

The Portland Tribune

City Hall Watch: Newest Police Chief Sworn In – Uehara as Interim

*By Jim Redden
August 29, 2017*

Plus, the 20s Bikeways are celebrated and \$1.25 million in livability grants are still being offered

Chris Uehara was sworn in as Interim Portland police chief on Thursday. He succeeds Mike Marshman, who retired after 26 years of service at the bureau when Mayor Ted Wheeler announced he had chosen Oakland Police Deputy Chief Danielle Outlaw as the next permanent chief.

Uehara is the 47th chief and the first Asian/Pacific Islander-American to lead the Portland Police Bureau. He will serve until Outlaw passes a background check and is sworn in.

"As we prepare for Chief Danielle Outlaw, I will continue building on our relationships in the community, so that every Portlander knows the Portland Police Bureau exists to serve them with integrity, compassion and respect," Uehara said.

Newest bike corridor celebrated

Portland transportation officials and community partners celebrated the substantial completion of a series of safety improvements along Southeast 20th and 30th avenues through the city known as the 20s Bikeways on Thursday.

The improvements are included on the avenues along a 9.1-mile route from the Springwater Corridor at the south end to Northeast Lombard Street at the north end, going through many of the neighborhoods with among the highest rates of bicycle commuting in the United States.

Participating at the Thursday press conference were Transportation Commissioner Dan Saltzman, Portland Bureau of Transportation Director Leah Treat, Kerns Neighborhood Association Chair Jay Harris, and Hopworks Urban Brewery founder and brewmaster Christian Ettinger.

Livability grant sessions announced

Prosper Portland is continuing to offer \$1,250,000 in livability grant funds for community-based organizations proposing projects in six urban renewal areas — Lents Town Center, Gateway Regional Center, Central Eastside, Interstate Corridor, Downtown Waterfront and River District — with funds in the latter two URAs focused specifically on the Old Town/Chinatown neighborhood.

The deadline for applying is Sept. 29. Priority will be given to projects to foster vibrant, healthy neighborhoods, benefit communities of color or people with low incomes, and improve prosperity of area residents and businesses.

Since 2006, the former Portland Development Commission has awarded more than \$6.3 million in community livability grants. Staff will be available at different locations in the city beginning this week for organizations interested in applying. To learn more, visit: prosperportland.us.

Police Take Their PR Push Nationwide

*By Nick Budnick
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Portland Police Association leader Daryl Turner joins the effort of other police unions to push back against negative coverage

The head of Portland's police union since 2010 and longtime beat cop Daryl Turner is going national to tackle what some officers feel is a bigger obstacle than criminals: media coverage. This month, Turner and the Portland Police Association have joined with other police unions on the West Coast to try and engage with the media and the public at large on high-profile national issues, blasting white supremacists and highlighting dangers to police.

"We wanted to have a national voice, a voice that could speak up for law enforcement unions at a nationwide level," Turner said. "We're part of the community, too, and we want them to know that we have the same wishes and desires for our neighborhoods as everyone else."

Thus far, the new effort, called the United Coalition of Public Safety, or UCOPS, has issued three news releases that seek to tap into trending national coverage, including the violent attacks in Charlottesville, attacks on police, and white supremacists.

Police don't support bigotry or violence, the group says.

"We're in a tough time, but we're in it together," says Turner, who is African-American. "So the only way to get out of it is together."

Heightened national attention to fatal shootings in the wake of the killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, has contributed to a feeling of being under siege for police.

A recent Pew Research poll found that four out of five officers feel their work is portrayed unfairly in the media, and 40 percent of cops feel that strongly. That feeling is highest among officers with poor morale, frustration and anger about their job, the study found.

In Portland, protesters have increasingly highlighted police shootings and put pressure on City Hall over issues ranging from the recent police union contract, to a policy that was viewed as giving officers too much time after a shooting before being interviewed.

In the face of such coverage, the UCOPS mission is "to publicly promote, through education and outreach, the exceptional work of law enforcement officers in our communities."

In August, UCOPS has gone out of its way to distance police from some of the organizations that try to align themselves with police.

On Aug. 21, the group responded to coverage of how white supremacists have adopted an American flag that bears a blue line, previously a symbol of police.

The UCOPS statement blasted "the hijacking of our symbol," saying "it does not represent hate, prejudice or bigotry; any group, such as Antifa, that makes such claims is lying to further their agenda of anti-police rhetoric and hate of law enforcement."

In addition to Portland, the founding members of the group include unions in Seattle, Sacramento, Oakland, San Jose, Long Beach and Los Angeles and San Francisco. The member unions contribute dues to the group, which has hired a Washington, D.C., public relations firm. The group's statements are emailed out by the Portland union, but UCOPS is based in San Francisco — where its bank account is, Turner says.

While Turner's style is to offer a progressive, kinder and gentler tone, a board member of the group who represents the police union in San Francisco, Martin Halloran, offered a more aggressive depiction of the UCOPS mission, saying it was set up to "fight the media assault."

"Over the past two years, criticism of law enforcement by some in the political arena, by certain media organizations, and certainly by the anti-police professional protestors has reached a frenzied state," he wrote in a May alert to members of his union. "The unrest has largely been based on false accusations and misinformation about our profession. We law enforcement labor organizations up and down the West Coast of the United States have had enough. We have organized and are united to fight the media assault.

"We recognize that improvements can and should be made within our noble profession [but] the great work done, day in and day out, by the men and women in our agencies goes unrecognized and under-reported."

The Daily Journal of Commerce

City Council OKs Portland Building Renovation Plan

By Kent Hohlfeld

August 28, 2017

The Portland City Council on Thursday tentatively struck down a condition attached to the Historic Landmarks Commission's approval of a plan to repair the Portland Building. The council also tentatively denied an appeal by architect Peter Meijer of the entire project approval. Both decisions, by 4-0 votes, are expected to become final on Sept. 13, when they are formalized by city staff and given a final reading by the council before another vote.

The plan for the \$195 million project is to address water leakage, interior lighting and air problems by covering the façade with a metal rain screen. It would closely, but not exactly, be true to the building's postmodern appearance.

"It's considered a sick building," Commissioner Chloe Eudaly said. "It's the best plan possible."

The project team's plan calls for placement of a larger HVAC system on the building's roof as well as larger tiles on the façade and lighter windows. The Historic Landmarks Commission approved the design with the condition that the size of the mechanical equipment on the roof be reduced by 50 percent or moved inside.

Project designer DLR Group asked the City Council to remove that condition.

"In order to function, (HVAC units) need to take in fresh air," said Erica Ceder, a project architect with DLR Group. "The best source for high-quality outside air is at roof level."

There is no technical way to meet the condition without significantly impacting the building's performance, Ceder said. Moving the units inside would require adding louvers to take in air from outside the building at a lower level. Since the building sits near downtown bus lanes, air quality issues inside the building would persist, according to Ceder.

Currently, the HVAC system takes up much of the building's second floor. A change to meet the condition would also increase the project's cost, according to Ceder. Also, the equipment would not be seen by the vast majority of people outside the building, she said.

"We have provided sightline diagrams that prove that from any location around the building or across the street you would not be able to see the proposed mechanical units," she said.

Regardless of the size of mechanical equipment, Meijer claimed, the entire plan is flawed, should be scrapped and the city should start over. He cited a letter from the National Park Service that stated the proposed plan could cause the building to be de-listed from the National Register of Historic Places.

“The project is also bad urban design,” he said. “I am asking you to reverse the commission’s approval. Go back to your design team and have them start over because this is the wrong approach to this project.”

Historic Landmarks Commissioner Matthew Roman said that given a choice between having the entire approval thrown out or having the condition removed, he would prefer the latter. He recognized designers’ limited options.

“We didn’t see the materiality of the building as being its most character-defining feature,” he said.

After a hearing that lasted nearly two hours, the City Council engaged in discussion for approximately 10 minutes before agreeing to remove the condition and reject Meijer’s appeal. The council knows many people have strong opinions about the Portland Building.

“I am one of those people who have always been critical of this building,” Mayor Ted Wheeler said. “It’s like one of those artworks that sparks a lot of conversation and a lot of debate. It would be my preference to not put large HVAC units on the roof, but I also understand why we are doing it.”