

## **The Portland Mercury**

# **Business Organization Lobbies to Expand Private Security Patrols in the Central Eastside**

*By Catie Gould  
January 24, 2019*

It was two in the morning and pouring down rain when Michael was told to pack up her home and move.

She was camping in the courtyard of St. Francis church at SE 12th and Pine, a space that's regularly occupied by houseless Portlanders.

"It's just one thing after the other," she said, wiping her eyes as she recalled the encounter. Michael, who asked the Mercury only use her first name, says her belongings have been lost—or destroyed—by police in the past. Last month during a sweep, the Portland native lost her cookstove and food, and is still missing her dentures.

But this time, it was not police harassing her, but private security guards paid with public parking dollars.

Every night since August 2018, a security guard has patrolled a five block radius around St. Francis Catholic Church, a regular community hub for Portland's homeless population living in the Central Eastside. The security guards are part of a temporary pilot program organized by the Central Eastside Industrial Council (CEIC), an organization comprised of people who own or run businesses in the area bordered by the Willamette River, SE 12th, Powell Ave, and I-84.

The guards' goal: To improve the so-called "livability" of the district. Or, according to the CEIC's annual budget, addressing "a substantial increase in the number of camps, campers and, at times, people with disruptive behavior that are creating a growing sense of insecurity to businesses, employees, residents and users of the district."

Homeless Portlanders and houseless advocates believe the CEIC's efforts are misguided. To them, the security program and other projects prioritized by CEIC are simply thinly-veiled attempts to push homeless Portlanders out of their neighborhood.

"I feel like they just want me to give up," Michael says, referring to the constant policing. "It's my neighborhood too."

The Portland City Council is poised to approve a new plan that would allow this security team to become a permanent fixture across the entire Central Eastside—and forfeit public oversight in the process.

Since passing a sweeping Parking Management Plan in 2012, the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) has allowed the CEIC to address the difficulty of finding parking in its district, and ultimately discourage car traffic, through a combination of parking meters and parking permits.

PBOT lets the group raise permit fees and meter prices to make parking increasingly expensive in their neighborhood if they use those funds to improve the alternatives to driving, like bike lanes, sidewalks, and public transportation options. The security program doesn't obviously fit into those categories.

The CEIC justified the program in their latest budget saying that people reportedly felt unsafe in the Central Eastside walking to public transit, and dim lighting, sidewalk trash, and graffiti were to blame. These issues could be addressed, the CEIC argued, with a security patrol. The CEIC declined to be interviewed for this story.

Earlier this month, Portland City Council passed new regulations on how, exactly, these parking funds could be used to support transportation alternatives. Multiple items from the CEIC's budget, like graffiti removal and private security, are absent from the list.

Juliana Lukasic, a CEIC consultant, testified during the council hearing that preceded the January 9 vote. "The Central Eastside is an example of the broader use of a permit surcharge," she said. "We have used it to promote cleanup and safety on our right of ways."

Her testimony sparked several clarifying questions from city commissioners. "I'm confused," said Commissioner Amanda Fritz. "It doesn't seem to me that this is an allowable use of surcharge money."

But, since the CEIC is already two years into a five year agreement with PBOT, the organization doesn't have to adhere to the new rules. And it's hoping to keep it that way.

The CEIC is striving to gain total control of how it patrols and polices its neighborhood. On January 30, Portland City Council will hear CEIC's pitch for an Enhanced Services District (ESD), a program that would require property owners pay into a private fund for "neighborhood improvement programs". One of those programs includes a security team to "document and address crime" across the entire Central Eastside. Since the funds are private, and not gathered through parking fees, they don't have to align with the new city regulations.

Part of CEIC's initial goal is working. A recent parking study funded by the CEIC showed that even during the busiest time of the day, curbside parking in the Central Eastside has dropped from 88.7 percent in 2016 to 78 percent in 2018—well below the city's target rate of 85 percent.

It's less clear how the funds collected from this program are being used. In 2015, the CEIC added a \$10 surcharge on top of the \$60 charged by the city for an annual parking permit. That initial surcharge allowed the CEIC to collect parking data and hire a part-time employee to oversee the program. The surcharge has been raised every year since, now up to \$240 per year, and the CEIC now oversees a \$1.4 million annual revenue stream.

In its 2019 budget, the CEIC reported that it had \$700,000 in unused funds from the prior year. A public records request for expenditures only turned up invoices for a handful of expenses like administrative staff, the security pilot program, and the seldom used shuttle that the Mercury reported on in August.

Sixteen percent of the CEIC budget goes toward PBOT's "transportation wallet," a program that incentivizes alternatives to driving by offering TriMet, Portland Streetcar, and Biketown passes to people who work in the Central Eastside, in lieu of a parking permit.

But more than double that—at 39 percent of the CEIC budget—goes to programs that includes the private security pilot project, a new graffiti removal program, and funding for Central City Concern's Clean and Safe, a program that currently works to removes trash and graffiti from downtown Portland and pays security officers to patrol sidewalks.

Sandra Comstock, a homeless advocate with Right 2 Survive, doesn't think these programs are an effective use of public funds.

“Businesses in the Central Eastside think they can solve our broken system through additional private police and cleaning forces that replicate the confiscation of life-sustaining items,” she says. “We think that's the wrong approach.”

That's why Comstock has joined a coalition of advocacy groups who drafted an alternative roadmap for CEIC's parking fee-funded programming, and are trying to build support to turn the CEIC district into a “Compassionate Change District”. Instead of paying for more security, the proposal suggests funding programs that provide vital services to the houseless community, such as a waste collection program, additional public bathrooms, and designated camping and parking areas where homeless residents can safely spend the night.

The proposal is meant to be an alternative to the CEIC's pitch for the ESD.

The CEIC, meanwhile, is investing in the ESD's success. From August to November, the CEIC spent more than \$37,000 of parking funds on consultant fees, informational mailers, and a catered rooftop party in September. If passed, the ESD is expected to raise \$1.2 million annually for the CEIC.

“We stand at a crossroads,” Comstock said about the upcoming ESD council vote. Advocates for the Compassionate Change District are still looking for a seat at the table, and are asking for a governance structure that includes representatives from the entire community. City officials are listening.

This evening, staff from Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty's office will present a proposal that takes ideas from both the ESD and Compassionate Change District during Right 2 Survive's monthly meeting. The potential tweaks to the CEIC plans are expected to reflect Hardesty's support of Portland's houseless community. The meeting will take place at Sisters of the Road at 5 pm.

“Until we start creating policies that allow people to live somewhere,” Comstock said, “nothing is going to change.”

## **The Portland Business Journal**

### **How Oregon Works: A Roadmap to Building a More Diverse Workforce**

*By Andy Geigerich*

*January 24, 2019*

Building a diverse workforce requires planning, investment and, most of all, intention. It is hard work, and it doesn't happen quickly. An understanding about the root causes of inequity is important, as is a recognition that a diverse workforce isn't always an equitable one. Buy-in from senior management is a must. Without that, achieving a diverse employee population, is nearly impossible. Fortunately, a new school of thought on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion has emerged, providing a roadmap for companies that are serious about the issue. Serilda Summers-McGee is chief human resources officer for the city of Portland and principal with Workplace Change, a consultancy that helps clients assess workplace culture and recruit underrepresented executives and employees. Clients have included PGE, Providence Health, Miller Nash, Oregon Health & Science and University, Lever Architecture, the Portland Business Alliance and

Friends of the Children. We put a few questions to Summers-McGee in hopes of clearing your path to a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

**Why is it important to create a diverse workplace?** It's important to diversify organizations throughout the ranks because it makes for a more welcoming environment for all. People will feel a connection and a level of safety in the workplace if they see other people who look like them. More important, a diverse employee population provides a variety of voices and perspectives, making a stronger organization. This is especially true if people feel their opinions are equally heard, they have equal access to promotions and stretch assignments, and they are provided a comparable amount of supervision and discipline to others. There are many companies that have diversified to realize the bottom-line benefits of having a diverse workforce, but they don't establish inclusive practices, which leads to high turnover, employee dissatisfaction, and poor performance. Having a diverse workforce is about more than strengthening a company's bottom line by having diverse perspectives, more creativity, and nibble responses to business challenges and opportunities. Yes, having diversity, if managed well, can lead to bottom-line advantages, but that should not be the primary reason why leaders are diversifying their organizations.

**Any examples of how well it's worked at the city?** The City of Portland had, at one time, eight bureau director vacancies. My recruitment team and I recommended to City leadership that we centralize the recruitment and selection process, which would ensure we had high quality, diverse applicant pools for each of the recruitments. We could also provide short time lines, inclusive community engagement, and a positive candidate experience. BHR ran this process in-house with a very diverse workforce (10 total HR employees, 70 percent women, and 80 percent people of color). BHR has held 26 community focus groups with 134 people participating in those sessions. Our total applicant pools were 50 percent executives of color, and 35 percent female executives. Our aggregate finalists were 54 percent executives of color and 46 percent female executives. We currently have three more executive recruitments as part of the pilot process, and we were confident that we will realize similar success with those recruitments. If it were not for our very diverse recruitment and operations teams, I believe we would not have had so many highly skilled, underrepresented executives participate in our recruitment processes and make it to the finalist level.

**What resources in Portland are available to help enable more inclusion?** Good Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts have the following components:

**Workshops:** There are DEI trainers that can create company specific workshops that will ensure a workforce has shared language, understands their implicit biases, and will help the organization identify their points of exclusion.

**Conflict Mitigation:** With diversity (difference) comes conflict, and many companies try to avoid dealing with conflict, which is an impediment to workplace diversity, equity and inclusion. There are professionals that can help companies resolve conflict swiftly and in inclusive ways that will reduce attrition and lawsuits.

**Leadership Selection:** There are recruitment firms that help companies screen leadership candidates for a proven track record of fostering an inclusive work environment. Many companies will hire managers who have amazing hard skills, but they gloss over screening for soft skills. It's imperative that companies start to ask prospective leaders about their proven ability to imbed DEI fundamentals into their management practices.

How do you set goals regarding the makeup of your workforce? Leaders should set goals around having a high-performing workforce that reflects the makeup of the community they serve, their

consumers, or their audience. Also remember that each year, new consumers enter the market, so, if your consumer base today isn't very ethnically diverse, in five years it probably will be so start building a pipeline of diverse talent now. It's never too early to start. Some recruitments are harder than others to find underrepresented talent, but I assure you highly skilled, ethnic, and gender diverse talent is out there. You just have to actively look for it.

### **Closer Look**

Summers-McGee's 3 steps to a more diverse workforce

1. Thoughtfully define what Diversity, Equity and Inclusion means to the organization. Why is it important? Why are you engaging in the work? What does DEI success look like for your organization?
2. Bring your workforce, especially your managers and leaders, along for the journey. They need to understand why DEI is important to the company and to the leadership team. They need to understand expected behavioral standards. And they need to see managers walk the DEI talk and lead by example.
3. Embed DEI principals throughout the organization's operations. Policies, systems, and practices need to be explored from an inclusion reference point. Exclusion is subtle. It's oftentimes as simple as building a process and not thinking about accessibility, or not having a process for addressing internal conflict when race, gender, or ability are at the center of the discourse. Things that happen organically, tend to benefit the majority, not the underrepresented.

## **The Skanner**

### **Chief Outlaw Speaks**

*By Lisa Loving  
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At this week's Martin Luther King Breakfast, The Skanner News spoke with Portland Chief of Police Danielle Outlaw about her work, her vision and issues impacting the bureau.

The Skanner News: How is officer recruitment going, and what are you looking for in your police recruits?

Portland Police Chief Danielle Outlaw: We are looking for the nontraditional officer. Historically, we would do a lot of recruiting directly from the military, which we still do. But the nature of policing has changed so much that we are looking for those maybe with liberal arts backgrounds. We want creative problem solvers with fresh ideas, that represent not only the diversity of our community but the diversity in this country and internationally. Because they bring new ways of doing things than how we address our issues currently.

TSN: Do you support the creation of a non-police response to people in mental health crisis?

CO: I most certainly do. I said it as soon as I got here: Every call to which we're dispatched goes to does not necessarily require a police officer. The problem is that we don't always know what we have until we get there. So there might be a time when someone is in crisis, but there might be an escalated level of threat that does require our care.

Now with that said, I do believe that there are many of those who are in crisis that don't need police services. They need to either speak with a clinician or they need other social services provided.

We just started a pilot program in early November by placing a police sergeant in the communications dispatch center at BOEC (Bureau of Emergency Communications). That sergeant is placed there to help triage some of the calls that we receive, to not only make sure that police officers are only being sent to calls where a police officer needs to go -- but if a call goes into BOEC and it is determined that this does not need to be responded to by a police officer, that sergeant has the authority to say "No, this needs to be reserved to another agency or social service provider."

So the answer to that is: It depends. We are researching a lot of options. Where I came from, before I moved up here, we had clinicians that worked for the county that were actually dispatched to the calls, and then if they determined that they needed a police officer there, then we came after that. So there are other ways to ensure that we are not always the first responders to those who need services outside of police response.

TSN: Many people are concerned about the increase in White supremacist street actions in Portland. Does the Portland Police Bureau have a plan on that? Or is it something that you're discussing behind the scenes?

CO: This is something that concerns everyone. But again, I want to say, I want to remind people what our roles are. Our roles are not only to be strong partners with our local law-enforcement agencies and state agencies but also federal agencies. We rely very heavily on information that we receive, for example, from federal agencies, if there are heightened threats that we need to pay attention to.

With all of that said, there are still laws that we enforce. I think it's important for us to educate the community on the differences between hate crimes and hate speech, and I think it's important for people to know what our roles are in protecting everyone's right. Regardless of how egregious or hateful some person's speech might be, we have to focus on behavior. It's a very slippery slope when there's an expectation of our police officers to protect -- literally protect -- the speech of others, but not everyone's.

So I really want to reiterate the fact that we provide services to everyone, and we don't pick or choose sides. But at the same time when it comes to increased threats or behavior or harm to individuals or property, absolutely we are concerned about that.

TSN: Are there what are the main reforms that you would care to make in Portland? What is your main vision for what you would like to see differently here?

CO: There are a lot of things that we do really well here, but there are a lot of things we need to improve. Obviously, in the bureau, there's a huge trust factor. There's a widening chasm of trust between the public and the police bureau and that's just based on the history of what's going on in the city and the state in general, and the role we represent as law-enforcement officers.

The only way I think to do that is through stability and presence, and relationship building -- and our actions, obviously. I've been here for a little over 14 months, maybe 15 months, and it's been quite busy. And there's been something major happening almost all the time and the feeling could be that at times were taking 20 steps forward, and then we take 10 steps back.

But I think it's important for us to be transparent in how we respond to the critical incidents or the things that are happening in the community. And it's important for me as the police chief to manage expectations and, again, let people know what our role is here in this community.

So again, trust building is huge. We're obviously under a settlement agreement. We've achieved a lot of compliance, actually. We've gained a lot of compliance in the short time that I've been here. We're focusing on effective crime strategies and how we deploy our resources. But ultimately, it's about making sure that we really reach out, we maintain and we establish trust with our communities.

TSN: Are there any other municipalities that should have made the kind of changes that you would like to see? Are there any other municipalities that you think would be a good model for Portland?

CO: There are a lot. And it really depends on where you are. Policing is different wherever you are in the country depending on where you are regionally. So West Coast versus East Coast, you look at Southeast, you look at Northeast. We all value the same thing -- we all value community -- but depending on where you are, the changes or reforms or tweaks or whatever you want to call them might be a little bit different.

So there's a lot going on out in the country. I spend a lot of time speaking with my colleagues, benchmarking against other police departments to make sure that we're not reinventing the wheel -- utilizing case studies, and also learning from our past and our own mistakes and also learning from what we really do well and sharing that nationally and internationally.

So yes -- the answer is yes, there's a lot of good work going on out there. You just have to pick and choose. And we have to tailor any strategy we implement according to the culture here in Portland. Portland is very, very unique and you cannot pick up something that works somewhere else and think we can just plop it here in Portland and it will work in the same way.

TSN: Do you have any legislative priorities or anything that you hope will happen in the legislature?

CO: That's a question for the mayor's office. I'll leave the politics to the politicians.

TSN: As an African American woman working in the Police Bureau, you must be facing obstacles, such as institutional racism. Is there any kind of solution that you have that you employ as a woman of color in this institution that helps you maintain empowered or that you would recommend to anybody else?

CO: I deal with it more, not necessarily inside of the bureau, I deal with it more outside the bureau. Sadly enough.

I find that a lot of institutions that are against all -isms, pick one, right -- racism, sexism or whatever -- a lot of these institutions are the very institutions that perpetuate the things that they say they're against. And then they turn around and say, "Oh, I didn't know, I didn't realize." They have a lot of the same biases that these other folks have that are just blatant.

So I find that when I call people out on it, when I recognize it happening I speak to it. And it might not be in a very confrontational way, but I do what I can to educate but also to let people know, one, I recognize that this is what's happening, I've acknowledged your biases, I expect you to check them and here's what we need to do to work through that -- because otherwise we're not moving towards the same goals.

TSN: That's like something I heard Angela Davis say once -- when you encounter racism, mark it, call it out.

CO: And we all have to be comfortable enough and confident enough in our skin to be able to do that. I wasn't always this way. I wasn't always aware of what it was when I saw it, I had to educate myself on what it looked like. A lot of us when we experience it, we know we feel something uncomfortable, but we don't always know what it is, or we don't always know how to articulate it. And then we don't know to whom we can go speak to do something about it.

And that comes with time, obviously, and we are in power in numbers. I really appreciate even having a question asked, because it gives me the opportunity to speak about it more, as opposed to it being the elephant in the room that no one is ever addressed

TSN: What's your take on the difference between where you're from -- Oakland, Calif., -- and Portland? Do you feel a little bit of culture shock or anything like that?

CO: You know, in the Bay Area we are very direct, what you see is what you get. And we say what needs to be said and then we moved on. No love lost. It's a little bit different here. That doesn't mean that I'm not open to learning new ways of being. I'm still going to remain true and authentic to who I am.

It's just like every relationship that needs to be built when there's a community and institution organization you have to get the time to know each other -- first learn to recognize cues, and so on and so forth. Yes, it's different, but it's not necessarily a shock.

Everyone brings a different place or a moment of truth to the table

TSN: What do you think is the most important thing for you about this position with the most important thing that you're trying to achieve as the Portland Police Chief?

CO: I originally said when I got here -- and I still hold true to this -- if nothing else hopefully I bring people to the table that otherwise would not have. Today is symbolic not only because it's Martin Luther King's 90th birthday, but he really emphasized unity in community. He emphasized recognizing differences, but he also recognized that in order to get there and achieve equality of opportunity, that we had to do it together, regardless of our background or our beliefs, that we could dissent but we could do it creatively, we could do it respectfully, we can do it peacefully -- and that's what's important here.

So from day one when people criticize me or they criticize the actions of the bureau, those are the first people I wanna speak to. Now, they don't always wanna speak to me, but I think it's important, because everyone brings a different place or a moment of truth to the table, and how do I know these things if I don't get a chance to hear directly from them what their perspectives are?

So I don't take it personally if they say things against us or our actions, but I want to sit down and engage our critics. That's important. That's the only way we get to where we need to be and that's what I will continue to do while I'm here.

TSN: Is there a question that you wish people ask would ask you but they don't?

CO: It's not really a question, but we receive a lot of support, PPB does, because public safety is a basic human need -- people want to feel safe. We receive a lot of support, I hear one-on-one, I hear it face-to-face, I hear it in community meetings, and I read it in the comments.

But you don't hear it publicly. Why is that? I would love to hear and have that same level of vocal support, whether it's at council meetings or the folks that are interviewed on the news -- I don't know how to phrase that into a question.

But my officers hear what is not liked about them more prominently – how do we bring that to the forefront? That the very people who literally drive past me and they stop their car to say -- we support you, we support you, thank you for everything you do – how do the officers hear that? How do I put that in a bottle and go to their roll calls and show them that this is the score that they get?

Because it could be a lot to hear day in and day out what they're not doing well or what is perceived not to be done well – there's no balance of what's being done right.

I had someone come up to me yesterday and wanted to share with me how an officer responded and handled her call, and was very caring -- very empathetic, very respectful, very professional -- and the officers need to hear that. So I guess my question is how do we get that positive feedback at the forefront in the same way we get the negative feedback?