

The Oregonian

Portland Mayor Has 'Failed Miserably' As Police Commissioner, Police Union President Says

*By Everton Bailey Jr.
August 2, 2018*

The president of the Portland police union says Mayor Ted Wheeler has "failed miserably" as police commissioner by appearing to allow "personal, political bias" to influence his decisions on public safety services. The message comes a week after Portland police disbanded an encampment outside a federal immigration building.

In a statement Thursday on the Portland Police Association's Facebook page, Officer Daryl Turner said Wheeler can have personal political beliefs as mayor but not as police commissioner. Turner suggested a "trained, experienced, police executive" should be deciding daily policing decisions.

"Our officers protect our communities and enforce the law irrespective of personal, political beliefs," the statement said. "Perhaps that is a lesson for the Police Commissioner."

Wheeler's office didn't immediately respond to requests for comment.

The police union president's statement is the latest development since the clearing of a 38-day encampment protest outside the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Building in Portland on July 25.

Demonstrators camped out to protest the Trump administration's policy of separating migrant children from their parents at the U.S.-Mexico border. Federal officials closed the ICE building for eight days because of security concerns.

Three days after protesters began camping outside the federal building, Wheeler tweeted that the family separation policy was ill-conceived, that the Portland protest seemed peaceful and he didn't want Portland police "to be engaged or sucked into a conflict, particularly from a federal agency that I believe is on the wrong track."

Weeks later, Wheeler called for the protest to disband, saying he supported the cause but the encampment wasn't sustainable. Local police cleared people from the camp two days later.

On Monday, the union representing ICE employees sent a letter to Wheeler claiming he banned Portland police from responding to 911 calls from federal officers during the demonstrations. The union said it left employees vulnerable to threats of violence and harassment. Wheeler said the next day that he ordered no such policy.

On Wednesday, Portland Police Chief Danielle Outlaw said the police bureau told the Federal Protective Service during the protest that it would respond to their officers' emergency calls if their safety was at risk. Portland officers responded to 41 calls for service during the protest outside the ICE building, she said. Outlaw has previously said the bureau received a total of 76 calls during the encampment.

It's not clear why police didn't respond to the other 35 calls for service or what all the calls were for. Portland police made no arrests during the demonstration outside the federal building.

The police chief also said Wednesday that the bureau would review police reports and calls for service related to the encampment.

Turner, in the police union statement, said it would be "certainly problematic and cause for grave concern," if the review uncovers "flawed policy direction" from Wheeler.

Landlords Prep for New Fights with Portland City Hall, Oregon Legislature

By Gordon Friedman

August 3, 2018

Three powerful landlord groups have joined to run what they say must be an all-out multimillion-dollar campaign to stop the Portland City Council and the Oregon Legislature from enacting "radical" tenant protections they say would jeopardize their livelihoods.

That the gulf between landlords' desires and policymakers' plans is so wide reflects the tensions between tens of thousands of struggling renters around Oregon and the relatively few landlords that control their housing.

The landlord industry groups, which have banded together under the name More Housing Now!, laid out their intended strategy in a letter and four-page brochure aimed at getting participants onboard that was obtained by The Oregonian/OregonLive. The materials, which are unusual because of their unflinching frankness, call out by name Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler and Commissioner Chloe Eudaly as the industry's primary foes.

Michael Cox, Wheeler's chief of staff, said the mayor has "acted on many fronts" to boost housing availability. "But when it comes to their opposition to effective tenant protections, we couldn't disagree more," Cox said.

Eudaly was unavailable for comment. Marshall Runkel, her chief of staff, said "calling each other names and throwing mud at each other is not going to make anything better – on either side."

More Housing Now! claims a ban on criminal background checks of tenants and limits on security deposits will be foisted on landlords if they don't fight back. Policies in the same vein as those are under consideration and likely to be proposed in the coming months, said a staffer to a Portland commissioner. The city Rental Services Commission, which devises rental regulations, will discuss the proposals this month.

Outright rent control is unlikely to be proposed in the near term because it is banned statewide. Even if the Legislature lifted the ban, cities would be responsible for enacting their own rent control ordinances – and would likely face intense pressure from landlords not to do so.

The landlords' brochure takes pains to criticize the renter activists of Portland Tenants United, a group that was formed to help tenants oppose rent increases and evictions that has become known for its protests. The landlord group's handout asserts the tenant association "wields power over City Hall" and has "manipulated City Hall and the Legislature" into becoming anti-landlord. A message left with Portland Tenants United Thursday was not returned.

Lobbyists hired by More Housing Now! will "fight activists and bureaucracy in City Hall and the Legislature," the brochure goes on to declare. But to succeed, it says, "we need YOU and your financial support. Because your livelihood is at stake." The group seeks to raise \$2 million this year, the brochure states.

Industry groups formed More Housing Now! in 2017 to oppose a bill in the Legislature that would have allowed municipalities to enact rent controls. The bill ultimately faltered in the state Senate. That later dealt a costly blow to Sen. Rod Monroe, D-Portland, a longtime legislator and landlord who lost his May primary election in a landslide to an insurgent candidate who ran on a pro-housing platform.

The Monroe loss – and the 2016 election of Eudaly, a tenants' advocate – demonstrates that being too soft on renter protections holds political consequences in Oregon's most left-leaning parts. Yet More Housing Now! is pressuring policymakers to not ramp up their efforts to make renting easier, fairer or more tightly regulated.

One of the More Housing Now! documents, a June 8 letter by Portland developer Tom Brenneke, says that due to "threats surrounding our industry," landlords must launch a "consolidated effort to fight unnecessary and potentially crippling" regulations.

What Brenneke warned of: a landlord registry, additional property inspections, limiting security deposits, prohibiting criminal records checks of prospective tenants and a ban on landlords evicting tenants for no reason.

None of those concepts exist yet as proposed state legislation or city ordinance.

As a candidate, Eudaly was painted by landlords as extreme for supporting rent control. Since being elected, she has successfully secured a unanimous City Council vote to impose serious financial penalties for no-cause evictions and 10 percent rent hikes in Portland.

Brenneke was not available for comment Thursday. But his letter makes landlords' position clear: lawmakers' interest in enacting additional tenant protections is "very bad" for his industry.

"We must not allow them to go down this path," he wrote.

Patriot Prayer, Antifa to Face Off in Portland One Month After Brutal Riot

*By Shane Dixon Kavanaugh
August 2, 2018*

The street fights on June 30 fanned out across Southwest Second Avenue in downtown Portland as dueling protesters pummeled, stomped and struck one another.

Amid the melee, a masked left-wing activist suddenly charged Ethan Nordean, a supporter of the right-wing group Patriot Prayer, and attempted twice to hit him with a baton.

Nordean, a hulking 28-year-old from Washington, responded with a single punch that crumpled his adversary, leaving the man unconscious.

The moment, captured on video, encapsulated what activists and observers say was the most violent clash in 18 months of tumultuous street protests in Portland, one that police declared a riot.

Footage of the beatdown has been used in the weeks since to energize right-wing activists nationwide and recruit them to attend Patriot Prayer's next event here.

Nordean and his comrades will return to Portland on Saturday, ostensibly to attend another "freedom march" organized by Joey Gibson, the group's leader and a Republican candidate for U.S. Senate in his home state of Washington.

And that could mean trouble.

Gibson has said he expects an array of out-of-town backers, whom he will escort to Tom McCall Waterfront Park in buses outfitted with armed security guards.

Some participants at his rally and march may be allowed to bring firearms. Others have spoken openly online about gearing up for battle.

Those active in the movement nationwide say it may become the largest right-wing demonstration in the U.S. this year.

The gathering, like others led by Gibson, will face a contingent of counter-protesters, who believe those who participate in Patriot Prayer events pose a threat to vulnerable members of their community.

"One thing we all have in common is our opposition to white supremacy, transphobia and homophobia," said Effie Baum, a spokesperson with Popular Mobilization, which formed with the sole purpose of mobilizing counter-protesters for Saturday.

The group's teamed up with local activist groups to organize phone banks, run public service announcements on KBOO radio and churn out a series of promotional fliers and online videos to urge people to participate.

Organizers said they hope to draw as many as 1,000 people to City Hall mid-morning, with plans to then march to the Patriot Prayer rally on the waterfront.

The goal, organizers said, is to create a broad coalition of progressive Portlanders, union members and social justice activists to augment the presence of the black-clad antifascists, or antifa, who have forcefully confronted Gibson and his followers during their events.

"When we show up en masse, we have a much better chance of preventing violence," Baum said.

How the demonstrations unfold will hinge in large part on the tactics employed by the Portland Police Bureau to provide public safety and protect the First Amendment rights of participants.

Over the last year, the bureau has vacillated between having a heavy police presence aimed at keeping rival protest groups at arm's length and taking a more hands-off approach as factions sometimes came to blows in the streets.

"There's no cookie cutter response to these things," Chief Danielle Outlaw, who became Portland's top cop in October, told The Oregonian/OregonLive in June.

A Portland police spokesman said he would not provide details until Friday.

Gibson says his last-minute changes to Sunday's march and rally is to keep his supporters out of harm's way. But the move is also squarely focused on out-maneuvering antifascist activists, or antifa, who have turned up to protest his public events.

Cities across the U.S. have seen street clashes and skirmishes erupt between right- and left-wing groups since Donald Trump entered the White House. Portland has emerged as one of the most contested centers, thanks in part to Gibson, a Vancouver house flipper turned political provocateur.

Propelled into activism by Trump's presidential campaign, he has repeatedly marched people into Portland under the premise of promoting patriotism, Christianity and freedom, causes Gibson and other conservatives have accused the liberal city of being intolerant toward.

Yet the political message that Gibson and his supporters claim to espouse has been eclipsed by their apparent interest in drawing counter-protesters into physical confrontations. Helmets and body armor have appeared at Patriot Prayer events with as much regularity as American flags and red Make America Great Again baseball hats.

Gibson has been criticized because his demonstrations have also attracted white nationalists and others who promote racist or bigoted views, including Jeremy Christian, the man accused of murdering two men aboard a MAX train after he launched into an anti-Muslim rant last year.

Even as the Patriot Prayer leader moved to denounce racists, some have continued to participate in his events. Members of white supremacist groups such as Identity Evropa and Stormers PDX have attend rallies held by Gibson in Portland in the last nine months.

Newly surfaced video shows that Micah Fletcher intervened in a confrontation involving Jeremy Christian at a protest in April.

Gibson has also faced criticism for his affiliation with members of the Proud Boys, whose profile has risen in recent months. Founded by conservative writer and political commentator Gavin McInnes, the group bills itself as a street-fighting "pro-Western fraternal organization."

Members have also made regular appearances alongside Gibson at his rallies in the Portland area. A number of them, outfitted in yellow and black Fred Perry polo shirts, have tangled with counter-protesters, throwing punches and drawing blood.

Among them is Nordean, who is widely known by his nom de guerre Rufio Panman — a reference to a character in "Hook," a film about Peter Pan and his Lost Boys.

"They glorify violence and are prepared to engage in it," said Heidi Beirich, a deputy director with the Southern Poverty Law Center, which monitors right-wing groups across the U.S.

To be clear, some antifascist activists do not shy away from the fight.

A spokesman for Rose City Antifa, a prominent antifascist group in Portland, said its members physically confront their political opponents in the streets as a means to keep others in the city out of harm's way.

"We make no apologies for the use of force in keeping our communities safe from the scourge of right-wing violence," said the spokesman, who identified himself only by his first name David.

Members of the loosely-organized group often shield their identity to avoid becoming targets of law enforcement or political opponents.

Despite concerns over the ongoing clashes, the city has indicated it's unwilling to intervene. Mayor Ted Wheeler received widespread condemnation last year when he tried to derail a pro-Trump rally organized by Gibson only days after the fatal MAX train stabbing.

Police arrested 14 people at the event, which remained relatively peaceful despite drawing several thousand people to protest against it.

Since the June 4, 2017 demonstration, Patriot Prayer has held nine other official marches or demonstrations in Portland, nearly all of them drawing police and counter-protesters.

"It's no secret that I'm no fan of the people from Vancouver who come down here and spout their venom," Wheeler said of Gibson and his supporters in a recent interview with The Oregonian/OregonLive.

Still, the mayor conceded the clashes would likely continue. "It's a no-win. It's managing the situation best we can with the resources we have."

Gibson, meanwhile, has ramped up his personal insults against Wheeler, publicly calling the mayor a "hypocrite" and a "liar" and blaming him, in part, for the violence at his rallies.

In recent weeks, the Patriot Prayer leader has also broadened his attacks to include Portland itself.

"It's one of the most hateful, darkest towns in the country," he said in an online video published in late June. "It's time to bring something good to a city that's so bad."

The next day, Gibson and several dozen supporters — many of whom traveled from outside the Northwest — arrived in downtown Portland by bus to hold a rally and march.

Portland police declared the event a riot after tensions between Patriot Prayer supporters and local anti-fascist activists came to a head and violence erupted. Officers deployed flash bangs and other crowd deterrents when Patriot Prayer demonstrators and counter-protesters came to blows mere blocks from the heart of downtown.

Portland Police declared Saturday's marches by right-wing group Patriot Prayer and local anti-fascist groups a riot in downtown Portland and began making arrests as violence broke out.

At various points, groups of men charged counter-demonstrators in response to provocations. In one instance, a several surrounded a man on the ground, repeatedly stomping him.

Nine people were arrested. At least a half-dozen wound up in the hospital.

"The street violence I saw on June 30 was the worst I have seen at any event since Charlottesville," said Jason Wilson, a journalist with The Guardian, a British-based publication.

Wilson has covered multiple protests in the U.S., including the one in the Virginia college town last summer that ended when police say a white nationalist drove a car into a group of counter-protesters, killing one of them.

But the melee in Portland has also galvanized many right-wing activists. Footage of Nordean's knockout punch quickly morphed into viral video clips gleefully shared by conservative news outlets and thousands of supporters on social media.

Rufio Panman became an instant internet meme.

Alex Jones, a conspiracy theorist and host of provocative news show InfoWars, flew Nordean to Austin last month for an in-studio interview about the infamous punch. The beat down was also celebrated by McInnes, who had the young man on his popular internet talk show.

"Major wars, major events can pivot on the slightest thing," McInnes said. "This entire war has just changed and it's all because of this unbelievable punch. The greatest punch in the history of Trump's presidency."

Gibson has also not shied away from touting the video. In a Facebook Live video this week, he referred to Nordean as a "national hero," one who was inspiring others to turn out for Saturday.

Beirich of the Southern Poverty Law Center said that Proud Boys chapters from around the country were in fact responding to Gibson's call for action.

"This weekend is starting to look like the biggest rally of the year that the far-right will hold," she said. "It could be combustible."

The Portland Tribune

City Throws in Towel on 'Rain Tax,' Offers Rebates to Houseboat Owners

*By Steve Law
August 2, 2018*

Bureau of Environmental Services vows to find a new, fairer way to bill residents for supporting the citywide storm drainage system.

The city of Portland is abandoning a controversial utility billing method that houseboat owners decried as an effort to "tax the rain" falling on their rooftops and decks.

The Bureau of Environmental Services announced this week that it expects to exempt houseboat moorages from paying higher stormwater fees, and grant rebates for past overpayments. BES's proposal would eliminate \$260,000 in annual stormwater fees assessed on floating home complexes, and require rebates of \$580,000 for the past three to five years of payments.

As an alternative, BES will conduct a broad review of how it sets utility rates in the next two to three years, said Mike Jordan, agency director.

"We are gratified and we are jubilant that they came to the realization that this was not right, and they are willing to give us our money back," said Ron Schmidt, a Jantzen Beach houseboat owner who led protests against the stormwater billing change. He's president of Waterfront Organizations of Oregon, which represents about 1,000 households living in various houseboat communities.

Formal appeals of the higher fees by 18 houseboat moorages, which were put on hold after the controversy erupted, can proceed, Jordan said — though he hopes those are now moot.

"We hope that our interim and long-term approach to this will get them what they are looking for on appeal," he said.

Fuzzy math

At issue is how the city charges property owners for the city's network of pumps, pipes and other equipment that handles water draining onto city streets and ultimately into the Willamette and Columbia rivers. Roughly 40 percent of the average BES bill is to manage stormwater; the rest is for sanitary sewers. About a third of the stormwater fee is based on water falling on an individual property and draining into the streets. About two-thirds pays for citywide services.

The city now bases onsite and offsite stormwater fees on the square footage of "impervious surfaces" — rooftops, roads and other hard surfaces that don't absorb rainfall and cause it to flow onto city streets.

In 2015, the Vigor ship repair company and houseboat moorages noticed that BES changed its methodology for measuring those impervious surfaces, by adding docks over the water, decks, moorage walkways and the rooftops of houseboats. Houseboat owners said that was ridiculous because rain water simply falls into the nearby river where they are docked, not entering the city's vast system for handling storm water.

Most houseboat communities are exempted from paying an onsite stormwater fee for that reason, but adding to the square footage of their impervious surfaces caused the offsite portion of their fee to double, triple or quadruple.

Vigor appealed the new billing method to the BES Administrative Review Committee, which ruled in late 2017 that the agency lacked the authority to change the definition of impervious surface administratively, and Vigor won a rebate. Eighteen houseboat moorages then filed their own appeals.

In response, BES submitted its proposed new billing method to the City Council as an ordinance in January. Floating home owners mobilized to protest.

Fairness questions

BES and two environmental lobbyists, along with Mayor Ted Wheeler, said houseboat owners were trying to get out of paying their fair share to maintain the citywide storm drainage system.

But after the outcry, Commissioner Nick Fish, who oversees BES, withdrew the ordinance, and the bureau conducted three "listening sessions" with houseboat residents.

A Portland Tribune analysis published Feb. 15 found widespread inequities in residential fees for offsite storm drainage, even though every resident benefits equally from protecting our streets and rivers from flooding.

The rate for single-family homes is ostensibly based on impervious surface at each house, but the city simply assumes every home has the same square footage and charges a uniform \$18.60 a month. Schmidt finds it unfair that owners of West Hills mansions wind up paying the same as owners of modest East Portland bungalows.

By doubling, tripling or quadrupling the rates for floating homes, BES wound up charging roughly \$16 to \$26 a month for each households, in the same range or higher than the regular single-family rate.

But the biggest inequity is when it comes to those living in apartments and condos. A Portland Tribune review of utility bills found tenants in sprawling low-rise apartment complexes are billed at about \$2 to \$3 a month. Those in highrise apartments in condos pay less, about 61 cents to \$1 a month, based on a sample of bills provided under a public records request.

The smaller rates for apartments and condo towers are because they have less space in parking garages, sidewalks and other impervious surfaces per person — though those residents benefit equally from the citywide storm drainage system.

Changes in the works

The controversy "has catalyzed a conversation about the equity of this situation," Jordan said. Changing city development patterns, including the construction of more highrise apartments and condos, has raised questions about whether the city's billing methods are equitable, he says.

Most cities around the country still use the impervious surface method to assess storm drainage fees, said Jonas Biery, BES business services manager.

But that dates back more than 20 years, when the new utility fees were devised by municipalities as a way to collect money for expensive storm drainage systems. If cities had instead charged the same amount per-capita, that could be deemed a tax and not a utility fee. Then it might be subject to Oregon's property tax limitations and more easily understood — and overturned — by voters.

Jordan said he didn't want to presuppose what billing methods the city will use after it hires consultants to help with the rate review, but promised the stormwater fee will be revisited.

Impervious surface area might remain as one of multiple factors, Biery suggested.

Another option is to borrow from what's used to assess transportation-related fees on development — measuring the impact each site has on the road system, since that's where rain water accumulates.

"We might look at trip generation as a possible way to allocate this off-site fee," Jordan said.

City leaders strongly agrees that everyone should pay for the storm drainage system, he said. The question is how to charge for it fairly.

What's next?

The Bureau of Environmental Services expects to present its new plan in the form of an ordinance to the City Council in September.

"I'm confident it will pass," said Mike Jordan, bureau director.

In Turnaround, City Decides to Renew Uber's Right to Operate Here For Just Six Months

*By Steve Law
August 2, 2018*

After facing criticism for prematurely taking Uber off probation, Portland Bureau of Transportation says it was its plan all along to extend Uber permit six months instead of a year.

In an abrupt change of course, the city of Portland has renewed Uber's permit to operate in the city for only six months, instead of the customary one year.

Just two weeks ago, Matt Grumm, chief of staff to city transportation commissioner Dan Saltzman, told the Portland Tribune that Uber's permit would be extended a full year when it expired Aug. 1 because the company had "basically been good actors the past six months."

Saltzman had levied a whopping \$3,457,000 fine against Uber on Jan. 29 for failing to notify the city of a potential data security breach after Uber's driver records were hacked. That came after the San Francisco-based company began service illegally in Portland in December 2014, without city approval, then deployed Greyball software to thwart city regulators' efforts to monitor the company.

"Uber has had a difficult relationship with the city of Portland dating back to December 2014," Saltzman wrote in his letter issuing the fine. Around the same time, he leveled a warning against Uber by renewing its operating permit only six months instead of a year.

In March, Dave Benson, the Portland Bureau of Transportation's parking services group manager who regulates Uber, said renewing its permit for six months "allows the fine to play itself out."

But Uber appealed that fine and has not yet paid a penny of it.

So it was somewhat surprising when Grumm said in late July that Uber would get a full year's extension. In effect, that would amount to taking the company off probation.

The Tribune's July 19 article relaying Grumm and PBOT's original plan to extend the Uber operating permit for a year included critical remarks from Commissioner Nick Fish, perhaps Uber's biggest critic on the City Council.

"I think it's way too premature to extend the operating agreement by a year," Fish said at the time. In the past, he added, council critics of Uber have had to "push pretty hard to get PBOT to step up on these issues."

John Brady, PBOT communications director, confirmed Thursday that Uber's permit was renewed effective August 1 for six months and not a year. Brady insisted that was always the agency's intention, so nothing had changed.

Grumm could not be reached for comment.

Fish said Thursday he wasn't told why PBOT reversed course, but he welcomed the decision.

"I'm delighted to hear it's only six months," he said. That could give city commissioners time to work with a new transportation commissioner in renegotiating terms of Uber's operating agreement with the city, Fish said.

In May, the City Council voted unanimously to create a new "oversight body" to vet Uber and Lyft driver complaints about working conditions, among other issues, and to raise the liability insurance Uber and Lyft carry to the same level paid by taxis. In both cases, the council directed PBOT to prepare formal policies for the council to adopt by year end.

The mandate to report back by year end was depicted as a way to assure Saltzman has a key role in reviewing such proposals, because he is leaving his post in January.

But Mayor Ted Wheeler may announce new bureau oversight assignments for city commissioners as soon as Monday, and scuttlebutt at City Hall suggests he may appoint Commissioner Chloe Eudaly to oversee the transportation bureau, in place of Saltzman.

Uber's regional spokesman in Seattle, Nathan Hambley, declined an interview on the latest twist at City Hall, but issued a statement via email.

"We're pleased our permit has been renewed in Portland. We look forward to continue serving our customers there — both driver partners and riders — and being a partner to the city," Hambley wrote.

One informed source said Uber doesn't mind being renewed for just six months, because that puts it on the same operating license renewal schedule next February with its main competitor, Lyft, as well as regular taxi companies.

"We didn't take Uber's sentiments into account in deciding when to extend," said Brady, the PBOT spokesman.

Police Union Blasts Wheeler After ICE Protest Reaction

*By Jim Redden
August 3, 2018*

Labor leader says the mayor has failed as police commissioner by allowing political bias to influence decisions.

Portland police union president Daryl Turner says Mayor Ted Wheeler has "failed miserably" as police commissioner.

Turner posted a statement on the Portland Police Association website Thursday saying there is no place for "political bias" in day-to-day policing decisions. Although not mentioned specifically, the statement was posted days after Wheeler defended his previous decision to keep

police away from the demonstration outside the Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility in Southwest Portland.

The union representing ICE employees has accused Wheeler of preventing police from responding to their calls for assistance during confrontations with protesters. In a letter of response, Wheeler said police were not prohibited from responding to 911 calls, but added he "consistently stated that I did not want the Portland Police Bureau to be engaged or sucked into a conflict for the purpose of securing federal property that houses a federal agency with their own federal police force."

Wheeler has repeatedly said he supported the purpose of the protest but not the camp that formed adjacent to the facility.

During a previous meeting with the Portland Tribune editorial board, Wheeler said there were occasional conflicts between his roles as mayor and police commissioner. He said they were the result of Portland's unique form of government, where the members of the council also oversee city bureaus. Mayors have traditionally assigned the police to themselves.

Here is the complete text of Turner's statement:

As police officers, our primary responsibility and duty is public safety; to ensure our city is a safe place to live, work, and raise a family. If someone calls for help and police are dispatched, we respond, without regard to who you are or where you are from. It makes no difference whether you are a soccer mom, an off-duty police officer, a CEO, or homeless; if you need our help, it is our responsibility to be there.

We appreciate the words of support from Chief Outlaw and continue to look to her for operational guidance on important policing matters. It should be self-evident that a trained, experienced, police executive should be making important, day-to-day policing decisions for our communities and our organization. There is no place for personal, political bias when it comes to providing public safety services to our communities. In that respect, our Mayor, who is also our Police Commissioner, has failed miserably.

As Mayor, Mr. Wheeler can certainly have his own personally held political beliefs. In contrast, as Police Commissioner, he must set his personal political beliefs aside and ensure public safety is his top priority. Politics have no place in the operations of the Portland Police Bureau. If Chief Outlaw's review reveals flawed policy direction from the Mayor/Police Commissioner that includes selective enforcement of our laws, that is certainly problematic and cause for grave concern.

Our Officers protect our communities and enforce the law irrespective of personal, political beliefs. Perhaps that is a lesson for the Police Commissioner.

Daryl Turner, President

Portland Police Association

The Portland Mercury

What To Expect From Saturday's Patriot Prayer Rally

By Alex Zielinski

August 2, 2018

It's another month in Portland, meaning there's yet another planned Patriot Prayer event coming to downtown. I know what you're thinking: Fun!

This time around, the Vancouver, Washington-based alt-right group is crossing the Columbia River Saturday, August 4, to hold an afternoon campaign rally on Portland waterfront for the group's leader, Joey Gibson. Gibson is running to represent Washington in the US Senate. Inexplicably, he's decided to hold a campaign rally in Oregon, surrounded by people who legally cannot vote for him. This conundrum exposes what's probably the real purpose of the Saturday march: To yell at people who don't agree with their beliefs, and maybe punch a few of 'em in the process.

It's not just speculation—Patriot Prayer has an extensive history of showing up in Portland on shaky pretenses to do just that. The group's events have regularly attracted violent white supremacists, like the man who fatally stabbed two men on a MAX train last May.

Gibson's right-wing rallies in the notoriously liberal bubble of Portland have begun to attract riled-up alt-righters from across the country. Patriot Prayer members have claimed that a number of supporters are "flying in" to participate in Saturday's protest. More than 300 people have indicated they're attending on Gibson's Facebook event page. The threats and hateful messaging around this particular event prompted the Southern Poverty Law Center to dangerously dub the event the "next Charlottesville."

Meanwhile, Portlanders who oppose Patriot Prayer's alt-right ideals (read: anti-immigration, anti-LGBT, pro-guns, pro-Trump, etc. etc.) have again organized to protest the noon march. As always, those who identify as anti-fascists, or antifa, have pledged to fight Patriot Prayer's expected violence with more violence—with the intention of protecting Portland from right-wing extremism. But in Portland, it's unclear if that response works—proven by the increasing number of visits by the ever-growing faction of Patriot Prayer-ers. It appears that for Patriot Prayer, violence only attracts more violence. Another group, named Popular Mobilization (POPMOB) plans on holding a rally Saturday morning in front of city hall for those who may not be interested in joining the potentially violent counter-protest—but want to speak out against Patriot Prayer's invasion.

If Saturday's event goes according to plan, we're bracing for another messy clash.

Here are a few other things to know going into this weekend's protest:

- Patriot Prayer might be armed. But it's not necessarily newsworthy. After rumors flared about Patriot Prayer bringing guns to the Saturday rally, Gibson said that his followers always bring guns to their rallies. And if they have an Oregon Concealed Handgun License (CHL), armed protesters aren't breaking the law. Update: According to an interview with OPB's Amelia Templeton, Gibson will not be armed, since he doesn't have a CHL for Oregon. He's "not sure" if the hundreds of other people coming to his event from out-of-state are aware of that law.

- All eyes are on the Portland police. In the midst of a debate over whether or not Mayor Ted Wheeler kept Portland officers from assisting federal immigration officials during the Occupy ICE protests, city riot cops will likely be on high alert during Saturday's protest (especially since

federal police often partner with them for large protests). And with Portland Police Bureau's history of unconstitutional responses to these types of protests, legal observers with the ACLU and/or the National Lawyer's Guild will be watching.

- Alex Jones probably won't show up. But, since he did talk to a number of alt-right folks about making an appearance, Jones (the InfoWars conspiracy theorist behind the disgusting "Sandy Hook parents were paid actors" hypothesis) may weirdly appear. We doubt it. However, we don't doubt that his rumored appearance has increased the event's popularity across the country.

- The city probably won't revoke Patriot Prayer's permit to protest. One of the largest demands from Portlanders tired of Patriot Prayer storming our city is for Mayor Wheeler to revoke the permits that grant the group the right to protest on city property. But, according to Portland Bureau of Transportation spokesperson Dylan Rivera, past litigation has the city's hands tied. In the past, the city's only revoked a permit when a protest or march has become violent. It's not a fun waiting game.