

## **The Oregonian**

### **Portland to resume homeless camp clean-ups after once-divided City Council unites**

*By Molly Harbarger  
January 8, 2020*

The city will resume cleaning homeless camps after a formerly divided City Council voted in lockstep to approve a new contract for the work.

The new contract requires the staff of Rapid Response Bioclean, the company that has been doing the clean-ups for the past five years, to be trained in tactics to avoid violent conflict, learn to engage with people who are in mental health crisis, take CPR classes and carry the opioid overdose reversal drug naloxone.

It also adds language that says clean-up workers “must be polite, diplomatic and professional at all times, and treat all persons with dignity and respect. Discrimination and harassment shall not be tolerated in any form.”

When the weather turns freezing and snowy, those clean-up crews then become outreach workers who are supposed to check on campers’ safety and well-being, distribute hand warmers and trash bags and help them get to shelter.

Lucas Hillier, who runs the clean-up system, told City Council on Wednesday that the changes were added after significant feedback during the last five years since the program started. This new contract is supposed to be a more compassionate approach to work officials say is necessary to balance the needs of business leaders and people who live near campsites with people who are living on the streets of Portland.

Through the city’s hotline, One Point of Contact, every complaint about a homeless person, camp or RV is vetted by a team of people who rate the site on a variety of metrics, such as the appearance of drugs and needles, how many yards of trash are visible and if there is obvious criminal activity.

If the camp scores above a certain threshold, a crew of biohazard cleaners are dispatched to move the people living there, then go through the remaining belongings, sorting it into trash and usable property, which is stored in a police facility.

The system has undergone significant changes since it was first implemented. In the last fiscal year, the program cleaned 3,122 campsites, removed 8,400 gallons of human waste, 1,300 tons of garbage, and removed 28,909 hypodermic syringes.

Those numbers have generally increased since the program started in 2014.

He said that between January and June 2019, only 15% of the sites reported through One Point of Contact were actually cleaned.

That number does not include the fact that reports steeply increase in the summer months as more people live outside when the weather is good.

However, Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty at first resisted the idea that one company should be handling biowaste and also acting as an outreach worker. Mayor Ted Wheeler pulled the vote from an agenda in mid-December to give him time to win Hardesty’s vote.

In the meantime, clean-ups stopped because the city was only authorized to spend \$5 million on clean ups for the past five years and that money was used up by the beginning of January.

Now, that work can resume with \$4.5 million set aside for the next five years.

Hardesty made a point of underlining the changes to the contract and that the City Council will have a work session to discuss possible further changes, as well as hearing community feedback.

## **Portland residents' monthly recycling bills to go down 40 cents**

*By Everton Bailey*

*January 8, 2020*

Most Portland residents will see their monthly bills for residential garbage and recycling collection lowered by about 40 cents beginning in February because the city has stopped collecting a business tax from garbage haulers.

The Portland City Council voted Wednesday to approve new rates after excluding the sales of residential garbage services from the Portland clean energy tax in December.

The change means the monthly rate for curbside pickup for a 35-gallon recycling receptacle with wheels, for example, will go from \$32.55 to \$32.15.

Ratepayers will be reimbursed for the taxes they've already paid, said Christine Llobregat, a spokesperson in the city's environmental services bureau. The average customer with a 35-gallon roll cart paid around \$1.20 from July 1, 2019 through Jan. 31, 2020, she said.

"The new rates have been set below the cost of service in order to pay back customers over the course of the period from Feb. 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020," Llobregat said.

The city increased monthly bills up to 75 cents for most customers in July saying it was to cover higher fees for processing yard debris and food scraps and the surcharge for the voter-approved Portland clean energy tax. The initiative subjected businesses designated as large retailers by the city to a 1% surcharge on revenue from retail sales in Portland.

Businesses with at least \$1 billion in annual revenue nationwide and at least \$500,000 in yearly Portland sales have to pay. Utilities, credit unions and co-ops are exempt, as are the sales of health care services, most groceries, medicine and prescription drugs.

Recycling companies were among the businesses who pushed back against the tax, saying city officials applied it too broadly. When voting to exempt construction companies as well as sales of residential garbage services and retirement plans last month, Mayor Ted Wheeler and Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty remarked that the move was done partly to prevent lawsuits against the city.

The Portland Haulers Association, which represents the city's residential solid waste and recycling collection services, sent a memo to the Portland City Council in July saying only three of 11 residential franchisees actually fell under the definition of a large retailer.

To cover the 1% tax on the three big haulers, the city raised all residential customers' solid waste and recycling bills an average of 20 cents per month beginning in July and all 11 hauling companies collect the 20 cents monthly, the association said.

The group said the 20 cent increase may not necessarily cover all the fees owed by the three affected haulers and it was unclear what the companies not subject to the tax were supposed to do with the extra funds they collected.

Voters approved the business tax in November 2018 and it went into effect the following January. The tax is supposed to raise money for clean energy projects, energy-saving retrofits for low-income homeowners and renters, green infrastructure and the creation of living-wage green energy jobs. Funds raised are meant to be prioritized to help Portland's low-income residents and communities of color.

The city initially estimated the surcharge could generate between \$54 million and \$71 million every year. The new exemptions decrease projections to between \$44 million and \$61 million.

The proceeds will be distributed as grants to nonprofit groups selected by a nine-person committee. The first round of grant funding, likely \$7 million, is planned for this summer.

## **Portland City Council honors late Commissioner Nick Fish in first meeting since his death**

*By Everton Bailey Jr.  
January 8, 2020*

During the first Portland City Council meeting since Commissioner Nick Fish's death, his chair and nameplate remained in their usual spot on the far right side of the council dais.

His four colleagues held a 20-second moment of silence to honor him Wednesday, then shared their memories of working alongside him. The commissioners posthumously appointed Fish as council president, a rotating position he had been next in line to receive before he died of abdominal cancer Jan. 2.

Commissioner Amanda Fritz said she knew Fish for 12 years and that it was still hard for her to put into words how large of a loss his presence is to her and all of those who knew him.

She said most people wouldn't have known how sick Fish was over the last two years because he was present so often. Fritz thanked Fish's family for sharing him with the city and said he often was open to hearing from constituents whenever they spotted him in public and "went out of his way to let people know that he's been listening."

Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty said she'll miss Fish and his tenacity, noting he ran for Portland City Council three times until he was elected and that he personally insisted on being on the campaign trail in 2018 despite his illness.

"Sometimes he sent surrogates, but most of the time, he showed up," said Hardesty, who was running for city council herself at the time. "I told him, 'People will forgive you for not being here.' But it was important for him, wanting to be reelected, that he showed up in public forums."

Hardesty was named council president Thursday after commissioners briefly appointed Fish to the position.

Fritz and Mayor Ted Wheeler said that before Fish died, the four members of the council had planned for him to be council president for the first half of the year as part of their regular rotation. The commissioner who holds that six-month designation acts as the de-facto mayor if Wheeler is absent.

Commissioner Chloe Eudaly said she wasn't able to meet with Fish in the time shortly before he died because she was in a hospital over the holidays with her son.

"I was still hoping against hope that he would be coming back to us or that he would finally take the break that we all encouraged him to take to focus on himself," she said. "He carried himself with such strength and dignity through this illness that I don't think even people quite close to him realized how dire his condition was."

Eudaly said she'll never forget showing up to her first council meeting in 2017 after being elected and Fish being the first to welcome her. She said he left his mark on Portland's affordable housing, environmental services, parks and cleanup and restoration of the city's waterways. She said Fish brought institutional knowledge, humor, civility and a willingness to compromise to the council.

Wheeler said he appreciated Fish's intelligence, thoughtfulness and humor. The mayor said Fish introduced him to some of his best and closest allies and that he "really embraced the good things a politician should be," including meeting with supporters and opponents.

Fish could have been in any political office in the country, but he chose to be a Portland city commissioner, the mayor said.

"He gave the best years of his life in that seat over there," Wheeler said gesturing toward Fish's empty chair. "And he did it because he loved it. He loved this city. He loved you. And it was genuine."

Wheeler said he often saw Fish meeting one-on-one with constituents at Caffe Umbria in downtown Portland. The mayor vowed to hold one-on-one meetings with constituents to honor the late commissioner.

## **Portland special election to fill out Commissioner Nick Fish's term set for May**

*By Everton Bailey Jr.  
January 8, 2020*

Portland voters will elect a new member of the City Council in May to complete the term of late Commissioner Nick Fish.

The Portland City Council voted Wednesday to hold a special election for Fish's open seat May 19, which is the same date of the municipal primary election during which another three seats on the five-member council are up for grabs.

Fish died of abdominal cancer last week after being diagnosed in 2017. He was first elected to the city council during Portland's last special council election in 2008. A public memorial is scheduled for 3 p.m. on Feb. 8 at Portland State University's Hoffman Hall.

Monday is the first day interested candidates can file with the city for Fish's position. March 10 is the last day to file as a candidate.

The seat of Commissioner Amanda Fritz, who has been on the council since 2009, will also be open because she plans to retire. Commissioner Chloe Eudaly and Mayor Ted Wheeler are both seeking second four-year terms in office.

If no candidate in the special election receives the majority of the vote, a run-off election of the top two candidates will occur Aug. 11. General elections in any of the other three races will occur Nov. 3, if necessary.

## **Public memorial for Commissioner Nick Fish set for February on PSU campus**

*By Everton Bailey Jr.  
January 8, 2020*

Portland State University will be the site of a public memorial for late Portland Commissioner Nick Fish in February.

A celebration of life will take place Feb. 8 at 3 p.m. in Hoffman Hall at the downtown Portland campus and will be open to the public. Sonia Schmanski, Fish's chief of staff, said the university will announce more details on the event next week.

Fish, 61, died of cancer last week after being diagnosed in 2017. He'd been on the Portland City Council since 2008.

His seat will remain vacant until someone is elected to fill the rest of his term, which expires at the end of 2022.

## **Willamette Week**

### **As Candidates Gather, Special Election Is Set for May to Fill Nick Fish's Portland City Council Seat**

*By Aaron Mesh  
January 8, 2020*

WW reported this morning that four people have confirmed their intention to seek the seat.

The election to fill Portland Commissioner Nick Fish's empty City Council seat is officially set for this May, setting up what promises to be a bare-knuckle contest between veteran campaigners.

A grieving City Council this morning scheduled a special election to fill the seat left vacant by Fish's death from stomach cancer on Jan. 2. The election will be part of the May 19 primary—and a runoff, if necessary, will be held Aug. 11.

WW reported this morning that four people have confirmed their intention to seek the seat: Metro Councilor Sam Chase, City Hall staffer Cynthia Castro, activist Julia DeGraw, and tenant organizer Margot Black. Two other political veterans are both considering a run: former Mayor Sam Adams and former Multnomah County Commissioner Loretta Smith.

Adams and Smith are famously aggressive campaigners, and Black has quickly gained notice for no-holds-barred tactics on behalf of renters.

Meanwhile, Fish's family has announced a public memorial service. The celebration of life will be held at 3 pm Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020, at 3 pm in Hoffman Hall on the Portland State University campus.

# Portland Officials Didn't Complete a Promised Report on Home Demolitions. So a Watchdog is Suing.

*By Rachel Monahan  
January 8, 2020*

He wants to know how they fared at preventing the spread of lead dust.

Sean Green volunteered to help Portland City Hall prevent toxic lead dust from drifting across neighborhoods during home demolitions. So he looked forward to the new year—and the release of a report saying how the city had fared.

But that report never came. So Green is suing.

On Jan. 7, Green filed a legal action in Multnomah County Circuit Court, demanding bureaucrats tell the City Council how they fared at preventing lead contamination during home demolitions.

When Portland city commissioners passed a landmark ordinance regulating the demolition of single-family homes in 2018, they demanded that the Bureau of Development Services report back on the new effort to guard against lead and asbestos contamination.

The council required BDS to check in by Jan. 1, 2020.

Green's legal action, called a writ of mandamus, asks a judge to compel the city to follow its own ordinance—and report how the first 18 months of regulation worked out.

"There is some fundamental lack of understanding about what the expectations are around the ordinance," says Green, a contractor and volunteer on the city's Development Review Advisory Committee.

Green "has tried every way he knows how to get BDS to do the right thing," says his attorney, Alan Kessler. "BDS doesn't seem interested in meeting their legal obligation. Our only recourse is to go to court."

Kessler, who successfully sued the city last year over its failure to properly account for how much it charged for copies of public records, wants a judge to compel the bureau to immediately schedule a City Council hearing and monitor the impact of the regulation.

Mayor Ted Wheeler, who oversees the bureau, did not respond to a request for comment.

Reporting to the City Council might require the bureau to compile statistics on those demolitions and how many inspectors actually witnessed. What's at stake in Green's lawsuit could be a precise measurement of how BDS enforces the new rule. As WW revealed in November ("Dust in the Wind," Nov. 13, 2019), the bureau broadly interpreted the requirement that city inspectors be on site during demolitions.

That means, by its own estimate, BDS was present at as few as 20 percent of demolitions when contractors actually had machinery running to tear down a building.

Bureau officials say they don't have a more precise estimate since WW's November story and won't comment on the legal action. But those officials now tell WW they've come up with a way to ensure they're on site for demolitions from now on.

Inspections must now be scheduled by contractors before work begins. It's unclear why the bureau didn't require this before.

"One change has already been implemented," says spokesman Ken Ray. "BDS notified active demolition permit holders on Dec. 3, informing them they should request a BDS inspection prior to commencing mechanical demolition."

BDS still hasn't figured out how to ensure contractors are dousing homes with water as they demolish them, says Ray. Water prevents dust from spreading during demolition.

Lead is a neurotoxin, which can lead to permanent brain damage, and lead dust can spread as far as 100 yards during a demolition. Green says that's reason enough to compel BDS to show their work in reducing such dust.

"I've been working incredibly hard on this demolition issue," he tells WW. "I've gone all in because I'm really interested in making a difference."

## **Portland Mayoral Candidate Sarah Iannarone Releases Her Housing Plan, Supporting a Tenants' Right to Organize**

*By Rachel Monahan  
January 8, 2020*

**"That seems to have been a very effective model for change-making," she says, celebrating tenants union victories.**

Portland mayoral candidate Sarah Iannarone will champion tenants' right to organize as part of her housing policy plan.

"That seems to have been a very effective model for change-making," says Iannarone, citing the tenant unions that have formed to support Portland renters, particularly at two housing complexes in Portland—Milepost 5 and Holgate Manor—where low-income tenants organized after their complexes were sold.

That's one element of Iannarone's housing policy program, which she's releasing today, that hasn't been part Mayor Ted Wheeler's efforts on housing.

Mostly, the ideas Iannarone offers are policy ideas that the incumbent has already talked about—a fact she tacitly acknowledges.

"It's not what he says," she tells WW. "It's what comes after."

Instead, Iannarone offers a critique of Wheeler's leadership on housing.

One example Iannarone offered: the residential infill project, the re-zoning effort under way for the entire length of Wheeler's term to allow more, smaller housing on property now zoned for single family zones of the city. Wheeler campaigned on the issue, but the policy has moved very slowly.

"Why is this so hard if he truly believes in it?" she asks. "Minneapolis started after us and finished before with a much more comprehensive policy. They went further faster."

Iannarone wants the city to develop a strategic plan for ending its housing emergency, which the previous mayoral administration declared in 2015; she wants to preserve and foster housing for aging Portlanders; she wants to lower construction costs by better coordination among the bureaus.

Iannarone's plan, which she calls Housing for All, is the third policy paper the campaign has released. The campaign says they expect to release three more.

## **The Portland Mercury**

### **Portland Renters' Rights Advocate Margot Black is Running for City Council**

*By Alex Zielinski  
January 8, 2020*

Margot Black, co-founder of Portland Tenants United (PTU), is running to fill the Portland City Council seat vacated by the death of Commissioner Nick Fish.

"Once you get involved in social justice issues, at a certain level, you can't ignore the injustices taking place around you," said Black in an interview with the Mercury. "I need to find a way to keep being part of that, and I need to do it in a way that is most effective. I think City Council's the right place for me to be."

Black, a former math professor at Lewis & Clark, began her tenant advocacy work under PTU about five years ago, where she led grassroots efforts to get state legislators to consider rent control measures, pushed then-candidate Ted Wheeler to adopt a Tenants' Bill of Rights, and helped Commissioner Chloe Eudaly draft Portland's groundbreaking renter relocation assistance policy.

Since then, she's helped organize tenant unions at neglectful apartment complexes, sat on the city's Rental Services Commission, and helped connect countless tenants threatened with an eviction notice with legal aid.

Black's vigorous, uncensored advocacy for tenant rights has made her a divisive figure in both the local landlord community (a group she once compared to terrorists) and among fellow tenant activists.

Black stepped down from her leadership role at PTU in January 2018 after the organization was accused of having a "serious race problem" by prominent activist (now Q Center director) Cameron Whitten.

"I have always come to the work with positive intentions, but in reality the impacts of some of my actions have had very negative impacts on valued members of our community, and created harm," Black wrote on PTU's Facebook page at the time. Black returned to PTU as a co-chair in March 2019.

But now, Black says she feels prepared to take on a bigger leadership role.

"[Since 2018] I've really struggled with trying to figure out what it means to have a voice and hold power in the left as a white person and a woman," Black said. "I've grown. I'm coming at this from a place of wanting this city to be a city where anyone really truly can live and work and find community in a way that's dignified."

Black said she first considered running for Fish's seat in 2018, but didn't feel the timing was right. With Fish's mid-term death, Black said, she sees an opportunity to take on Fish's unfinished work around affordable housing and "push it into the future."



Black would like to expand the city's investment in permanent supportive housing—a type of housing that offers specialized assistance to keep hard-to-reach, formerly homeless tenants from being evicted. Fish had been an early advocate for city-funded supportive housing.

Black says her mother has a severe mental illness which makes it nearly impossible for her to find stable housing.

"Right now, she's living in a homeless shelter. But she desperately needs supportive housing," Black said. "I've spent many sleepless night wondering where people like her are sleeping."

Thanks to Fish's persistence, the City Council approved funding in 2017 to create 2,000 permanent supportive housing units by 2028. Black wants to expand on that goal.

"I'm doing this as a way to honor Fish and the role he played on council—what he fought for," Black said. "A big part of why I'm running isn't because he died, it was because he lived."

Black is prepared for pushback from Portlanders—especially landlords—on her decision to join the rapidly-growing race.

"Despite the reputation that I have for being a divisive asshole, if you look at my record, you'll see that I'm principled and opened-minded," Black said. "I have spent an enormous amount of time in very diplomatic conversations with people I disagree with, like landlords. I conduct myself with full integrity and honesty."

## **Portland Police Make Their Case For Having Officers On Campus**

*By Blair Stenvick  
January 9, 2020*

The future of the Portland Police Bureau's (PPB) presence at local public schools is uncertain. But, with the decision currently in the hands of the Portland City Council, PPB leadership is making its best pitch for why their officers belong on campus.

On Tuesday, representatives from PPB and Portland's three public school districts spoke at a Portland City Council work session meant to provide information about school resource officers (SROs). SROs are sworn police officers who maintain a regular presence on campus, so that when a cop is needed at school—for instance, to break up a fight or help a student who is experiencing abuse at home—the officer already understands how the school works and, ideally, has the trust of students and faculty.

PPB Deputy Chief Chris Davis characterized SROs as “mentors, informal counselors, [and] trusted adults” on campus who “work outside of the criminal justice system whenever possible” to help students overcome challenges at home or on campus, and to provide treatment options to students struggling with substance abuse or mental health issues.

PPB has provided school resources officers for high schools at Portland Public Schools (PPS), as well as the two smaller school districts in East Portland (David Douglas and Parkrose), for decades. However, there's never been a formal contract between the school districts and the city—and the cost has always been absorbed by PPB, rather than passed on to PPS. In late 2018, city leaders tried to change that by asking PPS' board of directors to sign an agreement formalizing the setup, and agreeing to pay over \$1 million a year for the SROs.

That move saw intense backlash from district students, families, and faculty. Some opposed the new contract on the grounds that they didn't want police to have a regular presence on campus, while others objected to the cost suddenly being passed on to the district. The PPS board declined to approve the agreement.

During the last city budget cycle in May of 2019, the Portland City Council approved funding for the program for the 2019-20 school year. But not all city commissioners were happy with the decision, and Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty questioned whether PPS should use SROs at all. That means the topic could become a hot-button issue when budget conversations are taken up again later this year.

Nationally, SROs have developed a poor reputation over the last few years for disproportionately targeting students of color. Several viral videos have shown extreme uses of force against young students, and an SRO was blamed for not doing more to respond to a devastating 2018 school shooting in Parkland, Florida. PPB's Davis made a point of mentioning those national headlines at Tuesday's work session, and to define PPB's program as "intentionally different" from most SRO units.

PPB's SROs receive 350 hours of additional training, Davis said, and comprise the "most diverse" PPB unit in terms of age, race, and sexual orientation. Last school year, Portland SROs were called to respond to incidents on campus over 5,000 times, and only 20 of those instances resulted in arrest. That's because the officers are taught how to de-escalate tense situations with students, and how to redirect a potential criminal charge into a social services case, Davis said.

Madison High School Principal Adam Skyles said that he appreciated having SROs because his students "feel comfortable talking to a person they see on campus every day." That loss would be felt if the SRO unit didn't exist, he said—especially during emergency situations.

"I have concerns around what will happen to our students when we don't know who we'll be calling, who will be show up," Skyles said.

At the same time, Skyles acknowledged that "my experience with policing and officers looks different than the community I represent." Last year, when the PPS board was considering the new agreement, many PPS students of color told the Mercury that they didn't feel comfortable having armed police officers on campus, no matter how much extra training they'd received.

"I've always felt that simply being around a police officer was threatening to me because I see police officers as unpredictable, and it scares me," said Micah Mizushima, a student at Grant High School.

At Tuesday's work session, Hardesty brought up the trepidation people of color can sometimes feel toward police officers, and asked why SROs were necessary when many of their functions could instead be performed by school counselors.

"I'm just trying to understand the value that's added by having a police officer with a weapon in the school," Hardesty said.

Lt. Jim Quackenbush, who oversees PPB's SRO program, answered that police officers can help fill in "holes in information" that school faculty might not otherwise have access to. For example, if there were a sudden behavioral problem with a student, police would know if that student's parents had recently been involved in a domestic violence incident.

Commissioner Chloe Eudaly called PPB's SRO program "exemplary," but also expressed skepticism as to whether police were the best option for dealing with issues that might be better handled by social workers or counselors.

“I want to be sure we’re not being offered a false choice,” Eudaly said. “Are we over-relying on police?”

That question—and the question of who should be paying for SROs—will likely be taken up again by both the city and PPS later this year.

## **The Portland Business Journal**

### **Date set for election to fill Nick Fish's City Council seat**

*By Christopher BJORKE*

*January 8, 2020*

Portland City Commissioners have set May 19 for the election to replace Nick Fish, the City Council member who died Jan. 2.

The date is the same as the city's primary election and the winner in the election will fill Fish's seat until 2022, the remainder of his term. If no candidate receives the majority of the vote in May, a run-off election will be held Aug. 11.

Commissioners approved the resolution for the dates Tuesday.

The City Charter requires the council to fill vacancies by election within 90 days unless there is a reasonable cause for a delay. The resolution states that setting a date after 90 days that coincides with an scheduled election would decrease voter confusion, save the city money and allow candidates more time to prepare justifies the delay.

Fish was first elected to the council in 2008 in a special election and filled the term of Commissioner Erik Sten, who resigned. He was most recently re-elected in 2018.

Fish revealed a diagnosis of abdominal cancer in 2017 and announced Dec. 31 he would resign to deal with the disease but stay on until a successor was chosen. Instead he died two days later.

A celebration of Fish's life will be held Saturday, Feb. 8, at 3 p.m. in Hoffman Hall at Portland State University, according to Fish's chief of staff Sonia Schmanski.

Information about applying to appear on the ballot for the empty seat will be posted on the city Elections Office website and available at the office starting Jan. 13.

### **New Albina Vision director brings City Hall and community-engagement experience**

*By Malia SPENCER*

*January 8, 2020*

Albina Vision Trust, the nonprofit organization leading an effort to reinvent the 94-acre Albina area of Portland now has a managing director to take the group's mission forward.

Winta Yohannes, who was most recently senior policy adviser to Portland City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, was named to the role. She will be responsible for guiding the group's plan for the neighborhood, known today as the Rose Quarter, that saw a huge swath of the city's black community displaced through decades of urban renewal projects.

Yohannes is the group's first full-time employee. Her position was funded through a grant from Meyer Memorial Trust, and she plans to spend this year building the organization. The group has also recently closed an RFP for consultants to kick off the next phase of planning.

The Albina Vision group started over several months in 2015 when community leaders gathered for work sessions to reimagine the neighborhood, according to the group's website. An article in Oregon Humanities magazine notes the group was initially brought together by then-Mayor Charlie Hales. Other leaders in the group include Rukaiyah Adams, chief investment officer at Meyer Memorial Trust.

The vision created by the group calls for creating a public park along the waterfront on the Eastside between the Broadway and Steel bridges, a public plaza for community events, inclusionary residential and commercial developments along Broadway, and infill development that bridges Interstate 5, according to the website.

Part of the Albina Vision area was briefly in discussion as a potential site for a stadium and development as part of an effort to bring Major League Baseball to Portland. In 2018, Adams — who has community pull — said she would not support the baseball project for the site.

“It is not a place for another large inwardly facing sports facility. It's a place for housing. What I would like for them to do is to pursue one of the other locations and I could put my weight behind it,” she said at an April 2018 Portland Business Journal event. “The objective of the Albina work is to demonstrate that just as we can exact injustice through urban design in planning decisions, we can exact justice with them as well.”

Yohannes brings experience working in local government and maintaining community relationships to this role. In her work with Eudaly she worked on budget, strategy and civic engagement. She oversaw the creation of the city's first immigrant legal defense program and developed a recruitment and internship program for young people of color and people with disabilities.

## **OPB**

### **Portland Unanimously Approves \$4.5 Million Contract For Campsite Cleanup**

*By Rebecca Ellis  
January 8, 2020*

Portland's City Council voted unanimously Wednesday in favor of a new contract for the cleaning up and clearing out of the city's homeless campsites.

Under the contract, Portland could pay up to \$4.5 million over the next year to Rapid Response Bio Clean, a hazardous waste removal company tasked with disposing of the needles, shopping carts, trash and human waste left at cleared homeless campsites. The contractors are also responsible for dispersing any campers who have not heeded the city's warning to leave, required to be posted at least two days prior.

The city has contracted with Rapid Response since 2016. But in recent weeks, the contract, which expands the scope of the company's responsibilities and significantly increases the amount of money approved for campsite cleanups, became a flashpoint over the larger issue of whether Portland should be doing this work at all.

Advocates for people experiencing homelessness have maintained that the cleanups harm the city's most vulnerable populations, causing them to lose property and forego sleep. Advocates and those who said they've experienced the sweeps firsthand arrived at the meeting with orange signs that read "Sweeps Kill!"

These concerns initially caused the Council to pull the contract from the agenda last month — and put the bulk of the city's campsite cleanups on pause.

But when the contract arrived in front of the Council Wednesday, the commissioners praised it, along with the city program that oversees the controversial cleanups, officially called the Homelessness and Urban Camping Impact Reduction Program.

The new contract will require Rapid Response workers to be trained in non-violent conflict resolution, "be polite, diplomatic and professional at all times," and be capable of administering naloxone, a compound that can reverse drug overdoses.

"The work that's being done to get better at a more humane and just approach is really impressive," Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty said.

"Realistically, given the number of sites, there will always be improvements that we could make and should make," Mayor Ted Wheeler said. "But I think you've struck an excellent balance here."

With the new funds greenlit by city leaders, Rapid Response is expected to restart cleaning and clearing out campsites Wednesday afternoon.