

# **The Portland Tribune**

## **Wheeler announces for reelection**

*By Jim Redden*  
10/14/2019

Mayor is joined by labor, business and other supporters at Monday evening campaign event

Mayor Ted Wheeler officially announce for reelection before a wide range of supporters on Monday, Oct. 14

Wheeler is hoping to become the first mayor elected to more than one term since Vera Katz, whose last term ended in 2005. He previously served as Multnomah County Chair and State Treasurer.

Saying that being mayor is a hard job that includes making tough and sometimes unpopular decisions, Wheeler said he understand why previous mayors since Katz did not run for reelection. But he insisted he is will to take the hits that come with the office because he believes in the future of the city.

"I believe that despite the chorus of critics that frquently fills City Hall, we can make the changes we need to make to solve the crises we face," Wheeler said.

Wheeler announced at 6:30 p.m. at Uncorked Studios, a product design firm, in Southwest Portland. Introducing and endorsing hin were Commissioner Nick Fish, East Portland State Representative Janelle Bynum, Metro Council President Lynn Peterson, Portland Business Alliance CEO Andrew Hoan, Columbia Pacific Building and Construction Trades Council Executive Secretary-Treasurer Willy Myers, Native American Youth and Family Center Executive Director Paul Lumley, and Uncorked Studios founder and CEO Marcelino Alvarez. Wheeler's campaign emailed a press release about the event to local media on Friday, Oct. 11, and asked that it be embargoed until 6 p.m. Monday. But it also posted a letter about his accomplishments on his campaign website, prompting some media outlets to break the embargo, previewing the announcement over the weekend.

During his announcement, Wheeler took credit . making progress on the homeless crisis, providing more affordable housing, fighting climate change, increasing equity and inclusion and creating a community coalition to oppose hate groups. But he admitted many problems still exist — especially the homeless crisis — and vowed to continue working on them if reelected.

Wheeler's campaign committee currently has \$60,825 in the bank. It has not reported any substantial contributions since early January.

Only one other candidate has formally filed for mayor with the City Auditor's Office: neighborhood organizer and Wayfinding Academy faculty member Sarah Iannarone. Four other candidates have publicly declared for the office. They include Teresa Raiford, a Don't Shoot PDX organizer, and Ozzie González, a construction company director and and TriMet board member.

# **Last-ditch Wapato plea exposes rift**

*By Jim Redden*

*10/15/2019*

Public, private sectors spar over best way to help homeless as time runs out for using never-opened former Multnomah County Jail

The probable failure of efforts to use the never-opened Wapato Jail to help the homeless has exposed a simmering dispute between the idea's supporters and the existing official approach to ending homelessness.

Backers of using the never-used jail in North Portland for the homeless made a last-ditch plea for public and private help at the facility on Thursday, Oct. 10. The Portland/Multnomah County homeless service organization opposed it.

Developer Jordan Schnitzer, who bought the county property last year for \$5 million, told reporters last Thursday that he will begin demolishing the facility soon unless funding is found to convert it into a residential treatment center.

Schnitzer made the announcement at a news conference with Volunteers of America of Oregon President Kay Toran, who has proposed a Community Wellness Center conversion. But her organization has not been able to raise the tens of millions of dollars necessary to transform and operate it.

After the news conference, Multnomah County issued a statement that said, "We're glad that Jordan Schnitzer has reached the conclusion that he can't afford to warehouse people in this remote jail."

Schnitzer is a well-known philanthropist who has supported many charitable causes.

"Warehousing the homeless" previously was denounced at a Sept. 25 news conference attended by Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury and representatives of many homeless and other social service agencies in the county.

That county statement prompted Oregon Harbor of Hope, the nonprofit organization founded by developer Homer Williams that supports the Wapato plan, to issue its statement calling the "Housing First" approach to ending homelessness favored by the county a "failed policy."

Kafoury has repeatedly said that the key to ending homelessness is to provide housing to the homeless, along with caseworkers for those who need the most help. But the most recent federally required count found the number of unsheltered homeless in the county increased by 22% since 2017. Overall, homelessness was down 4%, however.

"'Housing First' as the principal part of the solution is a flawed and seriously incomplete understanding of homelessness and housing," said former Portland Development Commission head and current Harbor of Hope director Don Mazziotti, arguing that governments cannot afford to build enough housing fast enough to keep up with the increasing number of regional residents

losing their homes. He said the existing Wapato Jail could house 500 or more people right now, with separate facilities for men, couples, and women with children.

The county and city fund other services, too, through the Joint Office of Homeless Services. In its statement, the county argued that it and the city already had doubled the number of shelter beds and people living in affordable units in recent years. The office also provides rent assistance to those at risk of becoming homeless.

"We're not willing to take funding from those families getting rent assistance, from the people in apartments and shelters, and kick them to the street, just to throw good money after bad," said the statement, referring to the \$58 million cost of building the Wapato Jail.

But Mazziotti replied that the county and city are largely targeting just one segment of the homeless population, the chronically homeless who need the most help, and are not providing enough shelter and housing for the thousands of other people who need it or will need it, even temporarily.

"We have a deficit of 50,000 affordable units, according to Metro. The units were not built, but costs and rents continued to rise," said Mazziotti, who noted the regional governments are currently spending \$200 a square foot on their current affordable housing projects.

In its statement, the county said it agrees treatment and services can change lives, and it challenged Harbor of Hope to support the Downtown Behavioral Health Resource Center it is planning. But those at the Thursday news conference — which included Mazziotti, Williams and Portland Police Union President Daryl Turner — were dubious about the plans for the center, which would be housed in a long-vacant office building the county bought for \$5.8 million earlier this year at 333 S.W. Park Ave. The county has yet to announce the final costs for renovating and operating the center.

Ironically, the disagreement erupted shortly after Williams' group, the county and the city completed their first joint project, the Navigation Center and homeless shelter that recently opened near the southern end of the Broadway Bridge. Up to 100 homeless people can live there at a time and receive medical, counseling and placement services from on-site providers. It was built for Harbor of Hope for around \$3.5 million. The city and county are paying its operating expenses.

"Calling out Jordan Schnitzer, Volunteers of America, Oregon Harbor of Hope, the Portland Police Association and private-sector solutions is nonsense and nonproductive. The absence of public-sector leadership on the issue is stunning. And the community knows it," Mazziotti said.

You can find a link to a previous Portland Tribune story on the issue in the online version.

## **The Mercury**

# **Family of Man Fatally Shot by Police While in Mental Health Crisis Sues City of Portland**

*By Alex Zielinski*

*10/14/2019*

Lane Martin was experiencing a mental health crisis when he was shot and killed by a Portland police officer on July 30, 2019.

According to recently released records from the Portland Police Bureau's (PPB) investigation into the incident, Martin had experienced a "mental breakdown" triggered by a break-up in the months leading up to his death.

That might have been why witnesses said Martin, a 31-year-old art student at Portland State University, was acting "crazy" when he was first approached by a security guard that July afternoon.

And, according to Martin's family members, that's the primary reason why Portland Police Officer Gary Doran decided to shoot Martin. On Monday, Martin's family filed a civil rights lawsuit against the City of Portland for allowing its officers to fatally discriminate against someone with a mental illness.

"Defendant Gary Doran, a police officer with the City of Portland, shot and killed Lane Martin because Lane was exhibiting symptoms of his mental illness," reads the lawsuit. The lawsuit was filed the same afternoon that a Multnomah County grand jury cleared Doran of any criminal charges linked to the shooting.

Martin was shot in East Portland on July 30 after a series of escalating events.

Martin was first noticed by Will Rosenbalm, a security guard for Sally Beauty, a store that shares a parking lot with an abandoned Safeway on NE 122nd and Glisan. Rosenbalm said he saw Martin trying to break into a Jeep parked in the lot. When Rosenbalm attempted to intervene, Martin allegedly brandished a knife and told Rosenbalm that he was a federal police officer. Rosenbalm called 911.

When police arrived at the scene, according to PPB reports, Martin began walking south on NE 122nd, yelling and swinging a hatchet. When Martin didn't follow officers' demands to drop the hatchet, two officers—Nicholas Bianchini and David Kemple—fired rubber bullets at Martin's legs, causing him to drop the weapon. He began running down SE 122nd.

After shooting at Martin, Kemple said he "felt the suspect was reaching into his waistband to retrieve another weapon," so instructed officers to chase Martin down the street. Officers eventually cornered Martin in an apartment complex at SE 120th and Ash, where Kemple said he yelled at Martin, "Get on the ground or you may be shot."

"He still had that... crazed look in his eye. He didn't respond audibly. He just kind of was starting

at us and... he looked very amped up," Kemple said. "He looked like somebody that just wasn't gonna give up."

Officer Shanley Bianca was one of six cops surrounding Martin. In an interview with a PPB detective, Bianca said she saw Martin "raise his arms up so his elbows were bent, and hands in front of his chest, similar to a boxing stance," and take two steps toward the officers. She said she saw a black knife in his right hand. Other officers just saw Martin grabbing for something at his waistband.

"I had the impression he had something and he was trying to get it out," said Officer Mark Piombo in a PPB interview. "I was convinced he was coming out with a knife or something."

That's when Officer Doran fired 11 rounds at Martin, shooting him in each arm.

After Martin collapsed to the ground, officers continued yelling at him to put his hands up to prove he wasn't holding a weapon. Officers handcuffed him before administering first aid. He died on the scene.

Late Monday afternoon, a Multnomah County grand jury ruled that Doran was acting in self-defense when he shot Martin, clearing him of any potential criminal charges.

Around the same time, lawyers representing Martin's brother Evan filed a lawsuit against the City of Portland, accusing its law enforcement of using excessive, deadly force against someone with a disability.

In PPB's investigative interviews, Evan told a detective that his brother had addiction and mental health issues. Martin's mother, Cristi, told the same detective that she had visited her son within the past month and helped him make an appointment at Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare. Cristi noted that Martin was also going through a break-up.

"At the time he was killed by Officer Doran, Lane Martin was in the midst of a mental health crisis," the lawsuit reads. "He was delusional and paranoid. PPB's response to these mental health symptoms exacerbated his paranoia and precipitated his flight."

The lawsuit notes that it's been seven years since a US Department of Justice (DOJ) investigation found that PPB officers engaged in "a pattern and practice of unnecessary or unreasonable force during interactions with people who have or are perceived to have mental illness." Following that investigation, Portland entered a settlement agreement with the DOJ, agreeing to overhaul its tactics.

But, as the lawsuit points out, this intervention hasn't kept PPB officers from killing people in crisis.

"In the three years immediately preceding this lawsuit, PPB officers have used deadly force 18 times," the suit states. "At least six of those people were people affected by mental illness."

That includes Terrell Johnson, a 24-year-old man who was shot and killed by a PPB officer in 2017 while he was in a mental health crisis. In May, Johnson's mother filed a lawsuit against the City of Portland for her son's wrongful death. The case is still pending.

The Martin family's lawsuit blames PPB for not effectively disciplining officers who use excessive force, signaling that it's an appropriate response.

"The city wants us to believe that it has addressed police violence against the mentally ill with its training and data reporting," said Jesse Merrithew, one of the attorneys representing the Martin family. "The data shows those efforts to be ineffective. The central failing remains a lack of accountability and enforcement of the city's written policies, and that's what led to Lane's tragic death."

One of the new programs that came out of the DOJ settlement was the formation of the Enhanced Crisis Intervention Team (ECIT), a group of PPB officers specifically trained to respond to people in mental health crises.

At least two ECIT officers responded to the 911 call regarding Martin, including Kemple. In an interview with a PPB detective, Kemple says that despite his training, he had no option but to shoot Martin with rubber bullets.

"This was a person that was actively aggressive... he was in an area with a lot of people out... and there was no time to do anything but just immediately engage," Kemple said. "Talking to him was... he was yelling so much that there wasn't gonna be much of a conversation."

Another ECIT member on the scene, Officer Nikolay Hristov, said that when he arrived at the Safeway parking lot and saw Martin carrying a hatchet, he tried to de-escalate the situation.

"I said, hey... you can drop the axe," Hristov said. "He just kind looked at me and the wouldn't pay attention to me anymore... I couldn't communicate with him."

Martin's family has requested a trial by jury.

"Our family is heartbroken by Lane's unnecessary death," said Martin's mother Cristi in a press release sent Monday afternoon. "And our personal tragedy is further proof that the city has not changed the pattern of police conduct since it was sued by the U.S. Department of Justice. We don't want another family to suffer like this. The DA won't charge the officer and the city won't discipline him. How will we stop this from happening again?"