

The Oregonian

Drug Conviction Tossed, But Defendant Can't Get His Property Back as Police Destroyed It While Appeal Was Pending

By Maxine Bernstein

March 7, 2019

After a Portland man had his federal drug conviction thrown out on appeal last year, his lawyer filed motions to retrieve his property and cash that were seized at the time of his arrest.

But Mark Patrick Johnson soon learned all that was taken from him when arrested was gone.

His cellphones, bags and a small safe confiscated in the case were destroyed by Portland police. The \$7,100 in cash that a deputy removed from his back pocket was ordered by a Multnomah County judge to be forfeited years ago.

And Johnson's prospects of getting them back or getting compensated dimmed Wednesday in federal court.

"It's devastating," court-appointed lawyer Tonia Moro said after failing to convince the federal judge to order the government to make good on the losses.

"It's very, very disappointing. It's a shame because he needs the money so badly."

Johnson, now 48, had been convicted in December 2014 of possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine after a one-day federal trial. The trial went forward after the trial judge had denied a defense motion to suppress evidence in the case. On July 23, 2015, Johnson was sentenced to 15 years and eight months in prison.

This past May, a three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals threw out Johnson's conviction after finding the seizure of his property was improper.

The panel found that Portland police and Multnomah County sheriff's deputies should have done only an inventory of the items located in the car he was driving when stopped in Gladstone on an outstanding warrant in April 2014. But instead, they searched for evidence of a crime and seized bags from the trunk for a later search, before towing the car.

The items seized had served as the basis for Johnson's federal prosecution.

The federal appeals panel ruled that "a suspicion-less inventory search does not permit officers to search or to seize items simply because they believe the items might be of evidentiary value," but must function instead to secure and to protect the property of the person arrested.

The appeals court overturned his conviction, and Johnson got out of prison in October.

But the Police Bureau's evidence warehouse destroyed Johnson's property in mid-2017, while his appeal was still pending, according to the prosecutor.

The property seized included two cellphones, a battery pack, a duffel bag, a backpack and a small Sentry Safe inside the backpack. All were marked as evidence by the government at trial.

In court, Assistant U.S. Attorney Leah Bolstad called the destruction of the property "unfortunate," and blamed the passage of time. She also said no one from the Police Bureau had consulted with the U.S. Attorney's office before getting rid of Johnson's property.

“Nowhere was it made clear to the government that defendant wanted these items back,” Bolstad added.

The police bureau is supposed to keep evidence until a judge, a prosecutor or the lead investigator in the case says it can be disposed of, under bureau policy.

The prosecutor suggested Johnson’s lawyer might pursue a civil claim with the city of Portland.

Johnson’s concerns need to be raised with the people who held or destroyed the property, U.S. District Judge Michael W. Mosman said.

Johnson’s lawyer asked Mosman to appoint her as part of the Criminal Justice Act panel to help her pursue a civil judgement against the city, but Mosman declined.

As for Johnson’s cash, Multnomah County had petitioned to seize it through civil forfeiture. A Multnomah County judge granted the request in March 2015, after Johnson’s conviction but before his sentencing.

Johnson’s lawyer argued the forfeiture wasn’t proper because the cash was cited as evidence in Johnson’s federal prosecution. She noted U.S. Department of Justice policy that says “if the property is seized as part of an ongoing federal investigation, and the defendants are being prosecuted in federal court, the property should be federally forfeited.”

Bolstad presented an April 2014 notice of forfeiture from the county that was signed by Johnson after his arrest while he was in custody at Inverness Jail. The notice warned that the cash might be confiscated for good if he didn’t file a claim for it, even if he wasn’t convicted of a crime.

She also showed that the county had published notices in the Daily Journal of Commerce of its intent to seize the cash under civil forfeiture on four different days in May and June 2014.

“Defendant did not file a claim for the property, nor did any other interested party,” Bolstad wrote in a court brief.

All the forfeiture notices were published while Johnson remained in custody.

Johnson’s case comes in the wake of a Feb. 20 U.S. Supreme Court decision that places limits on states’ ability to take and keep cash or other property through civil forfeiture. The high court ruled that the property seized can’t be out of proportion to the crime involved.

As she left the courthouse Wednesday, Johnson’s lawyer was dejected, questioning how she was going to explain the outcome to her client, who waived his appearance in court, or pursue a civil claim against the city on his behalf when she won’t get paid to do so.

The Portland Tribune

Council Reforms Foreclosure Process

*By Jim Redden
March 06, 2019*

City is expected to be able to move more efficiently against 'zombie homes' and other problem properties in Portland.

The City Council passed a long overdue reform to city foreclosure process Wednesday that should allow it move more efficiently against 'zombie homes' and other derelict properties.

The council voted 4-0 with Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty absent to remove the City Auditor's Office from the process. The ordinance, which was introduced by City Auditor Mary Hull Caballero, had been recommended in a 2012 performance audit of city's liens, collections, and foreclosure process.

The audit found too many agencies were involved in citing owners of problem properties and compelling them to either fix the up or face foreclosures.

The ordinance approved by the council transfers the existing foreclose staff in the auditor's office to the to the Revenue Division of the Bureau of Revenue of Financial Services, which currently collects late liens and fees on noncomplying properties, and processes foreclosures approved by the council.

Mayor Ted Wheeler and Commissioner Chloe Eudaly both said the city takes foreclosures very seriously and gives property owners many opportunity to fix them up before threatening foreclosure as a last resort.

"I know foreclosure is a hot button term, but it is a very action taken by the city. It's really used against property owners who are absentee or large institutions that are not taking responsibility for them," said Eudaly, who explained that neglected and abandoned properties are more than eyesores, but can be dangerous.

A multi-part investigation undertaken by the Portland Tribune in 2016 documented the problems caused by neglected and abandoned properties in Portland neighborhoods. It also highlighted the overly complex process for compelling owners to fix their properties or, in cases where they are abandoned, seizing them through foreclosing and selling them to more responsible owners.

The series prompted former Mayor Charlie Hales to convince the council to adopt some reforms in June 2016. But he did not propose removing the auditor's office from the process, despite the 2012 performance audit.

Even with the limited reach of Hales' reforms, the city significantly increased the number of foreclosures after they were enacted. No homes had been foreclosed on in previous decades, regardless of how many problems they were causing. But by last August, 68 properties had been proposed for foreclosure, and 17 had been approved by the council. The city had recovered \$1.96 million on 44 of the properties, and many had been fixed up or replaced with new homes.

Hull Caballero predicts her proposed reforms will result in even more action.

"For the city, a streamlined process ensures that the broad expertise that exists in the Bureau of Revenue and Financial Services can benefit this program as well," said Hull Caballero.

The transfer could take several months to fully complete.

You can read a previous Portland Tribune story on the [issue here](#).

Disability Org: Ban E-Scooter Parking Blocking Sidewalks

*By Zane Sparling
March 06, 2019*

Disability Rights Oregon ask Portland City Hall to follow ADA requirements for electric scooters.

A powerful advocacy group for disabled Oregonians hopes to press City Hall into banning parking electric scooters in the public right of way — also known as the middle of sidewalks.

In a Wednesday, March 6 letter to senior deputy city attorney Ken McGair, the nonprofit Disability Rights Oregon lists creating those regulations, as well as enforcement, hosting public forums and collecting parking violation data among their top priorities.

The letter expresses concern that the Portland Bureau of Transportation OK'd a year-long sequel for the upright contraptions that will begin this spring without "any public meetings or open discussion, especially with the disability community."

Disability Rights' legal director, Emily Cooper, sat down Tuesday with the city's top attorney, the city's Americans with Disabilities Act coordinator and a lawyer from the Department of Justice (which prosecutes ADA violations) prior to sending the letter.

"I hope the city really understands that we're talking about equal access to public places and safety," Cooper explained in an interview, "and that they take our concerns seriously and address them."

Portland's apparent infatuation with two-wheeled transit blossomed rapidly after their arrival on July 26 of last year. Planners ultimately recorded some 700,000 trips traversing about 801,000 miles during the four-month test drive with three companies: LimeBike, Bird and Skip.

Supporters say it's a tech solution to last-mile gaps in public transit, one capable of luring residents out of their cars. Detractors say scofflaws rode on sidewalks, in parks — and left their helmets at home. A government report later found that e-scooters generated about 5 percent of the 3,220 total traffic crash injuries reported within city limits.

Cooper admits that riding the devices can be "super cool," but says there's no trade-off that can justify hampering disabled people's federal right to equal access to public spaces.

Her organization has suggested e-scooter companies use "geofencing" technology to prevent riders from operating or parking scooters in pedestrian pathways. Alternatively, riders could be required to send regulators a picture every time they park a scooter, or use docking stations like those designed for the ride-sharing program Biketown.

"Litigation is a possibility," Cooper said. "If we can resolve it short of that, we always look forward to those opportunities."

Disability Rights Oregon wants the city's aggregate data collection to include the number of parking violations involving e-scooters in right of ways, incidents involving pedestrians and the number of hazard or maintenance issues.

Representatives from the Bureau of Transportation and transportation Commissioner Chloe Eudaly's office did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Sources: Hardesty Returns to KBOO Thursday Mornings

By Jim Redden

March 07, 2019

Plus, Brown continues fundraising despite supporting campaign contribution limits and Merkley foregoes crowded presidential primary.

City Hall watchers will want to listen to KBOO radio 90.7 FM every Thursday morning.

That's when Portland City Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty has returned to the community radio station to continue hosting her long-running show, "Voice From the Edge," from 8 to 9 a.m. She suspended it during her 2018 campaign for the City Council to avoid violating the Federal Communication Commission's equal-time rule.

Hardesty, a former state legislator and longtime activist, is very outspoken on issues, even for an elected official. According to KBOO, the show covers topics ranging from civil rights to community building, drugs, the economy, police, prison, race and youth.

Hardesty undoubtedly will be talking about matters either in front of or headed to the council every week. The topic of her first show, upon her return, was "dare to end the war on drugs."

Brown continues fundraising

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown continues to haul in large campaign contributions while supporting limits at the 2019 Oregon Legislature, according to Oregon Public Broadcasting.

Although Brown cannot run for re-election because of the state's term-limit requirement, she's raked in nearly \$500,000 since the November 2018 general election, in which she defeated Republican state Rep. Knute Buehler. Nearly \$310,000 of that came in 2019 as the current legislative session geared up, Oregon Public Broadcasting reported on Feb. 28.

Brown promised to support campaign finance reform after Patrick Starnes, the Independent Party of Oregon candidate for governor in 2018, dropped out late in the race and endorsed her. But, according to OPB, Brown policy adviser Thomas Wheatley said, "She always says she plays by the rules as they are, and works to change them in the long run."

You can read the OPB story at tinyurl.com/y2z8dakq.

Merkley foregoes crowded presidential primary

To the surprise of almost no one, U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley announced Tuesday morning that he will run for reelection in 2020 instead of running for president.

Merkley faced long odds in the increasingly crowded Democratic field for president. Several of the announced and expected candidates have far more name familiarity than Merkley, including Independent Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and, potentially, former Vice President Joe Biden. Oregon is a very small base for launching a national campaign. It has only around 1 percent of the nation's voters and just seven electoral votes. That explains why he isn't likely to be considered a vice presidential candidate, either.

In his two minute video announcement, Merkley said he can accomplish more as a senator than perhaps even president.

"We are way off track, and the future of America hangs in the balance," Merkley said, staring into the camera lens.

Merkley did not endorse any other candidate in the race.

Willamette Week

Police Told Patriot Prayer Leader Joey Gibson They Considered Fights At His Rallies “Mutual Combat”

*By Katie Shepherd
March 6, 2019*

"They've made it very clear," Joey Gibson said in July, 2018, "they're kind of looking at it as mutual combat."

Portland police and prosecutors have been talking about "mutual combat" for a long time in relation to brutal fistfights at far-right protests.

Today, WW reported that Mayor Ted Wheeler's office asked about the timeline for indicting right-wing extremists. Staff say police and prosecutors told them the perception of "mutual combat" made pursuing cases difficult. That term refers to two people agreeing to a physical altercation—like a boxing match, or a duel.

It's not a concept supported by Oregon law, legal experts tell WW. But it's one local law enforcement has been using for nearly a year.

One of the earliest mentions of the term dates back to Patriot Prayer leader Joey Gibson's Facebook Live video on June 18, 2018, promoting his Aug. 4 campaign rally.

“They've made it very clear,” Gibson says, “they're kind of looking at it as mutual combat. Mutual combat is a law that basically states, something that happens a lot at bars and stuff, two guys go outside and they both want to fight—kind of like training or whatever—and no charges can be pressed.”

Text messages first reported by WW suggest a Portland police lieutenant told Gibson about the so-called "mutual combat" excuse right around the time the far-right leader posted that video.

Oregon law explicitly bans "mutual combat" as Gibson described it. A jury instruction says that both combatants being willing to fight is no defense in court. Subsection three of ORS 161.215 explains "a person is not justified in using physical force upon another person if: the physical force involved is the product of a combat by agreement not specifically authorized by law."

Oregon's law defining disorderly conduct also bans fights, saying a person can be found guilty of the misdemeanor if he "engages in fighting or in violent, tumultuous or threatening behavior."

Yet Lt. Jeff Niiya texted another Portland police officer on July 19, 2018, to provide information about conversations he'd had with Gibson about mutual combat. The text may have followed a story by The Daily Beast that reported Gibson's claims that Portland police gave his followers a green light to brawl with antifascists.

"Just throwing myself on the sword," Niiya texted another officer. "Joey called upset thinking I lied to him cause others could not find mutual combat in the law and thought I was making it up. I talked to Vasquez and clarified my understanding and my belief in ORS 161.215. He gave me info and I called Joey back. Hopefully it simmers down."

Niiya appears to be referring to Nathan Vasquez, a deputy district attorney in the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office who met with Mayor Ted Wheeler's staff to discuss why charges have rarely been brought against right-wing protesters caught on camera throwing punches.

Vasquez is also the prosecutor handling a recently re-opened case against Tusitala "Tiny" Toese and Donovan Flippo, two Proud Boys who allegedly assaulted a man on a Portland sidewalk in June, 2018.

Defense attorneys question the proposition that prosecutors cannot bring cases against people engaged in street fights.

"There is no mutual combat defense in the statute in this state," says Steven Sherlag, a criminal defense lawyer in Portland. "Sometimes it can be confusing as to who was the first aggressor and it can be confusing as to whether someone used too much force to defend themselves."

But Sherlag, who has reviewed video of an Oct. 13 street fight outside downtown bar Kelly's Olympian, says he does not understand why prosecutors would not take that case to court.

"That should be prosecuted, there's no question," he says. "What's mutual combat about that? When you're lying on the ground, there's no imminent threat. Someone who is stomping on someone's head should be prosecuted. That's a public safety issue."

Even the top brass in the Portland Police Bureau have publicly discussed mutual combat as a factor holding back prosecutions against right-wing extremists. In an interview with Oregon Public Broadcasting, Assistant Chief Ryan Lee explained that the perception of people being engaged in mutual combat can discourage prosecutors.

Lee said a criminal cases against two men involved in the particularly brutal October 13, 2018 incident hinge on "whether or not [prosecutors] are going to view that interaction as mutual combat, [or] whether they view that there is a temporal break and that the actions following on to the person being stomped was unreasonable in the mutual combat."

Meanwhile, prosecutors in Multnomah County frequently pursue criminal charges against left-leaning protesters who fail to obey police orders or clash with the cops.

Is It Legal for Right-Wing Extremists to Brawl With Antifa in the Portland Streets?

*By Katie Shepherd
March 6, 2019*

Prosecutors blamed a legal defense called "mutual combat" for why they rarely prosecute right-wing extremists.

For several months, leftist activists marching in the many street protests in Portland over the past two years have criticized Portland police for not charging right-wing extremists caught on camera assaulting their political foes.

Now WW has learned Mayor Ted Wheeler feels the same way.

On Jan. 23, mayoral adviser Berk Nelson met with representatives of the Portland Police Bureau and the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office to seek an update on whether violent right-wing extremists could be prosecuted. Nelson says Wheeler was particularly concerned about a bloody street fight captured on film Oct. 13 in front of downtown bar Kelly's Olympian.

Nelson tells WW law enforcement officials offered one central explanation for why charges had not yet been brought three months after an October beatdown, or following other street fights.

Police and prosecutors told Nelson they couldn't arrest or indict people involved in "mutual combat"—a term for brawls in which all participants consensually engage.

But the explanation doesn't match Oregon law—which bans fighting, even if both parties agree to exchange blows. In fact, a jury instruction reviewed by WW says mutual combat is not a legal defense.

Nelson says prosecutors were using the term in a looser sense. But he's not yet satisfied.

"Obviously, we need to do more work to make the city safer," Nelson says. "Not to say [the prosecutors and police] aren't doing work, but the goal posts are constantly moving and we need to adapt quicker."

Local lawyers were scornful of the mutual combat explanation.

"It's just a bogus excuse," says public defender Chris O'Connor. "Just get two black kids and have them have a fistfight and see how quickly the cops arrest them."

The backdrop for this, of course, is that for two years, right-wing groups like Patriot Prayer and the Proud Boys have met with antifascists on Portland's streets for what often amount to scheduled brawls. In February, WW first reported text messages between Patriot Prayer leader Joey Gibson and a Portland police officer who advised Gibson how to help an associate avoid arrest. By then, the mayor was already wondering about law enforcement's priorities.

"I don't always give Wheeler praise, but he was the one person who tried to speak out the last two years to try to get Patriot Prayer to leave," says Juan Chavez, the Oregon Justice Resource Center's civil rights project attorney. He doesn't see the same urgency from prosecutors: "The most generous way to put it is, it appears to be a lack of courage and a lack of imagination in not bringing these cases."

A spokesman for the DA's office says a lack of victim cooperation has been a key factor holding back prosecutions and clarified that mutual combat is not an "outright defense."

"The district attorney's office conveyed to the Portland Police Bureau, and later Mayor Ted Wheeler's office, that some of the individuals involved in the Oct. 13, 2018, incident could be subject to criminal prosecution," says DA spokesman Brent Weisberg. "The identity of the individual injured is known to law enforcement, but this person has not contacted law enforcement, nor has he responded to attempts by law enforcement to contact him."

Prosecutors and police say the investigation is still open and declined to provide further comment.

Law enforcement has, in fact, recently gone after some of the brawlers. Last week, a Multnomah County grand jury indicted the most notorious right-wing combatant, Tusitala "Tiny" Toese, for felony assault. A second Proud Boy, Donovan Flippo, also faces a felony assault charge, prosecutors told the victim, Tim Ledwith.

Formal indictments have not yet been made public. (Social media posts suggest Toese, the only Patriot Prayer supporter convicted of a crime in Portland, has decamped to his hometown in American Samoa.)

But observers note that prosecutors have more frequently brought cases against left-wing protesters. "We would hope the Police Bureau would be more proactive in engaging with the DA on this issue," says Zakir Khan, a spokesman for CAIR-Oregon, a Muslim rights nonprofit lobbying the city to crack down on right-wing marchers. "If they were to dedicate resources to this, it would be welcomed by Portland."

The simplest explanation for why police and prosecutors have prioritized indictments of left-wing protesters: They habitually get into scuffles with cops, while right-wing protesters fight only with leftists, who rarely cooperate with investigators. Police union president Daryl Turner has repeatedly emphasized the danger antifascists pose to his officers.

"What about those who throw bricks, rocks, bottles, feces and urine at police officers, endangering not only our officers but also peaceful protesters who are exercising their right to free speech?" Turner asked in a statement last month.

Wheeler has been calling for more aggressive crackdowns on right-wing rallies for two years. Last November, he introduced an ordinance that would have made it easier for police to keep warring demonstrators separated. That measure failed, after objections that police would use the ordinance chiefly against leftist protesters.

His staff says the mayor has also pushed prosecutors and police to pursue charges against violent actors in those groups, particularly in the Oct. 13 case.

"We've given them the go-ahead to do it," Nelson says. "It's in their hands to do something at this point."

The Portland Mercury

Portland Police Arrest Black Students at Disproportionate Rate

By Blair Stenvick

March 6, 2019

New data shows Portland police are arresting Black students at double the rate than their white peers. That information reflects the concerns of student activists who have been recently working to keep Portland Public Schools (PPS) from hiring more Portland cops to patrol school campuses.

According to [data from the City Budget Office \(CBO\)](#), PPB officers arrested 28 individuals under 21 years old on campuses during school hours during the 2017-18 fiscal year. Sixteen of those students were Black, eight were white, three were Hispanic or Latino and one was Asian.

Those arrest rates contrast starkly with PPS demographics; while more than half of arrested students were Black, only about 9 percent of the general student population is Black, according to [PPS data](#). It does, however, reflect national data, which shows [Black students are more likely to be arrested](#) at school than any other race.

The majority of these arrests were made by Student Resource Officers (SROs), which are PPB officers specifically assigned to PPS campuses. The police bureau currently employs 12 SROs—nine of which are assigned to PPS campuses.

This new data could have some bearing on how—and if—PPB's SRO program is funded in the future.

In October of last year, the PPS board of directors approved an agreement to start paying the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) about \$1 million a year for nine SROs. SROs have had a presence in Portland schools since the early 2000s, but the district had never reimbursed PPB for their services before. The move drew [swift criticism and action](#) from a group of student activists,

prompting the PPS board to suspend the original contract. The two agencies are currently negotiating a new deal.

Many of those student activists worried that they couldn't trust police officers to not unfairly target people of color.

"As a person of color, I've never felt safe in the presence of police officers," Grant High School senior Micah Mizushima told the Mercury in January. "I've always felt that simply by being around a police officer was threatening to me because I see police officers as unpredictable and it scares me."

The Portland City Council is in early stages of determining the budget for the next fiscal year, and could decide to eliminate PPB's SRO program. CBO noted that redirecting SROs to other positions could help alleviate "constrained resources and limited patrol staffing levels" in the bureau.

Portland's Police Response Times Are Unchanged, Despite Adding 49 New Cops

*By Alex Zielinski
March 6, 2019*

Last year, Portland Police Bureau (PPB) asked the city to include funding for 90 new officer positions in the 2018-19 budget. While easily the [most controversial budget request](#), bureau representatives argued that the expansion was crucial to improving officers' response time on 911 calls, which had increased 22 percent in the past five years.

City council listened, and [cautiously passed a budget](#) that expanded PPB's sworn officer positions by 49—leaving PPB with a total sworn force of 1,001.

"I don't care if you love the police or if you hate the police," said Mayor Ted Wheeler during his April state of the city address, explaining his support of more officer hires. "But when you call 911 you expect the police to show up and you expect them to show up in a timely basis."

New city data, however, reveals that this contentious decision to expand PPB's force did little—if anything—to solve the city's lagging officer response times.

[A PPB budget review](#) released by the City Budget Office (CBO) Tuesday shows that despite the new positions created in the bureau, the number of sworn officers on patrol—those called to respond to emergencies—has remained unchanged.

In March 2018, the [CBO reported](#) that PPB had between 350 and 360 officers available for patrol on any given day. The most recent data obtained by CBO finds that number is currently at 351. And as the number of 911 calls for service continue to rise over the past year, PPB officers' average response time for "high priority" calls remains unchanged at exactly 8.6 minutes. In 2012, that number was 6.3 minutes. There is no national standard for police response times.

According to the CBO, these unchanged numbers are based on a much larger problem: The police bureau is unable to successfully hire and retain sworn officers. The PPB currently has 75 unfilled officer positions—more than it began fiscal year 2018-19 (beginning on July 1, 2018) with.

While the total number of officer hires has increased over the past few years, PPB's ability to keep them around has plummeted. According to the CBO, Portland has historically seen an

average of 10 to 15 percent of all new officers leave PPB before their 18-month probationary period is over. Yet recent data shows that as many as 25 percent of officers hired in the past three years are no longer employed by PPB.

It's this problem, city economists say, that has hobbled PPB's ability to improve call response times.

"The pace of hiring is the primary determinant of the bureau's ability to deploy additional officers to patrol to help manage call volume," reads the CBO report.

The report attributes this hiring problem to several issues, including the fact it takes an average 340 days for a officer to be hired after initially applying for the job. PPB blames this lag time on the background investigations each applicant must go through before getting a job offer.

"Anecdotally, the bureau frequently loses would-be recruits to other agencies with shorter hiring timelines," the CBO report explains. CBO analysts also ascribe low hiring rates to a "negative local and national narrative regarding police work" that deters potential applicants.

This isn't news for the budget office, which has routinely deterred the city and police bureau from relying solely on new officer hires to fix its lagging response system.

Last year, CBO recommended the city hire no more than 14 sworn officers, and instead focus city dollars to filling officer vacancies and retaining already employed officers. This suggestion was certainly not reflected in the final budget's ask for 49 officers.

The CBO also presses PPB to prioritize "demand management strategies" (any internal programming that could improve response times) in the coming budget cycle. The report underscores what might have been the most successful use of PPB's budget dollars: Placing a PPB sergeant in Portland's 911 call center.

This pilot project, which began in November 2018, allows an officer to gauge whether or not incoming calls truly need an in-person officer response. According to the CBO, that one position diverted more than 1,800 calls to agencies and service providers better equipped to handle the emergency than PPB (like a county mental health office or a homeless service provider).

CBO estimates that the added 60 hours of weekly sergeant time spent at the 911 call center freed up 113 hours of total officer time that could be used responding to actual crimes.

"Generally speaking," the report concludes, "implementing demand management strategies is a far more cost-effective way of addressing increasing call volume than adding sworn patrol officers."

It seems like PPB is beginning to pay attention. The [police bureau's proposed budget](#) this year, released in February, doesn't include any requests for additional sworn officers.

The Skanner

PCCEP Steering Committee to Meet March 12

March 6, 2019

The public is invite to the Portland Committee on Community-Engaged Policing (PCCEP) - Steering Committee for its March meeting on Tuesday, March 12th, 2019 from 5:30pm-7:00pm at The PCCEP Office, 525 NE Oregon Street, Suite 250 in Portland. (The PCCEP office is located inside the East West College of the Healing Arts building on the corner of NE Oregon

Street and NE 6th Avenue. The Portland Streetcar lines A and B, MAX Light Rail lines Red, Blue and Green -- at 7th Avenue MAX station -- and the #6 bus line all stop nearby, there is street pre-paid parking in the neighborhood.)

The [draft agenda is online](#) and so are [meeting details](#).

PCCEP welcomes input from community members, who can share ideas during the public comment periods of the March 12 meeting.

Members of the public also provide your feedback to the PCCEP prior to the meeting by emailing your input to PCCEPinfo@portlandoregon.gov. Your feedback will be shared with PCCEP members prior to the March 12th meeting. Visit the PCCEP website to [learn more](#).

To help ensure equal access to our programs, services, and activities, the City of Portland will reasonably modify policies/procedures and provide auxiliary aids/services to persons with disabilities. If there are ways we can help you more fully participate in this process, please contact Claudia Claudio at claudia.claudio@portlandoregon.gov. To learn more about submitting an ADA Accommodation form, [click here](#).

Childcare is available upon request. In order to arrange for childcare, please email claudia.claudio@portlandoregon.gov at least four days prior to the meeting.

Agendas and documents are subject to updates.