

The Oregonian

Judge wants some proof that Portland's new community approach to police oversight is effective

*By Maxine Bernstein
June 6, 2019*

U.S. District Judge Michael H. Simon didn't give Portland city lawyers what they sought Thursday, instead ordering them to return to court in eight months to review the work of a new community group charged with overseeing police reforms.

Simon said he believed the Portland Committee on Community-Engaged Policing has shown "tremendous promise" since it began monthly meetings in November.

But the judge said he needed more assurance that the committee is effective, particularly since its predecessor fell apart amid inner turmoil and lack of support from the city and that nothing filled the gap for more than a year.

"Now I'm a little bit more skeptical about giving approval before I have further evidence it's adequate," Simon said after hearing nearly six hours of testimony about the city's settlement with the U.S. Justice Department over police mistreatment of people with mental illness.

"I think it's going in the right direction," the judge said, of the new community oversight group. "I'm not ready to conclude it's adequate ... until I see a record of positive performance."

Justice Department attorney Jared Hager and Portland Deputy City Attorney Denis Vannier had urged the judge to validate the committee's work and find the city has met the settlement's "community engagement" requirement.

Not granting final approval would be "an abuse of discretion" by the court, Vannier said.

The judge approved the settlement in 2014 after a federal investigation found Portland police officers too often used stun guns or excessive force against people experiencing a mental health crisis. The agreement called for significant changes to police policies, training and community oversight.

Simon said he disagreed with the city's contention that he has no discretionary authority and called the community engagement requirement a "critically important piece."

Hager emphasized the dozens of hours that committee volunteers have put in, the number of meetings and subcommittee meetings held, the adoption of bylaws and the city's financial investment in training and supporting the group's members.

Hager and Vannier argued that the judge's approval shouldn't depend on the adequacy of the group's performance.

The committee "needs to know it has an integral, long role in police accountability," Vannier argued, saying it's been hard for the city to hire a program director for the committee with the judge in April 2018 granting only "conditional approval" for its work.

The judge appeared skeptical: "What's your evidence of that?" Simon asked.

Later in the day, a city employee reported that a finalist has been identified for the program director's job and is undergoing background checks.

Portland's idea of giving community members the role of helping to monitor federally mandated police reforms was hailed as a unique approach when former Mayor Sam Adams helped work out the settlement. It also proved a way to avoid having a court-appointed monitor or court-ordered consent decree, as many other police agencies under federal investigation have faced.

"Was that a mistake in hindsight?" the judge asked from the bench. "I'll leave that to academics and others to opine on that in the future."

Community activists who addressed the judge all urged him to hold off on making any judgments yet about the new committee.

It's still getting off the ground, they said: The group's meetings haven't been well-attended by the public; six of the original members have resigned, as well as an alternate member, mostly due to personal reasons.; and the committee has yet to make substantive recommendation on a police bureau policy.

The 13-member committee was supposed to be the "new and improved, better model," but that's not been the case, said the Rev. T. Allen Bethel of the Albina Ministerial Alliance's Coalition for Justice and Police Reform.

Bethel said the group "lacks the essential charge – community engagement."

The meetings of its predecessor, the Community Oversight Advisory Board, were often contentious yet the public attended those, Bethel said. "We're lacking that here," he said.

Committee co-chairs Lakayana Drury and Lakeesha Dumas said whether the judge gave his "conditional" or "final" approval wouldn't make a difference because they're both committed to the work regardless.

"This is something in our conscience," Drury said.

Police Chief Danielle Outlaw and her three assistant chiefs attended the hearing, watching the testimony from the jury box in Simon's 15th floor courtroom. Outlaw thanked the committee volunteers for their time and said the Police Bureau has a "huge vested interest" in the group's success.

"We have blind spots," she said. "We don't know what we don't know." For that reason, the bureau will rely on the input and insight of the community group's members.

In other testimony, federal lawyers and the city-hired compliance officer cited ongoing concerns about the length of investigations into alleged police misconduct.

The judge also continued to question city officials and community members about the value of police body cameras, though they're not required in the agreement.

And several people urged the Police Bureau to open meetings of its Behavioral Health Unit Advisory Council to the public. The council was borne out of the settlement to improve police encounters with people in mental health crisis.

Jan Friedman, an attorney with Disability Rights Oregon and a former of the council, said allowing people who suffer from mental illness to have a voice at the table is key to "healing and empowerment." She said the state's public meetings law applies to the gatherings, though the city attorney disagreed.

"This would help engender trust if people had input," Friedman said.

The judge had the last word: "There's no legal prohibition to opening it up."

Portland retail tax applies more broadly than thought, igniting opposition at City Hall

*By Gordon Friedman
June 6, 2019*

Portland's voter-approved tax on big retailers falls on more companies than initially expected, leading business executives to push back against it at City Hall this week.

Instead of affecting just big-box retailers – as advertised by tax proponents during last November's campaign – a city legal analysis obtained by The Oregonian/OregonLive concludes the tax may actually be applied to nearly any billion-dollar company with sales in Portland.

The tax, officially called the Clean Energy Surcharge, applies a 1 percent tax on the Portland sales of companies with \$1 billion or more in total sales – at least \$500,000 of which must take place inside city limits.

Which companies pay hinges on what counts as a “retail sale.” Thomas Lannom, the city's top tax official, sought clarity in the legal analysis, which he asked for during the typically mundane task of drafting tax administrative rules.

Lannom asked: May the tax be applied to public works projects, construction equipment wholesalers, or financial products such as annuities, disability insurance plans or life insurance policies?

The answer to all, said Kenneth McGair, a senior deputy city attorney: Yes, because the measure adopted by voters applies the tax to nearly all transactions except those for groceries, medicines and health care services.

In essence, unless an industry is carved out from the tax, it pays.

That leaves unexpected liabilities on the ledgers of some of Oregon's biggest companies. The tax, officials say, would also affect the cost of building affordable housing, schools and other public works projects. Willamette Week first reported concerns over the tax rules.

Disagreement over the broad definition of retail sparked a meeting Thursday afternoon between Lannom, Mayor Ted Wheeler; Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty; Marshall Runkell, chief of staff to Commissioner Chloe Eudaly; Portland Business Alliance President Andrew Hoan; and representatives of the tax-backing coalition Portland Clean Energy Fund.

One attendee, Alan Hipólito, the executive director of coalition member Verde, said no decisions were made during the confab.

A spokeswoman for Wheeler said in a statement that the mayor wants the tax rules to “reflect the intent of the ballot measure and ensure that administrative rules do not adversely impact schools or affordable housing.”

Curtis Robinhold, director of the Port of Portland, said the city's interpretation blindsided his agency and will dent its budget.

“When the measure was being discussed – and I voted for it – I didn't know it would affect our projects,” Robinhold said in an interview.

He cited as an example the Port's PDXNext initiative, a \$2 billion expansion of concourses and dining areas at Portland International Airport. One of the project contractors, Hoffman Construction, stands to pay the city tax under the broad definition of retailer.

Dan Drinkward, Hoffman's vice president, said no reasonable person would consider his mammoth construction company to be a retailer. Portland's draft rules incorporate a definition that is "dramatically different" from what was told to voters, he said.

"We are not a retailer," Drinkward said, "and we should not be subject to this tax."

The irony, he said, is that it won't be Hoffman Construction paying the surcharge but the taxpayers who fund public works projects. Hoffman is building the Lincoln High School for \$243 million and the city tax hit "will make it difficult to provide the facility the community is hoping for," according to a school district analysis.

Jordan Papé, president and chief executive of heavy equipment supplier Papé Machinery, said the tax will affect his company's Portland dealerships. Papé is one of only a few machinery dealers to be affected by the tax and he said the added pressure "will have potential consequences of whether we can stay in Portland."

Executives at insurance and financial plan provider The Standard feel it would be nonsensical to apply the tax to their products.

"Nobody taxes retirement plans," said Justin Delaney, the firm's vice president of corporate and legal affairs. "It's just bad public policy to tax people's retirement savings."

Delaney said the draft tax rules are a far cry from the picture that was sold to voters.

"It seems like there's some revisionist history going on here," he said.

To date, 27 companies have prepaid \$3.3 million under the tax, said Lannom, the city tax official.

The surcharge is expected to generate up to \$71 million a year for companies and nonprofits to provide eco-friendly retrofits for low-income homeowners as well as job training for women, people of color and people with disabilities. No money has been distributed yet.

Portland City Council to vote on Bull Run Watershed charter amendment

By Gordon Friedman

June 6, 2019

The Portland City Council is scheduled to vote this month on sending three city charter amendments to voters, the most consequential of which would enshrine protections of the Bull Run Watershed into the document that acts as Portland's constitution, Commissioner Amanda Fritz announced Thursday.

Fritz, the Water Bureau commissioner, wrote in a blog post that it is "astonishing" the watershed doesn't already have charter protection. She said that she wants to do her part to "protect this precious resource" before she retires from city office in 2020.

Part of what protects the watershed is a ban on public access to the areas around Bull Run Lake, the Bull Run River and several tributaries. Fritz's amendment would put those restrictions in the city charter.

State law currently requires the city to protect the watershed, but Fritz noted those mandates are set to expire in 2027 when the city completes a new water filtration plant. Protecting the Bull Run Watershed only becomes more important after the state mandates expire, she said.

Fritz also proposed two less substantive charter amendments. One would allow the city to give or receive aid in the event of a disaster. The other would allow Portland Water Bureau properties outside the Bull Run area – such as those where storage tanks or pipes are located – to be converted for public use as greenspaces or gardens.

If approved by the Council at its June 26 meeting the amendments would appear on the November 2019 ballot in Portland.

40-room family shelter to open this month in Southeast Portland

*By Molly Harbargar
June 6, 2019*

Forty families will begin to move into a motel in Southeast Portland this month -- the new home for the city-county family shelter.

Multnomah County signed a master lease in April with the owner of Briarwood Suites and renamed the motel Lilac Meadows. It is supposed to bring an end to the nearly yearlong temporary housing fix the Joint Office of Homeless Services has provided for families previously staying at a homeless shelter that had a faulty roof.

The owners of Briarwood Suites on Southeast Powell Boulevard, a 16,908-square-foot motel built in 1991, offered the space to the Joint Office after a call for suitable accommodations. The county evaluated seven hotels, motels and one industrial site before settling on Briarwood because of its size and location to transit, grocery stores and other amenities.

The county signed a seven-year lease for \$35,000 each month. Human Solutions estimated that its operational costs will be about \$1 million a year.

The space is still under construction and was expected to reopen as a shelter at the beginning of June, but Human Solutions spokeswoman Lisa Frack said that the nonprofit hopes to open by the end of the month.

While all the families who stayed in the former shelter have found permanent housing, twelve families are still in temporary housing -- motels paid for by the night -- and will have priority in the new Lilac Meadows if they have not been placed in permanent housing by then. After that, the rest of the rooms will gradually be filled.

The motel does not yet have a full kitchen, so the move-in process could happen over the course of three months to not overwhelm the existing facilities.

Each family will have one room, unless there are too many members. Some of the rooms are joined by a door, which could be used to accommodate families with several children.

The rooms will have a mini-fridge and microwave, as well as the existing bathroom and vanity. The spaces will be cramped but afford more privacy than was available at the former family shelter.

That one placed all the families together in a setting similar to a traditional homeless shelter, which meant that kids of various ages and genders had little separation for changing and other daily life functions.

The motel-style shelter creates some challenges for staff because families can close doors and be less accessible. But it also allows children to feel like they are staying in a more home-like environment.

They also will eventually be able to play in a designated area on the premises, perhaps where a covered parking area is now. The families will have access to a large gathering area, daily meals and laundry services.

A sauna will be converted to a room that will zap all new families' belongings to kill bedbugs before they move in.

"The truth is, those families needed more than living in a large room with 120 bunks," said Multnomah County Chairwoman Deborah Kafoury when the lease was signed. "They needed their personal space. Every family does, especially when the Portland housing market is keeping families in shelters longer than ever."

The waiting list for a family shelter bed is about 400 families long right now.

"The market here is so tight that families are stuck in shelter even when they have a housing subsidy, even when they're working full-time jobs," Kafoury said.

There is no time limit to how long they can stay. Frack said that Human Solutions data shows that families are staying weeks and months now, when a few years ago, they were only in shelters for days or weeks.

"We find that if you send people out when they're not ready, they come back," Frack said.

While families are at the shelter, Human Solutions staff provides support to find housing, work with the children and clear obstacles to employment or other issues.

"It's a place to come and be stable but also a place to get closer to where you want to be," Frack said.

To sign up for a shelter, visit 211.org or call 211.

The Portland Tribune

Traffic cameras enforce lower speed limit on Marine Drive

*By Zane Sparling
June 07, 2019*

Portland Bureau of Transportation plans to add rumble strips, traffic lights, signalized crosswalks.

A slower speed will keep drivers cruising safely on Northeast Marine Drive, officials say.

The Portland Bureau of Transportation has reduced the speed limit to 40 mph from 45 mph on a 8.5-mile stretch of the roadway between Northeast 33rd Drive and the city limits at 185th Drive.

If this news feels familiar, it is. PBOT downshifted speeds to 35 mph on Marine Drive between 33rd and Interstate 5 in September of last year. But the road remains dangerous.

At least 189 documented crashes resulted in four deaths and 144 injuries between 2012 and 2016 on Marine Drive. Another six traffic fatalities have been reported since January 2017.

"The City of Portland has joined cities around the country in embracing Vision Zero," the bureau relates, "the notion that the death of even one person on our roads is one too many."

Daytrippers on the scenic two-lane roadway jostle with rumbling semis servicing the Columbia Corridor — with steep embankments on either side and no centerline divider thicker than paint.

Rumble strips, however, are in the works.

The new 40 mph speed limit began Thursday, May 30. The traffic camera at westbound Northeast 138th Avenue will issue warnings for two weeks, then return to citations. The speed camera at Northeast 33rd will not be affected.

This summer, PBOT says it plans to begin work on a new traffic signal at Northeast 122nd Avenue, rapid flashing beacons at Northeast 112th and 138th avenues, as well as filling in gaps in the multi-use trail and adding bike lanes between 112th and 122nd avenues.

WinCo adds clean energy tax to Portland shoppers' receipts

By Lisa Balick/KOIN 6 News

June 06, 2019

WinCo said it is 'in an effort to be transparent with our customers and in line with current draft regulations'

Shoppers at a Portland WinCo store were surprised to see a new charge on their receipts, KOIN 6 News reports.

The charge is a way for the company to show it's collecting money for a city-wide clean energy tax approved by Portland voters last fall.

Businesses that make \$1 billion or more in national sales and at least half a million in Portland are supposed to pay the city 1% of their gross receipts.

Companies doing business in Portland can either absorb the cost, pass it on with higher prices or pass it directly to shoppers like Winco is doing.

For many, the tax is only a few pennies on their purchases.

You may be seeing the charge at other Portland businesses and ATM transactions.

"It's supposed to be for large businesses but it's like the tariffs consumer will pay for everything anyway," shopper Barbara said.

Basic food -- items that could be purchased with food stamps -- are exempt, as well as medicine but the tax applies to things like prepared food, cleaning supplies and toiletries not covered by food stamps.

In a statement to customers, WinCo said "in an effort to be transparent with our customers and in line with current draft regulations proposed by the City of Portland, WinCo has chosen to collect the amount of this surcharge via a separately stated item on our receipts instead of building it into the price of the products we sell. This allows customers a greater visibility into how the surcharge impacts them."

City revenue experts told KOIN 6 News they are still working out the details on this tax, in particular, who would be required to pay.

Willamette Week

Portland Business Alliance Pushes City to Limit the Clean Energy Fund Surcharge

By Rachel Monahan

June 6, 2019

A fight under way in City Hall could determine whether the cost of affordable housing and schools rises.

The Portland Business Alliance is pushing for the city to limit which companies will be subject to the Portland Clean Energy Fund surcharge, citing the advice of lawyers that the city can change the regulation without a vote of City Council.

Passed last year by voters, the Portland Clean Energy Fund is expected to bring in upwards of \$30 million a year to fund energy efficiency and other projects for environmental sustainability. It adds an extra 1 percent charge on the city's business tax for retail companies with \$500,000 sales within the city and a billion dollars nationally.

The current fight is around the definition of "retail" business. The current city draft administrative rules would include construction companies as retailers, potentially adding to the cost of building schools and affordable housing as well as other public-works projects.

An email obtained by WW shows that the PBA, which opposed the measure, is fighting to limit the way retailer is defined.

"The campaign was unequivocally clear concerning a 'narrow definition of retail,'" writes Andrew Hoan, president and CEO of the PBA, which opposed the measure during the campaign. "The Portland Business Alliance supports rules that confirm and align with the campaign's concise statements."

Hoan continues: "Considering the enormity of the consequences that could be leveled on the business community, affordable housing, schools, disability insurance, retirement plans, manufacturing, wholesale, seismic safety and a host of other industries and business activities, which the voters never agreed to, I would like to make myself and team available to meet at any point."

The city attorney's office has determined that construction companies are subject to it and says the Revenue Division, which is responsible for drafting the regulations and collecting the funds, cannot change the rules without a vote of council.

The Portland Mercury

Transportation Activists Hold Jazz Funeral for Victims of Traffic Fatalities

*By Blair Stenvick
June 6, 2019*

Twenty-one people have died from traffic-related accidents in Portland this year, and they will be remembered with a New Orleans-style jazz funeral on Thursday evening.

The fourth annual Jazz Funeral to Remember Victims of Traffic Violence is a chance to pay tribute to those lost in traffic accidents—but it's also a political event, meant to call attention to what transportation activists see as a failure to make city roads safe for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.

In a press release, event organizers BikeLoudPDX, The Street Trust, and Oregon Walks note that despite the city's Vision Zero plan to eliminate traffic deaths by 2025, safety issues persist—and are especially prevalent in lower-income communities east of 82nd Avenue.

PBOT has continuous plans to make streets safer through both Vision Zero and the Fixing Our Streets program. Improvements through those programs include new and enhanced sidewalks and crosswalks, repaved roads, better bike lanes, and reduced speed limits.

Still, the event organizers have some specific demands that they'd like to see PBOT enact quickly. From the press release:

While we look forward to the speedy implementation of these improvements, BikeLoudPDX calls on Commissioner Eudaly and Director Chris Warner to:

- Ban Right-on-Reds in Downtown and in Pedestrian Districts
- Use low-cost materials to install curb extensions and upgrade bike lanes on dangerous streets
- Add protected left turns and 3-second head start to the walk signal (Leading Pedestrian Interval) for people walking across intersections to enhance pedestrian visibility along all High-Crash Corridors and Pedestrian Districts.

The jazz funeral kicks off at 5 pm at Pioneer Courthouse Square Thursday evening, and will include live music, speakers, and a procession to the Oregon Department of Transportation's Portland headquarters on NW Flanders.

The Daily Journal of Commerce

A 'new normal' for multifamily projects

*By Chuck Slothower
June 6, 2019*

A new proposal in Northwest Portland shows how developers are getting increasingly creative to avoid Portland's inclusionary housing thresholds.

Cairn Pacific is proposing six buildings, each with approximately 18 apartment units. With that arrangement, the developer can build about 108 units, with none required to be offered to low-income renters.

Portland's inclusionary housing rules exempt buildings with fewer than 20 units. For larger buildings, developers must provide a proportional amount of apartments at rents affordable to people who earn less than either 60 percent or 80 percent of the Portland area's median income, or pay a fee in lieu.

Noel Johnson, a principal at Cairn Pacific, said the proposed project would not be built if it had to include affordable units, which bring in less revenue for the developer.

"The reality is basically no projects pencil with inclusionary zoning," he said.

Other developers have moved forward with projects that fall just below the 20-unit threshold. A 19-unit building is under construction at 4130 S.E. Division St. That building is from a limited liability company that lists Anita Chan as manager. It was designed by Baysinger Partners Architecture.

In a September 2018 report, the Portland Housing Bureau said the pace of constructing buildings with fewer than 20 units was in line with recent years. In 2017, 13 percent of building permits were for structures with fewer than 20 units, according to the Housing Bureau.

"This proportion is consistent with what has been occurring since 2012 as Portland emerged from the recession," the report stated.

Still, 2017 saw the most such buildings constructed since 2012. Data for 2018 were not immediately available.

Gerard Mildner, a Portland State University real estate professor, said it's not surprising developers are finding a way around inclusionary housing rules.

"Folks are really scratching their heads over this, and if it takes a lot of 18-unit buildings, they'll do it," he said. "I think a more likely reaction is to go to the suburbs."

The 20-unit threshold is embedded in the 2016 state law that permitted municipalities – with Portland foremost in mind – to enact inclusionary housing ordinances. The law says inclusionary zoning rules "may apply only to multifamily structures containing at least 20 housing units." Developers have responded by building multiple structures of fewer than 20 units on the same site.

Johnson said he expects to see more such projects.

"That's kind of I think the new normal in terms of how Portland's going to be producing housing in the short run," he said. "The reality is we either produce housing, or we don't produce housing."

Portland has no flexibility to change the 20-unit threshold without a corresponding change in state law. Some small projects have included affordable units anyway.

"The Housing Bureau is encouraged that 14 residential projects with less than 20 units have voluntarily opted into the inclusionary housing program (paying the fee-in-lieu or providing affordable units) due to the incentives provided, and many others are considering doing the same," stated Eileen Park, spokeswoman for Mayor Ted Wheeler, in an email. "The city will continue to consider options to incentivize more affordable housing."

Cairn Pacific is best known for developing a series of large mixed-use projects in Northwest Portland's former Con-way area, now rebranded as Slabtown. These include the Leland James and L.L. Hawkins buildings, with tenants such as New Seasons Grocery and Breakside Brewery.

This new proposal calls for a series of five-story buildings at 2123 N.W. 30th Ave., and the adjacent block. Jones Architecture is designing the buildings on 30th Avenue, and Waechter Architecture is designing the others.

Using different architects is meant to provide some variety in design, Johnson said. The new buildings will be next to townhomes designed by architect Rick Potestio for Cairn Pacific.

"I'm trying to get a potpourri of designers working in that area to get an eclecticity of design," Johnson said.

Cairn Pacific's intention is to create a walkable, livable neighborhood for families within a short jaunt to Forest Park, Johnson said.

The multifamily buildings will have amenities such as bike rooms, storage, common areas and at-grade parking. Cairn Pacific plans to use cross-laminated timber. The material has become popular for office projects in the Portland area, but not multifamily projects.

The proposed buildings are in early-stage design, Johnson said. They're likely to be a mix of one-bedroom and two-bedroom units, with perhaps some three-bedroom units.

The small buildings will be sited on corners wherever possible, to give them more light and air and better energy performance, Johnson said.

The Portland Business Journal

Prosper Portland lands \$500,000 grant to clean up post office site

By Jon Bell

June 6, 2019

A \$500,000 grant from the Environmental Protection Agency will help Prosper Portland clean up decades-old contamination on its 14-acre post office property in the Pearl District.

In an announcement yesterday, the EPA said it selected Prosper Portland for one of its Brownfield Cleanup Grants. The grants typically help under-served and economically disadvantaged communities clean up old industrial and commercial properties so they can be redeveloped.

Prosper Portland acquired the Post Office site at 715 N.W. Hoyt St. in 2016 for \$88 million. The agency envisions the site anchoring the larger 32-acre Broadway Corridor area. A master planning process, led by Denver's Continuum Partners and ZGF Architects, is underway. Prosper Portland has noted that the area "offers the potential to create nearly 4 million square feet of new economic, business, social and community development opportunities."

Before any of that can happen, however, the post office site needs to be cleaned up.

According to the EPA, before the post office used the property, part of it was owned by the Northern Pacific Terminal Co., which used it as a rail yard. In addition, a manufactured gas company also operated in the northwest corner of the property for nearly 40 years, from 1893 to

the 1930s. That company, Pintsch Manufactured Gas, produced compressed gas for the lighting of railroad cars, according to an analysis of the brownfield posted on the Broadway Corridor website.

The EPA noted that the site "is contaminated with polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, ethylbenzene and metals."

Information from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality notes that the site has been capped and has been safe for prior uses. However, any redevelopment on the property will require excavation and removal of contaminated soil, which is what the EPA grant will help fund.

The grant will also cover the costs of community outreach activities, including public meetings, fact sheets and web pages.

The Skanner

Parkrose Hero Honored By City

*By Christen McCurdy
June 6, 2019*

At the May 31 meeting of the Community Peace Collaborative, which meets biweekly at the Portland Police Bureau's North Precinct Building, youth violence prevention director Antoinette Edwards started by asking those present to introduce themselves and say who their heroes were.

Most named family – mothers, grandmothers or other relatives who sacrificed themselves to help their family. Many named family members who'd made an impact on the world, like parents and grandparents who'd desegregated neighborhoods or spaces like swimming pools.

Later in the meeting, Edwards called the theme of heroism back again.

"Two weeks ago, this meeting was ending and police responders were heading out to Parkrose High School," Edwards said.

She then presented Keanon Lowe, who on May 17 tackled and disarmed a student, with the Community Peace Collaborative's Award for Selfless Heroism. Lowe works as a security guard and football and track coach at the high school. A former wide receiver for the University of Oregon Ducks, Lowe held analyst positions with the Philadelphia Eagles and the San Francisco 49ers before returning to Portland two years ago.

Friday he revealed that his return to Portland was motivated by tragedy.

"We talked about heroes and I have two," Lowe told the crowd of about 40 people. One was his mother, who relocated from Gresham to Beaverton to ensure he'd have access to education after he expressed a desire to attend Jesuit High School to play football. "She made it happen. I don't know how."

His other hero was his best friend, Taylor Martinek, who died two years ago of a drug overdose. At the time, Lowe was working for the 49ers and decided to move back.

"I always consider myself a leader in the community," Lowe said. "I sought out the school that needed the most help."

He said he believed he was placed in the situation he was for a reason: “All of a sudden, it’s on me to make something happen.”

Lowe held the student, Angel Granados-Diaz, in a bear hug until police arrived. Granados-Diaz, who turned 19 shortly before the incident, pleaded not guilty May 29 to charges of possessing a firearm in a public building, discharging a firearm at a school, possessing a loaded firearm in public and reckless endangerment.

Classmates and friends have told local media that Granados-Diaz had expressed suicidal thoughts in the weeks leading up to the incident and police have described the incident as a suicide attempt. Granados-Diaz is currently in custody at the Multnomah County Jail and his bail is set at \$500,000. His next court date is July 9.