

The Oregonian

Portland to Condemn White Supremacists, ‘Alt-Right Hate Groups’

*By Gordon Friedman
January 30, 2019*

Portland’s City Council has prepared a resolution that recognizes the city’s “racist governing history” and condemns “White Supremacist and Alt-Right Hate Groups.”

The resolution states the city “will not tolerate hate in any form” and will commit to training all city employees on the history and effects of white supremacist ideology and how to identify it.

Mayor Ted Wheeler said in a statement that Portland has become a place where people “are now emboldened to express hate, spread fear and do harm against those who simply do not look like them.”

Wheeler said elected officials have a moral obligation to speak out against white supremacy and white nationalism. The city’s proposed resolution goes beyond “thoughts & prayers,” the mayor said, and signifies Portland leaders’ commitment to “denounce hate in our community and protect our residents.”

City officials began drafting the resolution last year in response to “violence in our community and on our streets,” said Sonia Schmanski, chief of staff to Commissioner Nick Fish.

To that end, the resolution references “a recent surge of alt-right hate group activity and hostility” in Portland, a nod to the marches and rallies by staged in downtown Portland by members of ultra-partisan groups, some of whom hold racist ideologies. Those events were designed to – and did – provoke violence.

“Advocates asked that the council make a strong and united statement about its values and its unwillingness to harbor hate, and this is council doing that,” Schmanski said.

Far-right activists with the group Patriot Prayer and their allies the Proud Boys last held a planned event in Portland in October of last year. The most serious violence linked to their 2017 and 2018 rallies included fistfights and beatings with improvised weapons between far-right and far-left rallygoers.

The mayor and all four city commissioners sponsored the resolution, an “extremely unusual” step that Schmanski said speaks to the council’s unity on the issue and “the shared urgency we feel about sending an unequivocal message.”

The resolution, first reported on by the Portland Mercury, notes racist actions taken by previous officials in city and state posts.

It cites as examples Oregon’s entry to the union as a whites-only state, legislators’ initial refusal to ratify constitutional amendments extending equal protections to all people and ending slavery, Portland’s practice of displacing black residents and a “history of bias” on the part of police officers.

Portland is a welcoming city, the resolution states, and is “committed to undoing and eradicating the effects of past systemically racist practices.” A vote on the resolution is scheduled for February 7.

Portland Police Sergeant's Inflammatory Roll Call Statements Released a Year After His Firing

*By Maxine Bernstein
January 30, 2019*

Until Wednesday, no city or police official had publicly shared the exact racial and inflammatory remarks that got Portland police Sgt. Gregg Lewis fired.

That changed when City Commissioner JoAnn Hardesty quoted part of it on the record as her colleagues considered a proposed settlement that would reinstate Lewis but then have him retire with back pay to ensure an arbitrator couldn't overturn his firing and put him back to work.

Hardesty's disclosure and opposition to the settlement spurred Mayor Ted Wheeler to delay a vote until next week. It also prompted the mayor's office, in a response to a public records request, to release the full termination letter that Lewis received.

Lewis made the comment while instructing officers at a Central Precinct roll call on Feb. 12, 2017, how to place civil holds on people to take them to a detoxification center when they're inebriated in public or in public garages. He said, "If you come across a black person, just shoot them," according to the letter.

Lewis' remarks came just three days after the controversial fatal police shooting of an African American teen, 17-year-old Quance Hayes. About 16 officers and three other sergeants were present at the 4 p.m. roll call, according to the letter dated Jan. 12, 2018.

The three other sergeants present reported to a lieutenant by early the next morning that they were uncomfortable with Lewis' remarks.

Document: Sgt. Gregg Lewis' termination letter

Officers interviewed provided varying accounts of Lewis' statement, the letter reveals.

According to one account, Lewis told officers to "be smart" about who they removed from inside parking garages for being intoxicated. Lewis, according to this officer, said, "If you come across a guy in a suit and tie that came downtown and had a little too much to drink ... he's probably not the guy you want to detox straight out of the garage. He will most likely sue you. If it's a homeless guy, you will probably be safe. I doubt he's going to sue you."

Around this time at the roll call, someone mentioned the shooting of Hayes by Officer Andrew Hearst. The person voiced dismay about comments posted online in reaction to an Oregonian/OregonLive article. The commenter contended officers shoot to kill black people but only wound white people.

"Officers began talking about this statement, and then I heard Sergeant Lewis state, 'Well, let's just go out and kill all the black people,'" according to the letter. "The officers appeared shocked and astonished. There was some uncomfortable laughter throughout the room, but most officers were quiet. This brought roll call to an end."

In another recollection described in the letter, an officer responded to Lewis' statement saying, "Oh my God," and Lewis threw his hands up in the air, said an expletive and added, "What do I care?"

Lewis told investigators that he didn't treat people differently based on their race or how someone is dressed. He said he has a "habit of sometimes being a little sarcastic" and later admitted he could see how someone could take offense.

Hardesty's account of what Lewis said differed somewhat from what was in Lewis' firing notice. According to Hardesty, Lewis told roll call, "If you run into a drunk on the street who's white and in a suit, let him go because he'll probably sue you. If he's Latino, call Chiers. If he's black, shoot him." Chiers is Central City Concern's mobile van that takes people on the street to a detox center.

Hardesty said later Wednesday in a prepared statement that her comments at the council meeting were "paraphrased remarks" she recollected after getting briefed by the city attorney's office on the matter.

"The gist is the same: this person sworn to protect us made clear that he views certain types of people expendable in our society. I thank his fellow officers for reporting this heinous comment and elevating it as a punishable offense," she said. "What Mr. Lewis said makes my stomach turn."

Wheeler, who serves as police commissioner, called Lewis' statement a "patently racist remark," but said the settlement is the only way to ensure Lewis never wears a police uniform again. He noted that the police chief and police commissioner often don't have the final word on discipline under the state arbitration system.

"This is an egregious case but the chance that this will go to an arbitrator and then be overturned I believe is too great," Wheeler said. "I believe it is so important to get rid of this individual that I'm willing to take the heat to pay that settlement to get rid of him."

Deputy city attorney Mark Amberg told commissioners there was a significant chance that an arbitrator would overturn the firing of Lewis, a 25-year bureau veteran who had little prior discipline and had made no similar remarks on the job.

Lewis was fired on Feb. 2, 2018, about a year after it was reported to command staff. Lewis told investigators he made the comment as an off-the-cuff-joke, according to bureau records.

Under the settlement proposal, the city would erase Lewis' firing and pay him \$100,020.53 in back pay. Lewis would be considered retired, effective Dec. 3, with the city ensuring he receives pension credits for his adjusted service time through his retirement date.

The back pay figure covers his wages from Feb. 2, 2018, through Dec. 3, 2018, at the base hourly rate of pay at the time of his firing, minus 120 hours of suspension without pay.

Lewis had already retired from the Police Bureau once -- on Oct. 31, 2016 -- but was rehired on Dec. 1, 2016, part of the bureau's program to fill vacancies.

Commissioner Amanda Fritz said she felt "personally ill" considering the settlement, but said she understood it might be the only way to ensure Lewis never works for the city again.

"None of us are happy with this outcome," Commissioner Chloe Eudaly said. "This is an imperfect solution made within a flawed system."

The newly elected Hardesty, the first African American woman to serve on the council, said she wouldn't under any circumstance approve the settlement. She urged future police contract talks include people like her to make sure the concerns of the community are well-represented.

"It's clear we have a broken system," Hardesty said. "If it was up to me, I'd say let's go to arbitration. Let's fight the good fight because even if we lose it, we send a very strong message that this is just not acceptable. That you'd don't get to sit in roll call and make racist comments and you don't get a pay day on top of your city-paid retirement."

Donna Hayes, Quanice Hayes' grandmother, briefly addressed the council and said she's ashamed the City Council would pay off Lewis to get rid of him.

Wheeler said the city is working to support a bill before the Legislature this session that would restrict arbitrators in law enforcement discipline cases. Under Senate Bill 383, arbitrators would be barred from overturning police discipline if the arbitrator agreed the misconduct occurred and that the discipline issued fit a discipline guide that the department had adopted.

Dan Handelman, of the watchdog group Portland Copwatch, said he's not sure the proposed legislation would have made a difference in Lewis' case because the Portland police discipline matrix provides for only a 120-day suspension without pay for inappropriate racist remarks.

"You need to change the discipline guide," Handelman said.

"We need to do both" – back the bill and change the guide, the mayor responded.

Portland School Board Reverses Controversial Agreement to Fund School Police

*By Eder Campuzano
January 30, 2019*

The Portland school board is headed back to the drawing board in its negotiations with city police to deploy nine full-time officers at its high schools.

Amid intense backlash from students and community members, the board voted Tuesday to pull back a contract it approved on Dec. 11 under pressure from city officials. Back then, the district pledged \$1.2 million per year to pay for city police officers to patrol its nine public high schools.

Board members now say the financial liability should rest with the city, not the school district. And before their vote to reverse course Tuesday, some wondered whether the district has been too quick to give concessions when it's asked to pick up a bill.

"When the city pulled out of supporting us with Tri-Met passes, we grumbled. When this proposal came down the pipeline we grumbled, but not much else," board member Scott Bailey said.

Board member Julia Brim-Edwards replied: "We have a chance to do more than just grumble."

Last week, board members said they felt pressured by a false Dec. 31 deadline the city imposed for the district to approve the contract. Meanwhile, the neighboring Parkrose and David Douglas districts are just in the beginning stages of talks with the city police bureau on funding officers in their schools.

Brim-Edwards, who proposed Tuesday's reversal of approval for the contract, said the board believed failing to OK it in December would result in the district losing its existing police officers, who currently work at Portland schools three-quarters time.

She wondered aloud why the city asked the district to pay for officers in schools now after providing the service for free for nearly two decades.

"We're not a profit-making enterprise. Our enterprise mission is to educate students, and we should devote every last dollar to that," Brim-Edwards said.

She also said students weren't given enough opportunities to chime in on the agreement. District leaders agreed.

A team led by Jonathan Garcia, senior director for strategic partnerships, proposed a series of listening sessions that include stops at every high school and the appointment of student representatives to gather feedback from their peers. That group would then make recommendations to the board on an amended contract.

The board invited students from each high school to testify at Tuesday's meeting. Although a few spoke to the costs, most voiced concern over whether police, often referred to as school resource officers, or SROs, belong in their hallways at all.

"Students need support, not armed police patrolling the school like a war zone," Roosevelt senior Breely Buttitta said.

"I don't think SROs are performing any duties in high schools," Jefferson senior Jamari Signor said.

Four students stood along the walls holding signs reading, "Fund prevention! Not just detention!" and "Restore justice." Several in attendance snapped their fingers and clapped at their peers' testimony urging the school board to dismiss student resource officers.

But at least two students who took the microphone during the public comment period said they want police in Portland's public schools.

"I think I may have a lot of disagreements with a lot of students. Just because some people have the louder voices doesn't mean they're the only ones with opinions," Grant High School student Ben Sneads said.

He also criticized the board for holding a vote to cancel the resolution it passed more than a month ago.

"I would hope that public officials would be stronger in their convictions in what needs to happen," he said.

The board unanimously approved the resolution to nix December's agreement. But the lone voice from the dais that lined up with the majority opinion among students was its sole member of color.

"I think that we can support students in other ways and keep them safe partnering with other school districts but not with armed officers," said Julie Esparza Brown, who is Latina.

If the coming weeks result in a resolution that would place police in Portland schools?

"It's still going to be a no vote for me," she said.

The Portland Tribune

Fired Portland Immigrant Liaison Threatens Civil Rights Lawsuit

By Jim Redden

January 31, 2019

Well-known immigrant and refugee community coordinator Ronault 'Polo' Catalani was terminated last September while off work because of stress, lawyer say.

Portland officials are declining to comment on a potential civil rights lawsuit against the city by Ronault "Polo" Catalani, a longtime city immigrant and refugee liaison, who was terminated last September.

Attorneys for Catalani filed a tort claim notice of the suit last Wednesday. Representatives of the City Attorney's Office, Mayor Ted Wheeler's office and Commissioner Chloe Eudaly office all declined to respond, saying they cannot comment on pending litigation.

Catalani, who was first appointed to the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs by former Mayor Tom Potter in 2008, is well known within minority communities and the local news media. He was terminated while off work because of stress, according to the Jan. 23 notice filed by attorney Beth Creighton.

Catalani says he has worked for more than 35 years to integrate immigrants and refugees into the community, including the last 10 years for the city. He insists the threatened lawsuit is intended to pressure the city to live up to its promises.

"This is a lawsuit about moving our liberal mainstream's commitment from pretty speeches to more equitably sharing of our city's benefits and burdens," Catalani says.

Anne Downing, a David Douglas High School teacher who serves on the city's New Portlanders Policy Commission, says Catalani's departure is a huge loss for the city.

"Polo has been actively working to make Portland a better city for its refugee community, which now makes up 20 percent of the population and is growing faster than the city can accommodate," says Downing, who teaches English as a Second Language classes to immigrant children and has known Catalani since 2009. "He has been a wonderful mentor to me, and helped me understand how I can do my job better."

The lengthy notice says Catalani intends to sue for racial discrimination, retaliation under state and federal law and for discrimination and/or retaliation for taking family leave. It documents a series of incidents stretching back many years where city officials and employees have allegedly mistreated Catalani because of ethnicity and religion. The notice says Catalani intends to seek unspecified financial damages.

The notice claims that several personnel rule violations alleged against him were both unfounded and contrary to his personal and religious beliefs. Among other things, the notice says city officials falsely accused him of drinking alcohol at work, while the consumption of alcohol is against his Muslim religion. It described that accusation as a "rumor that would certainly damage his professional, familial, and personal reputations in substantial numbers of Southeast Asian, North and East African, and Middle Eastern, faith communities."

The notice not only says that the city discriminated against Catalani, but that it has never fully committed to the programs where he worked. Among other things, the notice says the City

Council never fully funded the immigrant and refugee affairs office after Potter left as mayor the following year, but that Catalani was subsequently shuffled from bureau to bureau and worked under seven different managers, preventing him from helping to develop the systems and secure the funding necessary to integrate immigrant families into the life of the city.

"The City has proven unwilling to officially adapt its structures to accommodate the work that Mr. Catalani was asked to do as the City's liaison between Portland's newcomer communities and City government," the notice reads, adding, "City policy leaders and managers have failed to commit to policies and practices in support of Mr. Catalani's position responsibilities."

In addition, the notice says Catalani's position was downgraded twice during his tenure, being reclassified from Program Manager under Potter to Program Coordinator and then Program Specialist, even though he was to perform increasingly complex and even additional non-immigrant program responsibilities. Catalani most recently worked in the Office of Community and Civic Life, which is under Commissioner Chloe Eudaly.

"He was set up to fail in ways big and small," says the notice.

Catalani was born in the Republic of Indonesia and raised between there and the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which once claimed it. He first moved to Oregon with his family as a refugee sponsored by the late Oregon U.S. Sen. Mark Hatfield, eventually graduated from Willamette Law School and opening a firm in Salem specializing in immigration and refugee cases before moving to Portland in 1986.

After being hired by Portland, Catalani and the programs he started or worked on have won numerous international, national, state and local awards. They include a Partners in Charity Award from Catholic Charities just last year.

You can read the tort claim notice [here](#).

Poll: Most Voters Happy with TriMet, City Government

By Jim Redden

January 31, 2019

Plus, transit is not a top regional priority and unsuccessful candidates won't go away.

It should be obvious, but a new Metro poll shows the protesters who frequently disrupt City Council meetings don't speak for most Portlanders.

The FM3 poll released on Jan. 25 found that 52 percent of voters in the region have a favorable view of their city government, compared to 38 percent who have an unfavorable view. The government entity viewed most positively was TriMet with a 73 percent favorable rating, compared to just 21 percent who view it unfavorably. The federal government was least popular, with only 26 percent viewing it favorably and 69 percent having an unfavorable opinion of it.

The elected regional government commissioned the poll in early January to help the Metro Council craft a transportation funding measure for the 2020 November ballot. Fifty-three percent of voters view Metro favorably, compared to 27 percent who view it unfavorably.

Transit not top regional priority

Although Metro is considering a November 2020 transportation funding measure in large part to help pay for the proposed Southwest Corridor MAX line, its new poll shows voters have other priorities.

According to the new FM3 poll, only 43 percent of voters in the region consider improving transit important. Issues that ranked higher include supporting quality schools (87 percent), improving roads and bridges to reduce congestion (78 percent), having enough affordable housing (74 percent), creating more jobs (71 percent), and providing housing for the homeless (63 percent).

A full 78 percent also prioritized protecting natural areas and wildlife habitats. That should please the Metro Council, since it is planning to place a measure extending its parks levy on the November 2019 ballot.

Unsuccessful candidates won't go away

Two unsuccessful Republican nominees for Oregon governor are keeping in the public eye.

Former state Rep. Knute Buehler of Bend has launched an email newsletter called "Knute's News." The first edition praises Oregon Labor Commissioner Val Hoyle, a former House Democratic leader, for recusing herself from the Bureau of Labor and Industry's sexual harassment investigation into the Oregon Legislature.

It also criticizes Oregon Gov. Kate Brown for considering bringing back the double health coverage for public employees that was repealed in 2017.

Brown defeated Buehler for governor last year.

And Salem physician Bud Pierce, who was defeated by Brown in 2016, has launched a podcast called "Oregon Crossroads." He thinks state spending under Brown and an Oregon Legislature controlled by supermajorities of Democrats in both chambers could contribute to an economic crisis, according to the Capital Insider.

Willamette Week

Mayor's Office Announces a New Organizer for the Portland Marathon

*By Elise Herron
January 30, 2019*

Brooksee was selected for its "desire to highlight the best Portland has to offer."

Mayor Ted Wheeler today announced Brooksee—an event organizer that puts on large races in places like Mount Hood, Hawaii and California—as the new producer of the Portland Marathon.

The selection signals increased stability for an event that has experienced volatile leadership over the last two years.

Last year, the longtime director of the Portland Marathon, Lester Smith, resigned and paid a \$865,000 settlement to the Oregon Department of Justice for keeping some of the nonprofit's funds for himself. A group called Run With Paula Events was selected by the city to take over the 2018 marathon.

This year, however, Mayor Ted Wheeler's office overhauled the application process with a plan to "revise some of the constraints."

Brooksee was ultimately selected as Portland Marathon's new producer, Wheeler says, because of its "vision for community and desire to highlight the best Portland has to offer."

"My vision for a marathon is one that is a world-class event worthy of a host city that's known for running," Wheeler says in a statement, "but also for a marathon that highlights the entire community and increases opportunities for community participation and equal economic prosperity."

According to a release from Wheeler's office, Brooksee's goal is to increase runner turnout, highlight the city's "unique culture" and "reinvest in Portland, with a particular emphasis on underserved communities."

The organization plans to create a governing board, the Marathon Community Council, to oversee the event. Paula Harkin, who ran last year's marathon, will also join Brooksee as a local liaison and community outreach director.

"We look forward to working with elected officials, city staff, community organizations, and Portland's residents to create the most iconic and unique race in the world," Jared Rohatinsky, Brooksee's CEO, says in a statement.

The Portland Mercury

City Council to Sign Resolution Denouncing White Supremacy and Alt-Right Groups in Portland

*By Alex Zielinski
January 30, 2019*

Portland City Council plans to pass a resolution to acknowledge the history of white nationalism in Portland, denounce the recent uptick in alt-right organizing in the city, and request a training that would educate city staff on the realities of white supremacy in Portland.

"Whereas, nationally, there has been a rise of white nationalist, white supremacist and alt-right hate groups, many of which have been emboldened by the words and actions of the current presidential administration," the resolution, shared with the Mercury, begins. It's scheduled to be approved by city council on Thursday, February 7.

"Whereas, Portland has a documented history of white supremacist hate groups who have used intimidation and have committed violent repression of individuals in our community," it goes on. "Whereas, there has been a recent surge of alt-right hate group activity and hostility, here, in our home, conjuring painful memories of our city's past and causing harm to current residents."

The detailed resolution does not mention any alt-right or white nationalists groups by name. However, it could easily be read as a direct response to the numerous violent protests instigated by Patriot Prayer, a Vancouver, Washington alt-right group, in the past year.

City council came to a head last November when, after a string of particularly unwieldy and aggressive visits by Patriot Prayer, Mayor Ted Wheeler proposed an ordinance that would restrict potentially violent protests. But the ordinance's vague phrasing concerned constitutional law experts, and the protest ordinance failed a council vote.

Commissioner Nick Fish, who voted against Wheeler's proposal, says that this new resolution reflects the input city council received from criminal justice advocates during the lead-up to the controversial vote.

"Local leadership had not unequivocally put down a marker on where we stood on the alt-right," Fish says. "We want to show that there's no daylight between us and the advocates on this issue."

Fish's staff worked closely with Wheeler's office to draft the resolution, which includes input from all five members of the council. It's expected to pass next week's council vote unanimously.

"We're at a crossroads in this country and in our community," said Wheeler in a statement emailed to the Mercury. "As elected officials, we have a moral obligation to speak out against white supremacy and white nationalism and stand together with all Portlanders.

"These aren't just words or 'thoughts & prayers,'" Wheeler continued. "This is signaling the city's commitment to begin taking immediately proactive steps to denounce hate in our community and protect our residents."

The city's introduction of the resolution comes amid an unusual uptick in Patriot Prayer visits to Portland.

Members of Patriot Prayer have become increasingly confrontational and violent with progressive Portland organizations in the past month. Just over a week ago, Patriot Prayer members held a rally in front of a union office where they'd been turned away from a Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) meeting the week before. The protest featured anti-Muslim shouts and general intimidation of community members.

Since then, Patriot Prayer members have ramped up a campaign to "demask" Portland anti-fascists (or, Antifa), a group in direct opposition to Patriot Prayer who regularly cover their faces during demonstrations. Patriot Prayer posted a video on its Facebook page Saturday showing a man grabbing a masked protester from behind at a recent pro-immigrant rally, while Patriot Prayer leader Joey Gibson aggressively removes the protestor's mask. Gibson calls this so-called "demasking" campaign "nonviolent."

On Monday, a spokesperson from the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) said that while the bureau was aware of these threatening encounters, no related police reports have been filed.

The city council resolution references instances in Portland's history informed by white supremacy, like the city's expulsion of Japanese Americans following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor or the construction of I-5, which primarily displaced Black communities.

"Portland has... a history of bias in government services, including policing, all of which have led to the gentrification and decimation of historically black neighborhood," the resolution reads.

It concludes with a straightforward promise:

"Be it resolved that the City of Portland will not tolerate hate in any form and reaffirms its commitment to continue, in collaboration with Portlanders, pursuing policies and directing bureaus in the next year and beyond to ensure civil and human rights to all individuals.

Be it further resolved that the City of Portland will work with community organizations to develop a training for all city staff on the history and impact of white supremacy and how to identify white supremacy."

Fish says he understands the resolution may be seen as a "purely symbolic" gesture by activists wanting a more action-oriented response to Patriot Prayer's unwelcome visits. He believes the message will set the tone for the rest of the city to follow, and give law enforcement a reference point when deciding how to police the alt-right in the future.

"Portland is a city that is proudly at the center of interesting movements," Fish says. "This is going to end up being an footnote in our history. Sooner than later, Joey Gibson will just be a footnote."

7-Eleven Blasts High-Pitched Noise Outside Store to Deter Homelessness

*By Alex Zielinski
January 30, 2019*

A convenience store in downtown Portland has turned to using a high-pitched, ringing noise to keep homeless people from gathering on the sidewalk in front of the store.

The 7-Eleven store sits at the intersection of SW Taylor and 4th, on a corner that's regularly occupied by people who appear to be homeless or transient. Up until recently, the store was blasting classical music from its outdoor speakers. Within the last week, that music was replaced with a single piercing note, similar to the noise emitted by a security alarm system.

A 7-Eleven clerk said the noise is meant to keep homeless people away. "The classical music just put them to sleep," the clerk said.

The new tactic is working: The corner outside of 7-Eleven was clear Wednesday afternoon. But it may not be legal.

In Oregon, it's illegal to "make unreasonable noise" with the "intent to cause public inconvenience, annoyance or alarm." A person found guilty of making unreasonable noise could be charged with disorderly conduct in the second degree.

The City of Portland also explicitly forbids this kind of noise. "It is the intent of the City Council to control the level of noise in a manner that promotes the use, value, and enjoyment of property, conduct of business, sleep and repose and reduces unnecessary and excessive sound in the environment," reads an ordinance entered into the city charter in 2001.

Violating this ordinance comes with a penalty of up to \$5,000. Several members of the public have contacted the city with complaints about the 7-Eleven noise, as of Wednesday afternoon.

"The business establishment is clearly intending to annoy members of the public who walk by or use the sidewalk in the public space outside their store," said Chris O'Connor, an attorney with Metropolitan Public Defenders.

"I suspect that if you walked into city hall or a police station or sat outside the 7-Eleven manager's house (or the mayor's home) with a speaker at the same volume with the same sound, they'd arrest you for the crime of Disorderly Conduct first and send it to Noise Control later."

7-Eleven did not respond to the Mercury's request for comment.

After Student Opposition, Portland School District Rethinks Paying for Campus Cops

*By Blair Stenvick
January 30, 2019*

After nearly two months of student activism, the Portland Public Schools (PPS) board of directors voted Tuesday evening to suspend and reassess its agreement to pay the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) for additional officers on PPS campuses.

With this vote, the board effectively hit pause on an inter-governmental agreement it passed in December, in which the district agreed to pay PPB \$1.2 million a year to have nine school resource officers (SROs) on duty five days a week. SROs are sworn, armed officers who have long-term assignments at public school districts.

The agreement sparked pushback among PPS students who felt they had not been properly informed or consulted about it. Students responded by demonstrating outside of Portland City Hall earlier this month, hoping to keep city commissioners from approving the agreement, and starting an online campaign with the social media handle NoSROsPPS. Their chief concerns are that having armed officers on campus would make students, especially students of color, feel threatened, and that the money could be better spent elsewhere.

Isabel Mace-McLatchie was among those students who organized after the original agreement passed. Talking to the Mercury after Tuesday's board vote, she said that she and her fellow students were pleased with the board's decision.

"We hung out a little bit after the meeting, and we're all excited with them saying, 'We made a mistake, we need more time to figure this out,'" Mace-McLatchie said.

SROs have had a presence in PPS schools for at least two decades, but there has never been a formal agreement between the two agencies, and the district never paid for the officers before. Officers were on campus three days a week; under the new agreement, SROs would have a full-time, five-day-a-week presence in Portland high schools.

PPS board member Julia Brim-Edwards authored the resolution passed at Tuesday's meeting. Brim-Edwards told the Mercury last week that the board originally felt pressure from the city of Portland to pass an SRO funding agreement before the end of 2018, but that Portland's city council has been dragging its feet in voting on it.

"The end of the year came and went, and it was clear that that wasn't the real deadline," she said.

Brim-Edwards said that with the new resolution, she intended to permanently suspend PPS' agreement to pay for SROs, because "it's their [the city's] fiduciary responsibility, not the district's."

At Tuesday's meeting, several other school board members expressed regret that the original agreement was rushed to a vote.

"There shouldn't be a time when expediency trumps student voice in our decision making," said board member Amy Kohnstamm.

Brim-Edwards told the Mercury she still wants SROs to have a presence in district schools, but that it was clear that a new agreement would need to include "students' and staffs' perspectives." District leaders laid out a plan at Tuesday's meeting to engage students, especially students of color, in more dialogues before drafting a new agreement. They said they'll have a new agreement ready to consider by the end of February.

Mace-McLatchie said she hopes that the SRO debate will lead to broader communication between the PPS board and the student population—and that "moving forward, it's really going to depend on them doing what they said they were going to do."

"This goes beyond this specific issue," she added. "It really gets to how students are involved in PPS decision making."

Last week, members of the PPS administration met with students at Jefferson High, where Mace-McLatchie is a senior, to hear about concerns brought up by the SRO issue.

"That was a great conversation," she said. "It definitely felt like the beginning of a conversation, not the end of one."

The Portland Business Journal

Utah Company Gets Portland Marathon Contract — Again

By Pete Danko

January 30, 2019

A rerun of the process to pick a 2019 Portland Marathon producer has landed the city right where it was three months ago — with the selection of Brooksee LLC.

The city posted a “notice of intent to award” a contract to the Utah race management company Wednesday morning.

It did the same thing last Oct. 25. But a month later, Mayor Ted Wheeler announced those results were being thrown out and another RFP would be issued, in search of a “bold vision” for a city-owned race.

A new evaluation committee was assembled to review bids submitted Dec. 17. Full scoring of the bids wasn't yet available, but Brooksee was again the winner.

Brooksee CEO Jared Rohatinsky acknowledged that with just eight months until the early-October race, this year's marathon might not be everything he wants to ultimately make it.

Nevertheless, "We are extremely confident that this year's race will be an incredible experience for runners and for the community," Rohatinsky said via email. "The race experience and production value will continue to build upon itself each year moving forward until it eventually assumes its rightful place among other major marathons such as Chicago, New York City, and Boston."

The RFP specified a contract for the 2019 race alone, but with the option for renewal for three subsequent years.

Brooksee's original win had drawn a protest — denied by the city — from one losing bidder, Oregon Sports Authority, a politically well-connected nonprofit. Beginning now, losing bidders will again have seven days to protest.

In addition to Brooksee and OSA, there were three other bidders in the new RFP: Rose City Marathon, a local coalition that also competed in the first RFP, and first-time bidders Motiv Group, a big Denver race production company that puts on Portland's Shamrock Run, and Bolt Marketing, a Portland event marketing agency.

The marathon dates back to 1972, when it was held on Sauvie Island for a few dozen runners. It settled downtown in the mid-1980s. In the 2000s, it regularly drew 5,000 to 10,000 runners.

But the relationship between the city and the nonprofit that owned and put on the race gradually fractured amid permitting conflicts. The number of finishers dropped to 2,912 in 2017, off by two-thirds since 2011.

Then in April 2018, the state Department of Justice accused longtime race director Les Smith of illegally borrowing \$865,000 from the nonprofit. He admitted no wrongdoing, but agreed to pay back the money and was banned from involvement in races.

By then, Portland was already looking for an organization to produce the 2019 race under city ownership, but it was struggling. A request for information had been drawn up but killed by Wheeler in January 2018. It finally went out in April, drawing interest from more than a dozen parties, but the follow-on request for proposals lagged.

Amid the confusion, the 2018 marathon, set to run in October, dangled on the edge of oblivion. It was pulled back by Harkin's Run with Paula Events, but just 748 runners finished the race, the lowest total in memory.

OPB

Portland Public Schools Pulls Out Of Agreement With City Over Police In Schools

*By Ericka Cruz Guevarra
January 30, 2019*

Portland Public Schools has backed out of an agreement with the City of Portland over how to pay for nine armed campus officers.

The board unanimously adopted a resolution Tuesday evening suspending the approval of an intergovernmental agreement the district approved in December. That agreement, passed despite student protest, sought to keep officers at campuses five days a week. It also would've required PPS to foot the bill.

The resolution approved Tuesday reverses that agreement after school board members argued it's the city's – not the district's – responsibility to pay for the campus safety officers.

“The police bureau is saying: ‘We have these tactics which we think are much more appropriate for working with our students ... and yet if we're going to provide that better service in the school environments, you're going to have to pay extra,’” said PPS Board Member Amy Kohnstamm at Tuesday's meeting.

“To me that doesn't really make sense. It's their responsibility to respond to the needs in our schools, so why wouldn't they respond in the most evolved and appropriate way?”

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler met with PPS Board Chair Rita Moore and Superintendent Guadalupe Guerrero on Jan. 14 to discuss concerns over the agreement.

Board Member Julia Brim-Edwards brought forward the resolution Tuesday after she said the city gave the district a “false deadline” for approving the agreement with the city. Board members said the deadline forced the district to make an uninformed decision in December without fully engaging with the community about their concerns.

“And it was made clear the IGA as approved in December was no longer acceptable to the board and would need substantial reconsideration,” said Vice Chair Julie Esparza Brown.

At the meeting with the mayor, PPS leaders reached several tentative agreements with the city, making clear that the district is unwilling to pay for the school resource officers. The district also agreed to look at alternatives to SROs.

Students called on board members to approve the resolution Tuesday, echoing concerns raised by earlier campaigns to prevent the district from moving forward with the agreement in the first place.

“At Roosevelt [High School], we have four counselors for the entire student body,” said Breely Buttitta, 18. “Students need support, not armed police patrolling the halls like a war zone.”

Camila Arze Torres Goitia, a government and economics teacher at Madison High School, said she has never seen her students more engaged until a recent circle discussion about SRO’s at Portland schools. She said she heard from students who said they would feel safer in school if there were more teachers of color, restorative justice coordinators or mental health counselors.

“Not one of them said an armed police officer would make them feel safe and secure,” she said.

The district says it plans to eventually revise the agreement with the city with input from students. It plans to have the revised agreement available for discussion by the end of February.

Portland Delays Settlement For Fired Officer As Hardesty Objects — And Quotes Him

By Amelia Templeton

January 30, 2019

UPDATE (Wednesday, Jan. 30, 2019 at 10 p.m. PT) — The Portland City Council postponed a vote Wednesday on a controversial settlement deal for a police sergeant fired after colleagues reported him making a racist remark during a morning roll call.

The settlement would allow Sgt. Gregg Lewis to retire with more than \$100,000, or nine months’ back pay. In exchange, he would be ineligible to work for the city or the Police Bureau in the future.

The city attorney has recommended that the council approve the settlement. It was originally introduced with an emergency clause, which would have required a unanimous vote of the council to pass.

The council struck that clause, setting the measure up to pass with a majority next week, while also clearing the way for Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty to vote against it.

Laying out her position against the deal, Hardesty read what she said were Lewis’s offensive remarks to the full council chamber: “If you run into a drunk on the street who’s white, in a suit, let him go, because he’ll probably sue you. If he’s a Latino, call CHIERS,” she said, using the acronym for a sobering station in downtown Portland. “If he’s black, shoot him.”

“That’s what the officer said. That’s why other officers turned him in. I’m happy that those officers turned him in,” Hardesty said.

That is not what exactly what Lewis said, according to an excerpt of the disciplinary letter he received from the bureau. That document includes an account by one of the sergeants who reported Lewis’ conduct to the police chief:

Sergeant Gregg Lewis #22515 gave roll call. During roll call we had a conversation about whether or not police could legally detox subjects from parking structures. Sergeant Lewis told officers to “be smart” about who they detoxed from inside the parking structures. Sergeant Lewis stated, “If you come across a guy in a suit and tie that came downtown and had a little too much to drink... he’s probably not the guy you want to detox straight out of the garage. He will most likely sue you. If it’s a homeless guy, you will probably be safe. I doubt he’s going to sue you.”

At this time an Officer mentioned he had read an Oregonian article about the Andrew Hearst shooting. The Officer stated he had read the comments section of the article and was dismayed because a citizen had written, “PPB kills black people, but only injures white people.” Officers began talking amongst themselves about this statement and then I heard Sergeant Lewis state, “well, let’s just go out and kill all the black people”.

I looked around the room to gauge the affect this statement had on the officers. The officers appeared shocked and astonished. There was some uncomfortable laughter throughout the room, but most officers were quiet. This brought roll call to an end.”

Hardesty thanked Mayor Ted Wheeler for removing the emergency clause from the ordinance.

“I would not, under any circumstances, vote for this settlement,” she said.

Wheeler declined to publicly elaborate on the remarks that Lewis made that prompted the city’s effort to fire him, but referred to them as “patently racist.”

Council staff told OPB the briefings they’d received hadn’t included Lewis’s exact remarks.

Late Wednesday, the mayor’s office released the full letter Lewis received stating he was being terminated. The letter includes a detailed account of the investigation into Lewis, including multiple officers’ recollections of his remarks.

According to the disciplinary letter, Lewis characterized his comments as a sarcastic attempt at humor. He acknowledged that they were inappropriate remarks for a supervisor to make.

“Your remarks shocked and left a negative impression on the officers and sergeants who were present,” the letter concludes. “It does not appear you fully understand the impact of your statements and the implication that you were encouraging or condoning mistreatment of a group or class of individuals based on their race. Given the egregiousness of your behavior I have concluded that the termination of your employment is the appropriate level of discipline in this matter.”

The letter is signed by Police Chief Danielle Outlaw and Wheeler.

Wheeler, who serves as police commissioner, argued that the settlement was the surest way to ensure that Lewis is taken off the police force for good. The Portland Police Association had filed a grievance challenging Lewis’ punishment. The city denied that grievance and the Portland Police Association had advanced the grievance to arbitration.

It’s extremely difficult to fire police officers in Oregon. Portland city attorneys believe that Lewis, who had no previous disciplinary history, would likely win back his job or a larger payment through arbitration.

“What we’re paying for in this settlement is certainty,” Wheeler said.

Wheeler suggested that the city’s difficulty disciplining Lewis lay with arbitrators who, he said, undermine the mayor and the police chief’s authority to discipline public employees.

He said the city has introduced state legislation to address that problem.

But in public testimony, one longtime police reform advocate pointed out that the city's weak position arguing for Lewis's termination came from the Police Bureau's internal discipline guidelines.

"The discipline guide says the most serious discipline you can get for racial bias comment is 120 hours off, which is what is in the agreement you're signing today," said Dan Handelman, with Portland Cop Watch. "What you need to do is change the discipline guide, not state law."

"Absolutely," the mayor agreed. "We need to change both."

Among those who came to testify against the settlement deal for Sgt. Lewis was Donna Hayes, the grandmother of Quance Hayes, an African-American teen shot and killed by police officers in 2017.

Donna Hayes reminded Wheeler that he had promised not to tolerate racism or threats of violence by police officers and had said officers who made such remarks would face severe discipline.

"So in keeping your word, you pay him off?" she said. "You are not a man of your word. Instead, you let this racist retire."

"This is what's called a lose-lose," Wheeler could be heard muttering in response, just off mic.