

The Oregonian

Portland voters approve spending ratepayer money in water system aid to other cities

*By Everton Bailey Jr.
November 5, 2019*

Updated at 9:07 p.m.

Portland voters OK'd spending water customers' payments to aid to other jurisdictions during major water-service-related emergencies.

Voters passed Measure 26-205 by 83% to 17%, according to partial returns as of 9:07 p.m. Tuesday.

The vote means the city can make formal agreements with other cities, counties, tribes or utilities to provide and receive water system-related aid after a significant disaster, such as an earthquake – and use money collected from water ratepayers for the costs of providing such help.

The city can already use the general fund to pay for assisting other communities during emergencies. The Portland Water Bureau and Environmental Services are also already part of the Oregon Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network, a statewide water-related emergency response coalition that includes 130 other cities and water districts. Their partnership is meant to facilitate deploying emergency services in the event of natural and people-caused disasters.

The charter amendment comes after the city spent about \$2.1 million of utility ratepayer money on a 30-day Louisiana trip in 2005 to send nearly three dozen Water Bureau workers and equipment to help with Hurricane Katrina recovery.

A Multnomah County judge ruled in 2014 that the spending was improper. The Federal Emergency Management Agency reimbursed the city about \$1.8 million and the city's general fund repaid rest.

Commissioner Amanda Fritz, who sponsored the measure and oversees the water bureau, said she was worried how voters would perceive the proposal because of the judge's previous ruling limiting use of ratepayer funds and The Oregonian Editorial Board's editorial urging Portlanders to reject it. She credited Commissioner Nick Fish, who was in charge of the Water Bureau from 2013 to 2018, for "helping restore the public's confidence" in how the agency spends ratepayer funds.

She said the Water Bureau would be required to report to the city council each year on water fund spending.

Fritz said the city spends at least \$500,000 a year to send Water Bureau employees to scenario-based training and conferences to help prepare for what to do in the event of a disaster.

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler says he'll donate past Gordon Sondland campaign contributions

By Everton Bailey Jr.

November 5, 2019

Updated at 6:20 p.m.

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler says he plans to donate \$16,000 in campaign contributions he received from controversial Portland hotelier and European Union Ambassador Gordon Sondland between 2012 and 2016.

Wheeler announced Tuesday that he plans to send the money to eight local nonprofits and groups, as well as a national coalition supporting the House impeachment inquiry into President Donald Trump.

Sondland, who became the U.S. ambassador to the European Union last summer, has become embroiled in the Ukraine scandal and President Donald Trump's impeachment inquiry.

According to campaign disclosure reports, Sondland personally donated \$5,000 in 2015 to Wheeler's mayoral campaign and \$500 in 2012 when Wheeler ran successfully as state treasurer. Sondland also donated \$10,000 to Wheeler's mayoral campaign in 2016 under a real estate investment fund tied to his Provenance Hotels.

Sondland revised his previous testimony this week to Congress, acknowledging he knew about and communicated to a top Ukrainian official a quid pro quo to withhold U.S. aid to Ukraine unless Ukraine's president publicly called for an investigation Trump wanted to discredit his political rival, Joe Biden. Congress released the new testimony Tuesday.

Wheeler is running for reelection in May. At least one of his opponents, Sarah Iannarone, has called for Wheeler to return Sondland's donations.

Jennifer Arguinzoni, Wheeler's reelection campaign manager, said in a statement that Wheeler wanted to give Sondland an "opportunity to explain his involvement in the Ukrainian scandal," before making a decision on his past contributions.

"Especially in light of the acknowledgment of a quid pro quo and the testimony of Lt. Col. Alexander Vindman, it has become clear that Sondland's actions are potentially counter to the law," Arguinzoni said.

Greg McKelvey, Iannarone's campaign manager, said they welcome Wheeler's decision to not hold on to Sondland's donations, but believe it should have come more quickly.

"Along with many Portlanders, we recognized the problematic association between Mayor Wheeler and Mr. Sondland, whose million dollar contribution to Donald Trump should have been an early red flag," McKelvey said in a statement, referencing Sondland's contribution to Trump's inauguration. "However, at the very least, as a candidate for public office, Mayor Wheeler should have recognized the necessity of returning Sondland's money the moment Sondland was implicated in the impeachment scandal."

According to Wheeler's campaign, he plans to distribute the funds to:

- Organizational partners of ImpeachNow.org: \$4,000
- Portland United Against Hate: \$1,500
- SOLVE: \$1,500

- DePaul Treatment Centers: \$1,500
- Basic Rights Oregon: \$1,500
- Portland Audubon: \$1,500
- Causa: \$1,500
- Transition Projects: \$1,500
- Portland Parks Foundation: \$1,500

Portland voters approve adding Bull Run watershed land protections to city charter

By Everton Bailey Jr.

November 6, 2019

Updated at 9:05 p.m.

Portland voters passed a new city charter amendment Tuesday that supporters say will add an extra layer of protections for the Bull Run watershed, the city's primary source of drinking water.

Measure 26-204 passed with 87% of the vote, according to partial returns as of 9:05 p.m. Tuesday.

The new charter provision will restrict public access and limit land uses and activities such as tree cutting on city-owned lands near the Bull Run watershed. It will also require any drinking water or hydroelectric projects to avoid and mitigate impacts to the natural environment.

The state requires the city to protect the watershed and protections are already in the city code. But future City Councils could vote to relax those protections without the charter amendment.

Commissioner Amanda Fritz, who sponsored the measure, said she and volunteers did outreach to voters leading up to the election. She said she wasn't surprised to see the proposal pass handily.

"I know how much people care about our water and preserving it," Fritz said. "I've found that when the people of Portland are presented with accurate information, they tend to make good choices. I'm glad that they did in this case."

Voters passed Measure 26-205 by 83% to 17%, according to partial returns as of Tuesday evening.

The city charter amendment means Portland voter approval will be needed to green light any logging, development or city-owned land transfers in the Bull Run watershed.

The watershed is made up of 102 square miles in the Sandy River basin near Mount Hood. It collects rainwater and snowmelt that flows to the Bull Run River and its tributaries, then drains it into two reservoirs.

Community can offer input on Portland's negotiations for new police union contract at two forums

By Maxine Bernstein

November 5, 2019

Mayor Ted Wheeler, who serves as police commissioner, and Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty are seeking community input about Portland's upcoming contract negotiations with the Portland Police Association at two forums before the end of the year.

One will be held Nov. 18, and the second will be Dec. 16.

"The goal of the event is to educate the public about the collective bargaining process, to listen to their thoughts and concerns and to gather their input to help ensure the contract best serves the interests and welfare of the public," according to statement released Tuesday.

Community members will be asked to identify their top priorities and discuss them among themselves in facilitated groups, with notetakers selected to capture the conversations, according to the release.

Negotiations are set to start in January for a new police union contract. The current one expires in June. The union represents about 950 rank-and-file officers, sergeants, detectives and forensic criminalists.

This fall, a coalition of community members said they plan to press the police chief, mayor and other City Council members to make changes to the contract that they say will help improve trust in the local police.

The group's members, including clergy and police watchdogs, are calling for an independent civilian agency that can review police use of deadly force and compel testimony and recommend discipline. They also seek a discipline process divorced from the state's arbitration process and lies fully with the mayor or City Council.

City officials are hoping to avoid the tumult that erupted in 2016 on the steps of City Hall as police pepper-sprayed and arrested protesters in the aftermath of an unruly demonstration over the city's newly approved police contract that was approved in a small meeting room after the council chambers were cleared.

The city increased officers' salaries 9 percent over three years in exchange for removing the controversial "48-hour" rule from the Portland Police Association contract. The rule had allowed officers who used deadly force to wait at least two days before making a statement to internal affairs investigators. Officers are now encouraged to speak with investigators less than 48 hours after a shooting or death in custody as part of the immediate internal affairs administrative review. The internal review is walled off from any criminal investigation of the use of force.

In September, Hardesty invited leaders of a national police reform campaign to address the city council. They recommended changes that will restrict use of deadly force, hold officers accountable for misconduct and allow for greater civilian oversight. City officials also are examining whether to hire an outside lawyer to assist in the negotiations, another move that Hardesty has proposed.

After the council heard from leaders of the national group Campaign Zero, the police union president called the group's recommendations "nothing more than an attack on workers."

Officer Daryl Turner, president of the Portland Police Association, wrote in a Facebook post then that the union " remains focused on the fundamental issues of collective bargaining, public safety, and adequate staffing to keep our community safe. We will not be distracted by those with self-serving agendas to derail the basic rights of our police officers. Also, our expectation is that our City leaders focus on preserving core rights and ensuring we address the critical recruiting and retention issues facing the Portland Police Bureau so we can fulfill our community's public safety priorities."

The first public forum will be from 6 to 8 p.m. on Nov. 18, at the Portland Community College Cascade Student Union, Rooms 203 and 204, at 5575 N. Albina Ave.

The next forum will be held during the same hours on Dec. 16. A location has yet to be determined.

3,000 gallons of sewage spills into Willamette River in downtown Portland

November 5, 2019

A pipe carrying raw sewage spilled an estimated 3,000 gallons into the Willamette River in downtown Portland Tuesday.

The city's Bureau of Environmental Services said crews discovered the spill around 10:30 a.m. Sewage flowed into the river at the Eastside Esplanade north of the Morrison Bridge.

Crews halt the spill by 2:30 p.m. by making a temporary repair on one of the city's sewer lines.

To put 3,000 gallons in context: The city's treatment plant takes in 70 million gallons of sewage a day.

Diane Dulken, a bureau spokeswoman, said the problem was a leaking underground pipe away from the river, at Southeast Second Avenue and Alder Street. Sewage made its way from there to a sewage outfall, a pipe designed to drain waste into the Willamette when heavy rains cause the system to overflow.

Dulken said the city is continuing to work on more permanent repairs to the pipe.

The bureau warned people to avoid contact with river water downstream of the area for the next 48 hours.

The Portland Tribune

Sources: Hearing on rewrite of neighborhood groups scheduled

*By Jim Redden
November 06, 2019*

Plan, a new nonprofit groups plans to rate homeless service agencies and a proposed initiative to legalize 'legalize psychedelics' in Portland is submitted and

The first Portland City Council meeting on the controversial rewrite of the civic engagement process will be held from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 14, at Self Enhancement Inc., 3920 N. Kerby Ave.

The document to be considered was not been released by press time.

The proposed rewrite has been criticized for proposing to remove references to neighborhood organizations from the engagement chapter of the City Code in order to encourage more civic participation by all Portlanders. It is being drafted by the Office of Community and Civic Life at the direction of the council.

Public comment will be accepted at the meeting. It is unclear whether the council will be asked to vote on something. At one time, Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, who oversees the office, said she will present the proposed rewrite as a report, but that could change. Doors will open at 5 p.m.

Nonprofit will rate homeless agencies

In another sign of growing public dissatisfaction with the regional response to the homeless crisis, a new nonprofit organization has been formed to help people decide which social service agencies are most worthy of supporting.

Several board members of the Hope for the Homeless Foundation have worked with homeless and affordable housing organizations, including President Doug Marshall, who served on the board of Fairhaven Recovery Homes, and Jerry Mason, who co-founded HOST (Home Owners Street at a Time) Development.

Marshall said the foundation will raise money for organizations that its members believe are addressing the root causes of homelessness.

The foundation will have its first annual fundraising event at 7 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 9, at the Multnomah Athletic Club, 1849 S.W. Salmon St. It is open to anyone willing to make a minimum \$1,000 contribution that will go to the approved organizations.

Push to legalize psychedelics

Think legalizing marijuana for medical purposes and recreation didn't go far enough? Then maybe you'll support the potential ballot measure to legalize "natural psychedelics" in Portland.

A prospective initiative petition to legalize the personal use of currently illegal plants and fungi with psychedelic compounds was filed with the City Auditors Office on Oct. 25. It would cover mescaline cacti, psilocybin mushrooms and plants containing bufotenine and ibogaine.

"Natural medicines and the plants of the Earth should be a common treasure for all humankind and should remain accessible to all regardless of race, orientation, gender and class," says the

petition, which deplores that psychedelic plant medicines "have been unjustly and immorally criminalized since the Nixon administration."

The petition was withdrawn Nov. 1 to correct a typo. Co-sponsors Nicholas Combest and Bryan Kim refiled it on Nov. 5.

Wheeler will donate past Sondland campaign contributions

By Jim Redden

November 05, 2019

At least one of Wheeler's opponents, Sarah Iannarone, had called him to return Sondland's donations.

Mayor Ted Wheeler's reelection campaign will donate \$16,000 in previous contributions from Portland hotel owner and European Union Ambassador Gordon Sondland to eight local nonprofits and a national coalition supporting the House impeachment inquiry into President Donald Trump.

Wheeler's campaign made the announcement Tuesday after Sondland revised his previous testimony to Congress, admitting that he knew U.S. was being withheld to Ukraine until it released a statement about fighting corruption as Trump wanted.

At least one of Wheeler's opponents, Sarah Iannarone, had called him to return Sondland's donations.

Jennifer Arguinzoni, Wheeler's campaign manager, said the mayor wanted to give Sondland opportunity to explain his involvement in the growing scandal before making a decision.

SW light-rail plan: Neither shorter, nor skinnier

By Bill Gallagher

November 05, 2019

Planners reject losing lanes on Barbur orstopping line in Tigard as budget gap closes to \$100 million

The people responsible for planning, pitching and completing a 12-mile light rail project through Southwest Portland dealt with the three B's Monday night: Barbur Boulevard, Bridgeport and budget.

BARBUR BOULEVARD: The Southwest Corridor Project Steering Committee buried the plan to remove two lanes for cars and trucks along Southwest Barbur Boulevard. That idea was born of a need to cut dollars from a proposed preliminary project budget.

The mayor of Tigard, Jason Snider, said he couldn't live with fewer lanes. There also was significant public opposition to "skinnying" Barbur to fewer lanes; a proposal that saw little support.

BRIDGEPORT: TriMet General Manager Doug Kelsey announced at the Committee meeting and public hearing in the Tigard Public Library, "It's Bridgeport or bust. If you don't play big you don't win big."

Snider had briefly backed a plan to run a light rail line only as far as downtown Tigard. His fellow Steering Committee members from Tualatin, Durham and Washington County, along with Kelsey, insisted on Bridgeport as the southern end of the line.

"It's the north star of the project," Kelsey said.

BUDGET: Just four months ago the project was reported to be \$462 million dollars over the \$2.4 billion proposed budget. It was the effort to balance the budget that generated cost-reduction plans to "skinny" Barbur Boulevard or to only go as far as Tigard.

Though both options for reducing the budget are off the table, Kelsey told the Steering Committee that the \$462 million shortfall has been slashed and is currently, "somewhere south of \$100 million due to significant effort outside these microphones."

The savings were mainly achieved by betting that voters will pass a multi-billion dollar transportation funding measure in November 2020.

Kelsey thanked Metro Executive Lynn Peterson for adding \$125 million to increase the "ask" for Southwest light rail in that measure to \$975 million on next year's ballot.

A critic of the Southwest Corridor Project, John Charles with the Cascade Policy Institute, said he doubts the voters will pass that measure. "The Steering Committee doesn't have an actual finance plan; it is just hoping voters will give TriMet a billion dollars next year in a bond measure. But every light rail bond since 1994 has been defeated; why do supporters think 2020 will be different?" he wrote.

Councilor Robert Kellogg of Tualatin said of the last four months, "It's been a roller coaster. To go from a project that's fully funded to one that's \$460 million over budget to one that's now \$100 million over budget. On a two and a half billion dollar project to get to \$100 million shortfall is positive. We're close and will be working to find additional resources."

Portland's elected representative on the Steering Committee, Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, said that a narrower Barbur Boulevard "is not feasible at this time," but seems not to have abandoned the idea of a shorter line. "It would be ideal to get to Bridgeport but I would hate to see this become an 'all or nothing' thing," she said.

Leah Robbins with TriMet reminded committee members and the hundred or so people in attendance that it's "still early on the timeline. There are many years to go" before trains on the region's sixth light rail line could possibly start running in 2027.

Nevertheless, Kelsey was optimistic that the Steering Committee would give final approval at its Monday, Nov. 18, meeting to the project recommendations discussed Monday night.

"We're on the nine-yard line. We've gone 91 yards but sometimes the last nine yards is the hardest," he said.

Portland Water Bureau measures approved

*By Jim Redden
November 05, 2019*

Both city measures related to the water bureau win easy approval at Nov. 5 special election

Two measures related to the Portland Water Bureau were easily approved at the Tuesday special election.

Commissioner Amanda Fritz, who is in charge of the bureau and sponsored them, said they were common-sense changes that should have happened years ago. There was no organized opposition to either measure.

Several suburban cities, including Beaverton, Tigard and Tualatin, receive some or all of their water from Bull Run.

With most votes counted, Measure 26-204 passed with nearly 89% of the vote. It puts the current environmental protection for the Bull Run Watershed into the city charter.

The same returns show Measure 26-205 passed with 85% of the vote. It would allow the bureau to spend ratepayer funds on emergency mutual aid agreements, which would enable governments to provide and receive emergency assistance following disasters. Such agreements typically allow the sharing of personnel and equipment.

The Bull Run Watershed is the primary source of water for Portland and much of the region. City code already restricts public access, prohibits tree cutting, limits land-use activities, and more. However, the code can be changed by the council, while changing the charter requires a public vote.

Fritz said she was inspired to ask the council to refer Measure 26-204 to the ballot after the 2017 Eagle Creek Fire that consumed much of the nearby Columbia River Gorge and the council's approval of a plant to filter Bull Run water to remove contaminants. The fire demonstrated how much harm a single person can cause, while the completion of the plant might encourage some to consider opening the watershed to public uses.

"If the protections are only in the code, they could be changed by the vote of a single council member," said Fritz.

The measure was supported by a coalition of environmental organizations and the Portland Business Alliance.

Measure 26-205 was a response to a judge's ruling in a ratepayer lawsuit that the city charter does not currently allow ratepayer funds to be spent on such agreements. The ruling prompted the city council to pay \$350,000 in general fund dollars to repay the bureau for money it spent to help New Orleans recover after Hurricane Katrina.

"General fund dollars are limited, and the bureau's experiences in New Orleans were good training that will help us recover when the big one hits," said Fritz, referring to the Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake expected to strike the region eventually.

Fritz said the bureau already is allowed to spend ratepayer funds to conferences and training exercises that are not as realistic as responding to a real disaster. She said the bureau would be required to report to the council every year on their mutual aid agreement activities, which will guarantee transparency.

Neighborhood Watch no longer part of Portland's plan

*By Bill Gallagher
November 05, 2019*

Community safety means more than stopping crime is the theory behind changes in neighborhood program

Boris the Burglar has been retired in Portland.

The Neighborhood Watch trademarked mascot won't be seen crossed out on any new signs warning people that nearby neighbors are watching.

Boris first showed up on signs on Southwest Portland telephone poles in the 1970s, as the manifestation of a crime prevention program begun by the National Sheriffs Association. Neighborhood Watch was a nationwide effort to get neighbors to know each other and work together in cooperation with local law enforcement to prevent crime and make neighborhoods safer and more livable.

Once those signs are gone in Portland they won't be replaced.

But there's a new name for neighbors getting together to prevent crime. It's called Neighbors Together.

"Starting July 1st, 2019, we are no longer involved in the traditional neighborhood watch model and the related watch activities to provide neighbors a new way to connect through Neighbors Together," according to a survey that was sent to more than 350 neighborhood watch organizers by Portland's Office of Community and Civic Life (Civic Life). (There were 597 neighborhood watches in 2014. By 2018 that number was down to 367.)

Those surveys asked whether the organizer was interested in "being connected" with a new program called Neighbors Together and if the neighborhood watch group included emergency response teams. One third of the surveys were returned. Civic Life says 96% of those who responded were interested in the replacement program.

Neighborhood Watch, according to answers provided by Civic Life, "... places primary emphasis on police response to resolve all public safety concerns. Civic Life has been evolving away from outdated models that focus solely on crime."

The official literature for Neighbors Together says the new program will, "better reflect Portland's values and vision to be a city that is welcoming and safe for everyone."

Asked by the SW Connection how the program would be "better," Civic Life provided this statement, "This new name describes a model that embraces an inclusive and collaborative vision of safety where neighbors work with each other, with the city, and with community-based organizations to better address a range of public safety considerations related to transportation, emergency preparedness, youth leadership, and more."

The Portland Police Bureau has had a long relationship with neighborhood watch groups, even though they were not part of the Bureau. They fell under the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, which is what Civic Life used to be called before it became Commissioner Chloe Eudaly's responsibility.

Asked about cooperation with local law enforcement going forward, Portland Police Lt. Tina Jones responded, " We do not have a position on another Bureau's actions. We do not have an involvement in the Neighbors Together program, as it is not our program."

Multnomah County Sheriff Mike Reese says there's a strong neighborhood watch presence in Corbett and Fairview, two cities east of Portland under his jurisdiction.

"They are vibrant groups," he said. "Neighborhood watch adds a lot of capacity to our efforts to keep our community safe. We really value their work. They've been great partners for many, many years."

Sheriff Reese, who lives near Gabriel Park, says he's not aware of an active neighborhood watch in his neighborhood but that when he was Portland's chief of police, "My wife was block captain. But that was just an effort to share public safety information with our neighbors."

Anyone wishing to form a community safety group that's part of Neighbors Together should contact Civic Life. Volunteers don't have to live in the same neighborhood to form a group. Training is currently being provided. Contact Civic Life at portlandoregon.gov/civic/cs

Willamette Week

Portland Voters Handily Approve Four Ballot Measures in Election With Feeble Turnout

By Aaron Mesh
November 5, 2019

Two of those measures renew property taxes to fund open spaces and schoolteachers.

Portland-area voters will approve four major ballot measures tonight, early returns show. Two of those measures renew property taxes to fund open spaces and schoolteachers.

This November's off-year election featured no candidate races, only measures. Voter turnout was anemic. As of 5 pm, three hours before drop-off sites closed, just 26.1 percent of registered Multnomah County voters had returned their ballots.

The feeble turnout does not appear to have harmed regional government Metro's \$475 million bond that will be used to purchase and preserve open spaces. Early returns show that measure winning by a nearly 2-to-1 margin across three counties.

The Metro measure drew some scrutiny. Critics raised objections to how many of the properties exist outside the urban growth boundary, away from public access, and derided the pass-along to other governments as a slush fund. Proponents argued that the bond preserves natural areas around a rapidly growing city, and is Metro's first open-spaces measure crafted with input from communities of color about what parks and trails they wanted.

Portland Public Schools is on its way to passing a serial levy that will raise about \$100 million a year to keep nearly 900 teachers on the payroll. Oregon's school-funding system leaves the state's largest district dependent on voters to renew the jobs of more than a quarter of its teachers.

Voters said yes: 73 percent to 26 percent.

Both of those measures replace existing measures, so their passage means taxpayers' property taxes will not rise because of them—they will continue paying current amounts for previous measures.

Portland voters also approved two measures that relate to the city's drinking water. One requires a public vote to change protections and use of the Bull Run Watershed, the glacial lake and surrounding wilderness near Mount Hood where the city draws its tap water. The other measure allows the Portland Water Bureau to spend ratepayer money on emergency aid to other cities—and enter deals where those cities agree to help us in a crisis, such as a Cascadian earthquake.

Both measures are passing with more than 83 percent of the vote.

The Portland Mercury

City Will Host Public Information Meetings Ahead of Police Union Contract Negotiations

*By Alex Zielinski
November 5, 2019*

The last time the City of Portland met at the bargaining table with the Portland Police Association (PPA), Portlanders expressed their frustration with the city's closed-door negotiations with the rank-and-file police union by staging a protest that forced City Hall into lockdown.

Three years later, it seems Portland City Council is trying to get ahead of the expected public disappointment that could result from the next round of PPA contract negotiations.

Mayor Ted Wheeler has announced that in the coming months, he'll be holding two public meetings with Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty and city attorneys to brief Portlanders on the negotiation process, which is expected to kickoff in January 2020. The current PPA contract expires in June 2020. Members of the PPA will not be present at the meetings.

Attendees will be invited to share what they'd like to see included in the new contract, according to a Tuesday press release from Wheeler's office.

"The goal of the event is to educate the public about the collective bargaining process, to listen to their thoughts and concerns, and to gather their input to help ensure the contract best serves the interests and welfare of the public," the email reads.

Several groups have already made clear which areas of the PPA contract they'd like tweaked.

In September, members of Unite Oregon, the Portland chapters of the NAACP and Democratic Socialists of America, Portland Copwatch, and the Albina Ministerial Alliance held a press conference to announce their shared PPA contract priorities—including improvements to Portland's civilian police oversight system and stricter penalties for officers who use excessive force.

"We will not be able to change the number of police shootings until we change this contract," said LeRoy Haynes, co-chair of the Albina Ministerial Alliance. "We will not be able to fully change the responsibility of holding officers accountable until we change this contract."

That group of advocacy organizations intends to present their priorities to City Council before negotiations begin.

The city has already taken steps to educate the public—and city commissioners—on the coming contract talks. In October, City Council invited a pair of Black Lives Matter activists who have spent time researching problematic loopholes in police union contracts to present their findings at a public meeting.

Wheeler's upcoming "community conversations," however, will be the first time the public can speak their mind about the PPA contract.

The first meeting will be held on Monday, November 18 at 6 pm at Portland Community College's student union (Rooms 203 & 204, 5575 N Albina). The city hasn't announced the location of the next meeting, but has scheduled for December 16 at 6 pm.

The Portland Observer

Running for Mayor

By Beverly Corbell

November 5, 2019

Rev. Willie Banks outlines his priorities

Rev. Willie Banks has long been active in supporting Portland's African American community, but he's fed up with local government, so he's running for mayor of Portland in 2020.

"What got me is the city has used people of color as a token, and only call us when they want us to do something," he said. "When they did the reconstruction in northeast Portland and pushed black folks out, they have used people of color to gain their wealth and used people of color to pay taxes, and that's all they really care about."

Banks recently lost his wife Earnestine, but said that he's running in her memory.

"She was such a sweet wife to me, and every time I see her picture, it motivates me," he said.

Banks' top priority as mayor would be to reduce poverty in Portland. Over a decade and more, he established a foundation and resource for legal help in Portland to help the disadvantaged and named both efforts in honor of civil rights icon Rosa Parks, work he said has saved people \$3.5 million in real estate foreclosures and rental assistance since 2000. He said the public service mission has also generated holiday food baskets for poor families and supported educational programs.

The most evident sign of poverty is all the homeless people sleeping on Portland streets, Banks said, and he's disgusted that not more is being done.

"We need to stop beating around the bush and do what we can for these people and get them back into the neighborhoods," he said. "We've got empty buildings all over the city. We seem to push homeless people around like we're pushing a buggy. We need to realize that they are human beings too."

Banks says he gained experience looking out for other people when he was president of the National Federation of Federal Employees for 20 years.

"I dealt with grievances and firings and prepared a bargaining agreement with management to make sure everything affecting working people was addressed," he said.

Banks, who is also pastor at the New Beginnings Church of God in Christ, said he is also unhappy about the cost of having a car towed in Portland, which can reach hundreds of dollars and disproportionately affects senior citizens and people of color.

"I would encourage the city not to tow people's cars," he said. "It needs to come to a stop. They can give them a ticket but leave the car. The city is not fair."

Banks plans to go door-to-door during his campaign, but he also plans to get more homeless people and senior citizens registered to vote.

"You rich people look out," he said. "If I can get seniors and homeless people to support me, I will win this race."

OPB

Portland Mayor To Send Sondland Campaign Contributions To Charity, Impeachment Group

*By Rebecca Ellis
November 5, 2019*

UPDATE (Nov. 5, 6:50 p.m. PT) — Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler announced Tuesday evening he will donate about \$16,000 he has received in contributions from U.S. Ambassador to the European Union and Portland hotelier Gordon Sondland to several charities, as well as to a grassroots coalition supporting impeachment proceedings against President Donald Trump.

The announcement comes on the heels of Tuesday's revelation that Sondland had told Ukrainian officials that military aid was linked to officials carrying out the investigations into presidential candidate Joe Biden. The admission was a reversal from Sondland's statement last month, when he reportedly told investigators he did not believe any conditions were put on the release of the aid.

"The mayor made it clear that he wanted to give Ambassador Sondland the opportunity to explain his involvement in the Ukrainian scandal," said Wheeler's reelection campaign manager, Jennifer Arguinzoni. "Especially in light of the acknowledgment of a quid pro quo and the testimony of Lt. Col. Alexander Vindman, it has become clear that Sondland's actions are potentially counter to the law."

Portland mayoral candidate Sarah Iannarone had called on Wheeler at the beginning of October to return previous campaign donations he received from Sondland.

Wheeler's deputy campaign manager, Amy Rathfelder, said that Wheeler had wanted to wait and hear Sondland's testimony before coming to a decision about what to do with past donations.

"We really wanted to make sure we gave Ambassador Sondland the opportunity to testify and testify publicly, so we were well aware of all of the implications of his involvement," she said. "With the revelation of the ambassador's testimony to the public, it's gotten to the point where we no longer believe its a good idea to be associated with him."

According to state campaign finance records, Wheeler received a \$10,000 campaign contribution in 2016 from a fund connected with Provenance Hotels, which Sondland founded.

Sondland personally donated \$5,000 to Wheeler's mayoral campaign in 2015 and \$500 to his campaign for state treasurer in 2012.

Wheeler has also received support from Sondland's wife, Katy Durant, who chipped in \$6,500 to his campaigns between 2010 and 2015. Durant served on the Oregon Investment Council alongside Wheeler during his time as state treasurer.

Rathfelder said she's not aware of any campaign plans to return Durant's contributions.

Iannarone's campaign said that while they welcomed Wheeler's decision to give away the contributions, they believe the mayor should have done so sooner.

"At the very least, as a candidate for public office, Mayor Wheeler should have recognized the necessity of returning Sondland's money the moment Sondland was implicated in the impeachment scandal," a statement from Iannarone's campaign read.

“Instead, it took Mayor Wheeler a month following revelations of Sondland’s involvement in subverting our democracy in the Ukrainian scandal and his inconsistent testimony to Congress to return the reported \$16,000.”

Wheeler is far from the only Oregon politician to whom Sondland has donated over the years. Sondland and Durant gave \$50,000 to Republican Knute Buehler’s gubernatorial campaign in 2018. Since 2008, Sondland has also contributed to the campaigns of Portland City Commissioner Nick Fish, former Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber and former Portland Mayor Sam Adams.

Wheeler’s campaign said he will donate \$4,000 to the ImpeachNow.org coalition, which is “supporting the House impeachment inquiry into Donald Trump.” Donations of \$1,500 will also be provided to the Portland Parks Foundation, Transition Projects, CAUSA, Portland Audubon, Basic Rights Oregon, DePaul Treatment Centers, SOLVE and Portland United Against Hate.

Portland Approves Both Water Measures In Tuesday's Special Election

*By Rebecca Ellis
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Tuesday’s special election saw Portland vote overwhelmingly for two measures related to the city’s prized drinking water.

The first, Ballot Measure 26-204, will safeguard the region’s main drinking water supply by enshrining its current protections in the city charter. As of 8:30 p.m. Tuesday evening, 87 percent had voted in favor of the measure.

Commissioner Amanda Fritz, who had sponsored the measure, said she’d been hoping for this kind of victory.

“They really are common-sense measures, and I know how much Portlanders care about the Bull Run Watershed and its delicious drinking water,” she said. “But it’s still really great to see the numbers.”

For nearly a decade, Portland’s city code has forbidden activities that could threaten its share of the Bull Run Watershed. These rules prevent the city from selling its 4% portion of the 102-square mile area to the highest bidder or opening up the lush area as new terrain for loggers, developers or hikers.

But these rules have always been easy to roll back. A simple majority vote by Portland’s 5-person city council would have done the trick.

Passage of the measure means these protections will be placed into the more durable city charter. Unlike the city code, the charter can only be changed through a referendum by Portland voters.

“It makes these protections secure for a year to come,” Fritz said. “It really means the people of Portland are in charge.”

The watershed doubles as a refuge for endangered populations of salmon and northern spotted owls, which led environmental groups like the Sierra Club and the Audubon Society of Portland to push for the measure’s passage.

“It’s a really, really good night for the environment,” said the Audubon Society’s Director of Conversation Bob Sallinger, who like Fritz, said he was not shocked by the results.

“Voters care very deeply about protecting our water, and this will make sure we leave a legacy of clean water for future generations.”

Portlanders also voted in favor of Measure 26-205 Tuesday night, which allows the city’s water bureau to use its own money to enter into “mutual aid agreements.”

These agreements make it easy for non-local emergency responders to help Portland fix its water system in the aftermath of a natural disaster. In return, the city agrees to help other jurisdictions when disaster strikes.

The measure’s passage puts an end to a long-running debate over whether such agreements were an appropriate use of ratepayer funds.

The bureau had originally tapped its own funds to pay for a staff trip in 2005 to New Orleans to assist with repairs after Hurricane Katrina. But a judge later ruled the city had acted improperly and needed to pay back the water bureau out of the general fund.

The new measure effectively counters the judge’s decision, clarifying that the water bureau has residents’ approval to make and pay for these agreements by enshrining permission in the city charter.

Fritz, who sponsored the measure, had said she believed these agreements were a poor use of the city’s already scarce general funds.

“Being able to use the water bureau’s funds to fund water bureau staff giving and receiving aid will make it much easier and much simpler to get the aid we need,” Fritz said.

Fritz added that she didn’t believe the measure would cause ratepayers’ bills to go up as money only gets used in the rare instances where staff is sent out to other jurisdictions.

“It’s not enough of an impact or make a difference in the rates and it’s something we can absorb into the general operation,” she said.