

## **The Oregonian**

# **Portland Approves Emergency Plan to Reduce Speeds on SE Stark Street**

*By Andrew Theen  
April 11, 2018*

Portland approved an emergency plan Wednesday to reduce by 5 mph the speed limit on a more than 50-block stretch of Stark Street in Southeast Portland.

Two of the city's 10 traffic fatalities this year happened between 109th and 162nd avenues on Stark. A 53-year-old pedestrian was struck and killed Feb. 1, and a 34-year-old motorist died Feb. 11.

The road has long been an area of concern. Two advocacy groups, Oregon Walks and the Rosewood Initiative, requested traffic changes February 7 and subsequently met with city leaders in March.

Leah Treat, Portland's transportation director, on Wednesday told the City Council the bureau will install or redesign four pedestrian crossings on Stark this year and set up red light and speed limit safety cameras at 122nd and 148th avenues.

"We have found that when we reduce the speed limit and have it backed up by an enforcement method," Treat said, "it's way more effective."

Drivers should notice 30 mph signs soon, down from 35 mph. New pedestrian beacons will be installed at 146th and 155th. Existing crossings will be redesigned at 151st and 160th with additional street lights to improve visibility. City crews have replaced the 160th beacon in the median three times because drivers plowed into it. Officials hope to install overhead crossing beacons there if possible.

The speed limit change, while deemed an "emergency," will only be effective for 120 days at the outset. Oregon Department of Transportation must approve a permanent speed limit change.

Treat said the city would immediately seek a permanent slowdown, calling the street one of Portland's 10 most dangerous for bikes, pedestrians and motorists. Portland can subsequently apply for a 120-day extension if state officials have not yet approved the reduction.

Transportation officials are also kick-starting plans to redesign Stark, which in that stretch of east Portland has bad lighting, long gaps for pedestrians and no median or bike lanes.

"The time is definitely right to address this and other major roadways," Treat said to council.

Stark is the latest street to see speed limits reduced. In 2017, Portland slowed down traffic on parts of Southeast Division Street and installed speed cameras. City leaders say those cameras are working to deter speeders.

Starting this month, Portlanders will see dozens of new billboards and advertisements plastered on the sides of buses across town urging drivers to slow down.

This month, the city also installed hundreds of new 20 mph signs on residential streets while simultaneously releasing an advertising blitz designed to warn drivers of the dangers of speeding.

Commissioner Dan Saltzman, who oversees the Transportation Bureau and introduced the emergency ordinance, thanked east Portland community groups like the Rosewood Initiative for bringing the issue to the council's attention.

Saltzman said the city is committed to its Vision Zero campaign, which strives to eliminate all traffic fatalities and injuries by 2025. The city highlighted Stark as a danger zone in its 2016 Vision Zero report and installed a pedestrian crossing beacon at one location that same year.

More speed limit reductions could be coming.

Saltzman said by reducing speeds from 40 to 30 mph, the likelihood of fatality is cut in half.

"One of the fundamental principles of Vision Zero is that traffic deaths are not just inevitable," he said, "we can reduce them and get them to zero."

## **Demonstrators Rally at Portland City Hall in Response to Homeless Shelter Shooting**

*By Mark Graves*

*April 11, 2018*

More than 50 people gathered at Portland City Hall Wednesday afternoon in response to the death of John Elifritz, 48, who was shot and killed by police at a Southeast Portland homeless shelter over the weekend. The rally, "Beds Not Bullets," was organized by Portland's Resistance and featured several speakers, including Portland City Council candidate Jo Ann Hardesty. Demonstrators called attention to the link between police violence and the homeless community.

## **The Portland Tribune**

### **Police Chief Orders Team to Halt Use of Active Gang List**

*By Jim Redden*

*April 12, 2018*

**Deputy DA, others push back, saying the new listings are needed to reduce increasing gang violence.**

Portland Police Chief Danielle Outlaw has directed her Gang Enforcement Team to stop maintaining a so-called secret list of active gang members.

However, Multnomah County Chief Deputy District Attorney Kristen Snowden and other law enforcement officials say the list is essential for reducing gang violence.

The list was first publicized in a city audit of the gang team released March 28. The Portland Auditor's Office said the police bureau had stopped maintaining a longtime list of known and suspected gang members and associates last year, at Mayor Ted Wheeler's direction. But according to the audit, the team had continued making a list of "most active gang members and associates" without telling the public.

"If the Police Bureau continues the most active list or other practices of collecting information on people's gang relationships, we recommend it should adopt a policy and put safeguards in place

to protect people's rights and the accuracy of the information. It should also address potential legal questions," the audit says.

Wheeler aide Berk Nelson announced Outlaw's directive at the biweekly meeting of the Community Peace Collaborative on Friday, April 5. Nelson read a statement from Wheeler who said he was "deeply disappointed" to learn the team was still maintaining such a list.

"A key question is whether the existence of the list is in conflict with my specific direction. Chief Outlaw shares my concerns. Last week she directed the bureau to immediately cease use of the list pending further discussion. I support Chief Outlaw's decision, and I trust the chief to come to a positive resolution," Nelson quoted Wheeler as saying.

But during a spirited discussion by the group about the list, Snowden strongly disputed the audit's description of the list and said it was needed to reduce gang shootings. Snowden said that unlike the previous list, it was not a membership list, but a list of suspects in recent shootings in Portland based on forensic evidence collected at the scene of the shootings, witness statements and tips from informants.

"The notion that it is a secret gang list, I categorically disagree with that description," said Snowden, explaining she was interviewed for the audit and objected to its description of the list.

According to Snowden, the team was using the list to build cases against specific suspects in gang-related shootings. In the meantime, after the suspects are identified, team members work to locate and arrest them for parole violations or other crimes, if possible.

"If we can't use a list like this, I don't know what we can do to reduce gang violence," Snowden said.

Other law enforcement officials at the meeting agreed with Snowden, including Brad Smith, a Multnomah County parole and probation supervisor who works with team members to locate the suspects on the list.

"We are targeting shooters, not gang sets," Smith said.

Some others at the meeting were still bothered by the idea of the list, noting that, according to the audit, everyone on it was African-American. Snowden replied that while there are other race-based gangs in the Portland region, only African-American gang members are routinely shooting at one another in public. The audit acknowledged the same point.

Even Kimberly Dixon, whose son, Andreas Jones, allegedly was murdered by a known gang member in 2013, questioned whether the city is following the right strategy to reduce gang violence.

"Put the freaking resources into the youths and families. Pay for bus passes, summer work experiences, and education opportunities for those being priced out of our community," she said to applause from much of the crowd.

According to the most recent team statistics, gang violence increased 45 percent in the first quarter of the year compared to the same period in 2017. Almost all of the cases investigated by the team are shootings, with multiple shots frequently exchanged between suspects. Police believe many are in retaliation for the shooting death of a gang member in January.

The Community Peace Collaborative is a public forum that meets every other week at North Precinct. It is overseen by the city's Office of Youth Violence Prevention and is regularly attended by law enforcement officials, social service workers, religious leaders, community activists and interested community members.

Find out more

You can read the audit that questions the list at: [tinyurl.com/yc96cskw](http://tinyurl.com/yc96cskw).

## **Wheeler: Russia May be Meddling in Portland Politics**

*By Jim Redden*

*April 11, 2018*

Mayors writes to the U.S. Department of Justice asking for an investigation into suspicious activity on Portland social media accounts, including his own.

Mayor Ted Wheeler isn't saying that Russia is meddling in Portland politics — but he's not say it isn't, either.

Wheeler wrote the U.S. Department of Justice on Tuesday asking that it investigate apparent fake social media accounts that appear design to "sow discord" in local politics in America, including Portland. Among other things, the letter cites fake followers of his official city Twitter and Facebook accounts who are suspiciously active on hot button political topics.

"[B]ased on the nature of some posts to city social media accounts and Russian propaganda accounts made publicly available, I believe it may be likley that Portland Twitter and Facebook accounts may have been, or currently are, being used by foreign conspirators in an attempt to sow political discord in our local politics in Portland," Wheeler wrote in the letter to Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein and Loren Cannon, the special agent in charge of the Portland FBI office.

According to Wheeler spokesman Michael Cox, the fake followers and suspicious activity was first noticed by a social media manager hired by the mayor's office last year. Cox says activity spiked during especially contentious events, such as the planning for the Patriot Prayer rally after the fatal attack on a MAX train by an alleged white supremacist.

"We're not saying Vladimir Putin is obsessed with Portland, but it's consistent with other activities reported about Russian meddling in U.S. politics," says Cox.

The letter cites similar activites in Special Counsel Robert Mueller's indictment Russians operating a so-called troll farm during the 2016 presidential election. Among other things, the indictment charges the Russian conspirators "[C]reated and controlled numerous Twitter accounts designed to appear as if U.S. persons or groups controlled them" to "[S]ow discord in the U.S. political system."

Cox says Rosenstein and Cannon did not immediately respond to the letter.

Wheeler has posted the letter on his city website. You can read it at [www.portlandoregon.gov/wheeler/article/679713](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/wheeler/article/679713).

## **Fish Campaign Unveils Website in Five Languages**

*By Jim Redden*

*April 11, 2018*

The previous record for a Portland campaign website was just two language, according to the Wednesday announcement.

Commissioner Nick Fish's reelection campaign unveiled a campaign website that can be read in five languages on Wednesday.

The site can be changed to be read in English, Chinese, Vietnamese, Russian and Spanish. According to the campaign, it is the first Portland campaign website that can be read in more than two languages.

"Accessibility is the foundation of democracy. I'm proud that Portland's many and diverse communities can visit my website and learn more — in their own language — about my work and my vision for Portland's future," Fish said in a press release announcing the site.

The campaign says the site is a response to Portland's changing population. The number of households where English is not the only or primary language is rapidly increasing.

For example, Portland Public Schools reports that approximately 16 percent of K through 12 students are learning English. The district says that an average of 64 different languages are spoken by their families.

The ratio of English learners is even higher in the Reynolds School District at 46 percent. The David Douglas School District has the second highest number of languages spoken in Portland — 42.

Anita Yap, Multicultural Collaborative Founder and a leader of the Jade International District in East Portland, says the new website is appreciated.

"Nick is deeply committed to welcoming New Portlanders to our community. By translating his campaign website into four languages, he is setting an important standard for other campaigns to follow," says Yap.

You can see the new website at [www.nickfishforportland.com](http://www.nickfishforportland.com).

## **Willamette Week**

### **Mayor Ted Wheeler Asked Citizens to Lobby for More Cops. We Asked Candidates to Say Yes or No.**

*By Rachel Monahan  
April 11, 2018*

**Our question: Do you support increasing the Portland Police Bureau's budget so the city can hire 93 more officers?**

This is a tough week to ask for more cops.

The Portland Police Bureau is asking City Hall for a budget increase to hire 93 more officers. That would mean cutting budgets elsewhere—probably from Portland Parks & Recreation.

The mayor is on board. On April 7, KOIN-TV reported that Mayor Ted Wheeler had recruited citizens to lobby for a larger police force.

That night, Portland police shot a shipyard worker who had entered a homeless shelter, allegedly waving a knife.

The shooting, of a man who appeared to be in mental crisis, has reignited questions about the Police Bureau's response to mental illness that is at the center of the city's legal settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice—and City Hall's oversight of the police.

WW asked candidates for the City Council how they would respond to the budget request.

Question: Do you support increasing the Portland Police Bureau's budget so the city can hire 93 more officers?

### **Position 3**

Andrea Valderrama

Leaning toward yes.

"When officers are overworked and over-exhausted, their ability to make sound, rational decisions decreases and the likelihood of implicit biases affecting decisions increases. However, increasing the PPB budget means raising taxes or cutting funding for the other general fund programs, primarily parks, housing and fire, and I need more information to support that shift in resources."

### **Stuart Emmons**

Yes.

"To do community policing for a city the size of Portland, we need police who are from the community, look like the communities they serve, with sufficient numbers to get to know the community and keep our community safe. We need to invest in training and mental health professionals, in demilitarizing our police force, and better community oversight, so our police do a much better job protecting and serving all of us, housed or unhoused."

### **Felicia Williams**

Yes.

"When people call 911, they have a right to expect an immediate and appropriate response. The current staffing shortages put us all at risk."

### **Loretta Smith**

[Note: After press deadlines, Smith's campaign spokesman Jake Weigler asked that her response be characterized as "yes, along with additional training" instead of "Not now," which is the answer that ran in the print edition of WW.]

Yes, along with additional training.

"I am in support of making investments in the hiring of more mental health crisis intervention specialists to support people who may be experiencing a mental health crisis, additional cultural competency and sensitivity training for our officers, so that the practice of disproportionate stops of our black and brown neighbors discontinue. After we've made these investments, I would support additional officers if the focus is on community policing."

### **Jo Ann Hardesty**

No.

"The DOJ investigation in 2012 showed Portland police use excessive force against persons with mental health issues. Since then, almost everyone killed by Portland police has had a mental health issue, so more money and training hasn't changed the outcome for community members.

"I don't believe they are understaffed. I believe they are poorly assigned and not held accountable for outcomes. We can't afford to continue to reward police for doing an inadequate job with the limited resources we have."

## **Position 2**

### **City Commissioner Nick Fish**

No.

"The independent budget office recommends hiring 14 new officers this year, but even that smaller number would mean tough cuts elsewhere. I believe in community policing and creative strategies to keep our neighborhoods safe and livable. But as a former parks commissioner, I do not support cuts to parks programs our families, children and seniors depend on."

### **Julia DeGraw**

No.

"Communities are safer when people have a home to live in, good-paying jobs, and fully funded schools. We should be investing more money in improving and supporting our communities, not policing them. The Portland police continue to use excessive force and disproportionately target black people and other marginalized communities."

### **Philip Wolfe**

No.

"I must stress that our public safety is in danger from police to begin with, and now, Ted wants to increase 100 more officers? No. Just...no. Not after the fact that Ted ordered anti-houseless laws which enable the police to do houseless sweeps, take away Village of Hope and criminalize houseless people. Why aren't we increasing social services? Why are we not housing the houseless? Why aren't we increasing mental health services?"

## **The Portland Mercury**

### **Protesters Demand Answers in the Shooting Death of John Elifritz**

*By Alex Zielinski*

*April 11, 2018*

Around 75 people met in front of City Hall this afternoon to protest the death of John Elifritz, a 48-year-old man who was reportedly in the midst of a mental health crisis when a group of Portland officers shot him to death Saturday, April 7. Elifritz died inside the Cityteam Ministries homeless shelter after he allegedly swung a knife at a police dog, but we're still waiting for an official investigation report from the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) of what caused officers to open fire.

"There is no reasonable explanation how a dozen well-trained professional police officers, who have all been trained in mental health intervention, would have made the decision that they made on Saturday," said Portland City Council candidate JoAnn Hardesty, addressing the crowd. Many in the group held handmade signs with messages like "Police the Police" and "Disarm Cops."

Jacob Quinones, a member of the Direct Action Alliance, noted that four of the twelve officers involved in Elifritz' shooting had numerous complaints against them, three of them for using excessive force against a person with a mental illness.

"This just keeps happening over and over again," Quinones said. "Why are they still on the force? When someone is a danger to the community, why do they keep sending them out to the community? It's a pretty easy problem to solve."

City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly was the only member of city council to come outside and watch the protest. Asked why, she replied: "I needed a breath of fresh air. These people are my constituents as much as anyone else in the city and I'm interested what they have to say."

Elifritz's death follows a recent budget request by Mayor Ted Wheeler's to add 93 more officers to the police force. To many, last weekend's shooting is a clear example why this shouldn't be Wheeler's priority.

"If the only answer that he has to the city's problems is to throw more men with guns at it, then that is a failure of leadership," said Juno Palente, representing the Democratic Socialists of America.

## **Gang Audit Has City Commissioners Questioning Mayor's Ask For More Officers**

*By Alex Zielinski  
April 11, 2018*

A recent audit of Portland's gang enforcement team has city commissioners questioning Mayor Ted Wheeler's request to add nearly one hundred new police officers to the force makes sense.

The audit, which we wrote about in March, details how Portland Police Bureau's gang enforcement team stops a disproportionate number of African American drivers for traffic violations, under the assumption the drivers could be involved in a gang. However, auditors weren't able to definitely say Portland's officers weren't profiling drivers by their race, since PPB hadn't been collecting the data needed to prove or disprove this. This audit was released alongside another showing that PPB was still keeping an informal list of active gang members, despite Wheeler's request to stop.

Wheeler called the audits' findings "deeply disappointing."

Meanwhile, Wheeler, whose office oversees the PPB, has been pushing to pass a city budget that funnels \$12.3 million toward PPB, in part to cover the salaries of 93 new sworn officers. In doing so, Wheeler's requested commissioners make substantive cuts to their bureaus before the total budget goes to a vote at the end of April. Right now that leaves three community centers, an invasive plant mitigation plan, a program that promotes civic engagement for older adults, and a full-time street sweeping service on the cutting board—among others.

Commissioners already aren't thrilled about making major cuts to their bureaus, but today's presentation about a mismanaged, problematic police program seemed to add fuel to the fire.

"Given the results of this audit, I'm not convinced that this is the best use of these existing resources," said Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, referring to Wheeler's budget ask. "While I am open to conversations around the police budget and staffing, I want to make sure that we are making the best use of our existing sworn officers."

Comissioner Amanda Fritz, who has been particularly vocal in opposing cuts to the Portland Parks Bureau (which she oversees), echoed Eudaly. "I'm not entirely convinced that increasing the number of patrol officers is necessary based on this audit," Fritz said.

Wheeler, however, saw the commissioners' doubt as a challenge.

"A quick vote as of this moment tells me I don't have support for increasing the police bureau budget, at all," said Wheeler, after hearing from his fellow commissioners on the dais. "So what I'm hearing is 'Make the case.' And I will rise to that challenge."

## **The Skanner**

### **Unite Oregon to Host People's Candidate Forum**

*April 11, 2018*

On Tuesday, April 17, Unite Oregon and co-sponsors CAUSA, Momentum Alliance, OPAL and Portland Harbor Community Coalition will host the People's Candidate Forum from 5:30 – 8:30pm at the PCC Cascade Moriarty Auditorium.

The forum, moderated by Ken Boddie (KOIN News 6) and Sharon Gary-Smith, will feature candidates for City Council Position 3 and County Commissioner District 2. We'll hear from candidates about issues impacting our communities and what plans they have for elected office. With so much at stake, Portland is facing increasing challenges in time of unprecedented growth for the Rose City. This year's election comes at a critical time as diverse communities confront a housing crisis, job insecurities, police accountability, immigrant issues, and education challenges in our schools.

**What:** Unite Oregon People's Candidate Forum

**Who:** Candidates for City Council Position 3 and County Commissioner District 2

**When:** Tuesday, April 17, 5:30-8:30 pm

**Where:** PCC Cascade Moriarty Auditorium, 5518 N. Albina Avenue, Portland, Oregon

**Moderators:** Ken Boddie and Sharon Gary-Smith