

The Oregonian

Portland police reject community panel's recommendation to add race, ethnicity data to reports on use of force

*By Maxine Bernstein
November 11, 2019*

Community members who advise Portland police on training expressed frustration this week that the police chief rejected one of their key recommendations to include race and ethnicity data from the U.S. Census Bureau in police reports that track use of force by officers.

The Census statistics would provide greater context about who is affected when police use non-lethally force and help inform decisions by the bureau's Training Advisory Council, the group wrote to Chief Danielle Outlaw earlier this year.

"Given that historically people of color are overrepresented in their interactions with police, this skews the context this data is intended to provide in that it fails to highlight the larger effect on the community as a whole," the advisory council told the chief in March.

Not only did Outlaw reject the recommendation, the bureau's response came six months after the training council made the suggestion, said Danielle Droppers, a volunteer who has served on the council for two years.

Dropper resigned at Wednesday night's council meeting. "We're getting untimely responses to our recommendations," she said. "There's a level of frustration."

The next morning, Chief Danielle Outlaw said she was briefed about the concerns raised at the advisory council's meeting and called the council chair to apologize for the delay. Outlaw said she had reviewed the recommendation months ago and met with police training instructors but the memo responding didn't get sent back in a timely manner "due to a miscommunication."

From now on, a representative from the chief's office will attend the advisory council meetings when recommendations are made and when the chief's response is presented, Outlaw said.

The Police Bureau does quarterly and annual breakdowns on the types of force used by its officers in proportion to the number of people they arrest on criminal allegations or detain for transport to mental health or detox centers. The force includes handcuffing someone, using a stun gun, a police dog bite or pointing a gun.

The advisory council noted that the bureau includes demographic data in its reports on motorists stopped by officers, so it asked why the bureau doesn't do the same for its force reports.

"If we don't actually dig into these questions, I don't think we'll ever move past them," said Shawn Campbell, the council's chair.

Droppers said the reason the council made a formal recommendation to the chief for the Police Bureau to add demographic data to its force reports was because "we had been informally recommending that and had been getting a lot of pushback."

In the second quarter of this year, police reported 215 instances of force used in 6,247 custodies, up from 186 force instances in 5,762 custodies in the first quarter.

In the second quarter, black males accounted for 25 percent of use-of-force instances, while they represented 17 percent of police custodies, the report said. Black females accounted for 7 percent of use-of-force instances, while they represented 5 percent of custodies.

The report didn't note that black people represent about 6 percent of the city's population.

The Police Bureau responded that such demographic data won't put its use-of-force statistics in greater context.

U.S. Census data, according to the bureau, doesn't give a comprehensive demographic profile of the people who live, work, visit and travel through Portland. Further, it doesn't account for "notoriously hard-to-locate" vulnerable populations such as homeless people, the bureau responded.

"Adding census data to our reports misrepresents the data by inaccurately comparing populations of use of force to the overall population as this population includes members of the community who may never be taken into custody because they do not engage in behaviors that require police services," Training Capt. Erica Hurley wrote in a document that Deputy Chief Jami Resch signed and sent back to the advisory council.

The advisory council had anticipated such a response, so in its March recommendation it said the argument shouldn't outweigh the need for greater transparency.

"While the (training advisory council) acknowledges the limitations of utilizing city-wide demographic data for direct comparison with Use of Force data, it is held that the benefits of making a good faith effort in the service of transparency and accountability outweigh the statistical rationale for excluding such data from the reports," the council wrote.

The council urged the bureau to include the demographic data with a footnote to clarify the shortfalls of any comparison, as is done in the bureau's traffic stop data reports.

"I just want them to do the right thing," Droppers said. "If the bureau is going to espouse accountability and transparency, I want to see it put into action." Droppers does health equity work for the state.

On Friday, Outlaw said she values the Training Advisory Council's work and is open to revisiting the recommendation in the future.

"The discussion regarding the most appropriate benchmark to use has broader implications beyond use of force reporting," she wrote in an email. "There are varying opinions on this matter in the social science world. With the (training advisory council's) assistance, we can address the matter together."

The Portland Tribune

PPB name, phone number used in statewide scam

*By KOIN 6 News
November 17, 2019*

Portland Police Bureau says no law enforcement agency ever calls anyone and asks for money

An ongoing phone scam in Oregon seems to be targeting real estate agents and using the name of a Portland Police Bureau employee.

According to police, two cases with striking similarities were reported in Bend and Eugene. In both reports, the caller claimed to be from the PPB and used the name of a real sergeant. The caller ID showed an actual PPB phone number, but any attempt to call the number back leads to an out of service message, police say.

During the call, the scammer claimed there was a warrant out for the person's arrest, which was not true. The scammer then asked for money to pay bail for the made-up warrant.

Both people who reported these scams to police worked in the real estate industry, according to police.

In a public service announcement to Oregon residents, PPB clarified that it does not call individual people and demand money "under any circumstances." Nor do they — or any other law enforcement agency — call to collect payment on outstanding traffic citations or warrants.

PPB also listed the following tips to help prevent being a victim of a scam:

- Never give personal or financial information to an unsolicited caller or email.
- Be suspicious of callers who demand immediate payment for any reason.
- Regularly update privacy settings for social media sites. (Scammers regularly collect personal information from platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Utility companies and government agencies will never contact you for payment by GreenDot, MoneyPak or Vanilla Reload.
- Remember that anyone who has the number on a prepaid card has access to the funds on your card.

Never wire money, provide debit or credit card numbers to a stranger.

If you believe you were a victim of a scam, please call PPB's non-emergency line at (503) 823-3333.

Willamette Week

City Hall Hears Divergent Views on How to Change Portland's Approach to Neighborhood Associations

*By Rachel Monahan
November 18, 2019*

After a contentious fight over the future of neighborhood associations, City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly has delayed definitive action from council. But city groups still in conflict over how long the delay on a change should be.

City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly earlier this fall walked back a proposal to change the city's code on neighborhood associations, delaying any decision until it's clear what the change might mean in practice—specifically, how the city's various bureaus get input from Portland residents and what groups they might turn to.

But at a hearing on Thursday night, Portlanders continued to offer conflicting perspectives on changes to the neighborhood associations, including proposals for how long the delay on changes should be, as well differing accounts of what's at stake.

Eudaly announced a delay earlier this month, offering that she would propose a "3-year extension" for district coalition offices that support to neighborhood associations "to thoughtfully examine the current structure and work with the community to develop recommendations for improvements to better serve all Portlanders." (Those contracts are set to expire in June.)

At the same time, city bureaus will meet to determine civic engagement going forward, assuming the resolution is approved. A recommendation on that would be due in November 2020.

Eudaly faced backlash over the proposed change to city codes, which give neighborhood associations official status in Portland as civic groups to which the city is accountable. Eudaly says the changes were designed to reflect a more inclusive approach while neighborhood associations accused her of trying to eliminate them.

After Eudaly's fellow commissioners declined to support the changes she proposed, she initially threatened them via email, WW reported.

People supporting the continued importance of neighborhood associations have proposed a five-year extension of the contract for coalition offices, effectively kicking the can down the road till 2025.

"What's at stake here is the livability and quality of life in Portland's residential neighborhoods," testified Terry Parker, who identified himself as a fourth-generation Portlander, and who serves on the Rose City Park Neighborhood Association.

"Civic engagement must not come just from special interests, take place in closed-door back rooms or become a hand-picked administrative task under the control of a czar-like bureau director. Transparency is paramount," he added.

Those who supported Eudaly's efforts, on the other hand, requested just a one-year extension to the proposal, citing an amendment put forward by the Coalition for Communities of Color.

"If I'm fully candid, I don't believe this resolution goes far enough to level the playing field between the largely affluent, largely white property owners who have run our city for generations and the vibrantly diverse communities of color immigrants, tenants, and other middle-class, working-class marginalized people who actually represent the vast majority of this city," said Henry Kraemer, a housing advocate.

"That some neighborhood association leaders see that equal treatment as an attack is the same tendency to horde power and access that make so many of us wary of their influence," he added.

City Council is expected to vote on a resolution next month which will direct the city bureaus to work together on a plan and determine how long the current neighborhood association system will be in place.

OPB

All-Day Rates Go Up At Portland's SmartPark Garages

*By Rebecca Ellis
November 18, 2019*

Prices are rising in downtown Portland's five SmartPark garages as the city tries to make more room for potential shoppers.

The city's \$2 price hike for long-term parking takes effect Monday. Portland Bureau of Transportation Spokesman Dylan Rivera said local businesses asked for the price hike, as they were concerned that having garages packed with the same cars all day might deter customers.

“All day parkers, we think, were crowding out the folks who were trying just to reach a shop or their favorite restaurant for a short stay,” said Rivera. “And we want to focus those garages on those sorts of trips.”

Garages had been charging a daily rate ranging from \$14 to \$18. All those rates will go up by \$2.

Short-term prices will stay at \$1.80 an hour for the first three hours and \$2 for the fourth hour. After that, long-term parking rates kick in.