council approving a new contract with the police union last year.

### **Strip club to be replaced with affordable housing**

The Safari Showclub at 3000 S.E. Powell Blvd. will be torn down and replaced with up to 300 affordable housing units under a plan approved by the City Council on Wednesday. The building that currently houses a strip club could be used as a homeless shelter until construction begins.

The council approved buying the property for \$3.7 million, with the money coming from lodging taxes collected from short-term rentals. The affordable housing units could be financed with bond funds approved by Portland voters last November. Some other lower-cost housing also could be built there.

The property is owned by Bob Rice, who also owns the Virginia Cafe and serves on the Oregon Liquor Control Commission. The strip club must vacate before the deal closes on Sept. 30.

### **Southwest Portland subdivision approved**

The City Council tentatively approved a controversial 11-home subdivision in Southwest Portland on Wednesday. Neighbors oppose the Everett Heights Subdivision in part because it will create a new through street they fear will increase traffic near Hayhurst Elementary School.

By a 4-1 vote, the council rejected an agreement between opponents and Everett Custom Homes to limit access on the street to pedestrians, bicyclists and emergency vehicles. Commissioner Amanda Fritz argued city policies require through streets in such situations. Only Commissioner Dan Saltzman voted for the compromise and then against the subdivision.

The final vote is scheduled for Sept. 11. If approved, opponents are considering challenging the subdivision at the state Land use Board of Appeals.

## **Willamette Week**

### **Portland Protesters Plan To “Eclipse Hate” At Friday Rally in Response to White-Power Violence in Virginia**

Activists will gather to condemn white supremacists and far-right activists who marched on Charlottesville, Va.

*By Katie Shepherd  
August 14, 2017*

Portland's Resistance is holding an "Eclipse Hate" rally one week after a car rammed into a crowd of counter-protesters, killing a woman and injuring 19 other people demonstrating against a white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Va.

The violence in Charlottesville erupted during an "alt-right" march attended by members of white supremacist organizations including the KKK, neo-Nazi groups and other far-right activists. The man behind the wheel of the gray Dodge that sped into a group of pedestrians has been identified as James Alex Fields, who attended the rally and was allegedly a neo-Nazi sympathizer. The U.S. Department of Justice is investigating the killing as an act of domestic terrorism.

Portland's Resistance, a left-wing protest movement that has concentrated on social justice and police reform along with decrying the policies of President Donald Trump, also called the attack by vehicle an act of "domestic terrorism by white supremacists" in a statement it released announcing its rally and march planned for Friday on the downtown waterfront.

For many, the violence in Charlottesville echoed the May attack in Portland by alt-right sympathizer Jeremy Christian, who stabbed three men on a MAX train after they defended two black teenagers, one of whom was wearing a hijab. Two of the men died.

"Just like Charlottesville, Portland has recently and historically faced tragedy at the hands of white supremacy," Portland's Resistance said in a statement. "We stand against the division and destruction that festering racism brings both here and across the country. We will not tolerate hate in our city."

The rally and march will begin at the Salmon Street Springs at 5:30 p.m. Friday evening.

## **The Portland Mercury**

### **The City Could Extend Renter Protection Law's Life By Six Months**

*By Dirk VanderHart  
August 14, 2017*

As local landlords mount a renewed legal challenge to the relocation payments Portland's requiring of landlords these days, the city's getting ready to extend the law's life-span.

As soon as next month, the Portland Housing Bureau plans to put legislation before Portland City Council that keeps the current law alive for six months past its current scheduled sunset in

October. According to PHB Policy and Equity Manager Matthew Tschabold, that extension will create breathing room as the city works toward a permanent policy—which will be up for consideration before the six months is up.

"This extension is to provide space," Tschabold told a technical advisory committee that's making recommendations on the renter relocation law, in a meeting last Friday. "We won't be waiting six months before legislation is brought to council."

The move means that tenants who are issued no-cause evictions, or who move out when their rent is hiked by 10 percent or more, can continue to expect payments of between \$2,900 and \$4,500 well into next year. Two Portland landlords, Phillip Owen and Michael Feves, have challenged that law in court, arguing it amounts to illegal rent control, among other things.

The pair, backed by the local landlord lobby and represented by attorney John DiLorenzo, **suffered a defeat** at the circuit court level, when a state tax judge ruled Portland's law passes muster. After initially saying they'd hold off on an appeal, though, the attorneys **challenged the ruling last week**.

"We still strongly believe the ordinance will only aggravate Portland's housing crisis," DiLorenzo said in a statement announcing the appeal. "The court failed to see it for what it is – disguised rent control, which violates state statutes and the Oregon Constitution."

In response, Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, who introduced the relocation payment ordinance, issued her own statement: "The ruling from Judge [Henry] Breithaupt was clear and comprehensive. It is disappointing that DiLorenzo and the landlord lobby continue to waste time and money fighting the city in its efforts to stabilize families in their homes. Their time might be better spent helping us find additional solutions to the housing crisis instead of trying to take away the only tool we have to help vulnerable people."

There's no telling how long it will take for an appeal to play out, but it's likely that by the time a ruling is issued, Portland's policy will have changed. At last week's meeting, Tschabold presented a lengthy list of potential changes to the law that the PHB is considering introducing into a permanent ordinance.

Changes the bureau appeared to be favoring (though that was subject to change), included offering relocation assistance only to tenants with rents below a certain monthly threshold, changes to how information about the law is disseminated to the public, and exemptions regulated affordable housing providers in some scenarios.