Police ID Man Shot by Officer in North Tabor Neighborhood

By Samantha Matsumoto
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The man shot by Portland police Wednesday has been released from the hospital and is lodged at the Multnomah County JailJesse Lee Brockner, 31, led police on a chase in a stolen SUV after he is suspected of robbing banks in Yamhill and Washington counties, police spokesman Sgt. Chris Burley said.

Officer David Staab shot Brockner after he crashed the Chevrolet Blazer in the North Tabor neighborhood then refused to obey police's orders to get out of the car, Burley said.

Witnesses told The Oregonian/OregonLive that it appeared Brockner had been shot in the shoulder.

He was taken to a hospital, then released later Wednesday, Burley said.

Staab has been placed on administrative leave, as is standard practice. He will be interviewed by investigators within 48 hours of the shooting, Burley said.

The chase began after officers spotted the Blazer driven by Brockner near Southeast Cesar E. Chavez Boulevard and Southeast Clinton Street at 12:40 p.m. Wednesday, Burley said. Authorities believed the SUV was stolen and had been the getaway vehicle in a Washington County robbery earlier that day.

Brockner sped away after officers tried to stop him, Burley said. He led police on a chase for more than two dozen blocks before he crashed into a parked car in the 100 block of Southeast 55th Avenue.

Officers ordered Brockner to exit the Blazer. Staab shot him when he refused to comply, Burley said.

Officials continue to investigate the shooting, Burley said.

According to an affidavit filed by FBI agents in U.S. District Court on Thursday, Brockner and two other men are suspected of stealing several tools from a barn then taking a blue Chevrolet Blazer.

The three men filled a U-Haul with an oxygen tank, welder and other tools at 7 a.m. Wednesday, then Brockner fled in the Bazer and the other two men left in the U-Haul, FBI agent Phillip Garcia wrote in the affidavit.

The men in the U-Haul were arrested by Yamhill County sheriff's deputies later that day. They told deputies Brockner was the third man involved in the burglary, the affidavit said.

At about 9:30 a.m., Brockner robbed a U.S. Bank in Beaverton while wearing a welder's mask, the affidavit said.

Gun in hand, Brockner told the bank teller to give him money, demanding, "Where are the 100s? You have 10 seconds or I'll shoot," according to the affidavit. At one point, he pointed the gun at the teller, the affidavit said.

Brockner took more than $3,400 from the bank, the affidavit said.

While in the hospital, Brockner told FBI agents he borrowed the Chevrolet Blazer from his friend after he bought heroin from her. He said he thought police officers stopped him because he had heroin in the car and he "panicked and sped off," the affidavit said.

He later confessed he was part of the barn burglary in Yamhill County, telling agents, "he was struggling real bad and needed money," the affidavit said.

He said he did not rob the U.S. Bank and told agents he tried to go to a thrift store nearby, realized it was closed, then left, the affidavit said.

Based on surveillance footage, agents believe Brockner is the bank robber and one of the men involved in the earlier barn burglary.

Brockner remains in custody on a U.S. marshal's hold, jail records showed Thursday afternoon.

Brockner has several prior convictions, court records show, including unauthorized use of a vehicle, first- and second-degree theft and several counts of heroin possession. He was also charged with first-degree identity theft, theft and forgery in April. He pleaded not guilty, court records show.

The Portland Tribune

PERS Task Force Solutions Have Uncertain Future

By Claire Withycombe/Capital Bureau
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Some proposals floated by the governor's task force involve substantial policy changes.

SALEM — A task force appointed by Gov. Kate Brown has come up with some early ideas for reducing the state's unfunded pension liability, but it's not yet apparent how far they could go.

Some proposals floated at the task force's most recent meeting Monday involve substantial policy changes, and Oregon's House Republican leader has already criticized certain proposals.

Brown, a Democrat, has asked the task force, which includes representatives from both the private and public sector, to reduce the unfunded actuarial liability of the Public Employees Retirement System by $5 billion.

The unfunded actuarial liability is the amount by which the pension system's future obligations exceed its ability to pay.

Most of the $24.2 billion unfunded liability has already been earned by public employees. According to a 2015 Oregon Supreme Court opinion, benefits already earned cannot be modified by the Legislature.

So the state must pay down most of that sum by cutting costs elsewhere in the budget or raising revenue.

Suggestions from the task force have included using some of the state's reserves and rethinking how certain parts of state government, such as educational institutions and the state's liquor control commission, are run or structured.

While some of the ideas task force members floated at the most recent meeting Monday involved reducing costs, such as consolidating some of the state's public universities and community

colleges, many ideas involved raising new revenue to help pay off the unfunded liability, such as a placing a surcharge on liquor or on certain state-issued licenses and permits.

Some of the ideas may require legislative approval, and indications are they may face some pushback. However, the task force has about two more months before its final report is due to Brown Nov. 1, and task force meeting materials note that "there is significantly more work to do between now and then."

The governor, in turn, is expected to choose which proposals to bring to the Legislature.

House Minority Leader Mike McLane, R-Powell Butte, voiced disapproval of some of the early proposals in a prepared statement.

McLane claimed the task force was signing on to a "myth" that the way to reduce the unfunded liability is by raising revenue and argued instead for having state employees contribute "their fair share toward their retirement accounts."

However, attempts at curtailing public employees' retirement benefits going forward stalled out during this year's legislative session, despite an early session effort by state senators on both sides of the aisle.

State Sen. Mark Hass, D-Beaverton, an advocate for revenue reform, said the state has already attacked the "low-hanging fruit" when it comes to PERS, such as in 2003, when the Legislature created a new tier of retirement benefits that were scaled back from the plans offered employees who had been hired earlier.

Hass did not comment on specific proposals from the governor's unfunded liability task force, but said he believes the unfunded liability problem could be addressed with tax reform.

Despite failure of revenue reform in the most recent session, he thinks with a different approach, "evening out" the tax code could allow the state to devote more money toward paying down the unfunded liability. In particular, Hass has been critical of the volatility of the income tax — the state's primary source of general fund revenue — and its property tax structure.

Hass pointed to this session's transportation package as an example of how an agreement on taxes could be reached: a bipartisan group of legislators hosted a series of public meetings across the state and ended up with policy proposals that weren't "conspicuous" back in 2015, when an attempt at a transportation package failed during that year's long session.

"When the transportation package in 2015 was on deck, it looked a lot different and actually less ambitious than the one we actually passed," Hass said.

Hass acknowledged differences between transportation and taxes — especially when it comes to public opinion. But Hass believes legislators recognize the obstacles in place, and that they are not "insurmountable" in the face of the unfunded liability issue.

"It doesn't mean we'll just throw up our hands and never fix it," Hass said.

Central City Concern, Business Look to Clean Up Portland's Eastside

By Andy Giegerich
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A leading social services provider and a noted Eastside business group have a plan to rid Portland neighborhoods of trash.

The Central Eastside Industrial Council and Central City Concern devised the CCC Clean Start PDX program, which Mayor Ted Wheeler touted on Wednesday. Central City added a fourth crew to what's apparently an ongoing pilot of the program.

The program dispatches crews, consisting of many workers who've experienced homelessness, to clean up litter, remove graffiti and work with homeless people living outdoors to help them keep their area clean. Residents can make requests for such services through the PDX Reporter app.

The idea is that the workers "develop relationships with homeless people in camps and offer to provide trash bags and regular clean-up schedules." It also serves as a six-month training program for "formerly homeless people re-entering the workforce."

The Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods is also involved with the project.

Juliana Lukasik, the Central Eastside Industrial Council's executive director, said the sides hope to find funding that would allow the program to expand.

"We are currently in a cycle of unprecedented growth and with the growth comes growing pains," she said in a release. "Finding sustainable solutions to issues around safety, graffiti abatement and district cleaning are extremely important for the future. But addressing those issues right now is critical. Central City Concern's nationally recognized programming is a perfect fit now and in the future."

The program could eventually provide a long-term Eastside counterpart to the Downtown Clean & Safe District program, which, enabled by Central City Concern, helps tidy 213 blocks in downtown Portland.