

The Oregonian

Meet Jocko - Portland Police Bureau's new comfort canine

By Maxine Bernstein

January 30, 2020

Portland police on Thursday introduced their newest recruit, a 1-year-old Schnauzer named Jocko.

The bureau adopted Jocko to be the bureau's comfort canine as part of its developing officer wellness program.

"To be of service, we must be fit for service," said Acting Cmdr. Erica Hurley, one of two officers assigned as the dog's handlers.

Jocko was donated to the Police Bureau, and money to care for him will come out of the bureau's training division funds. The dog will go through three years of training to become a certified therapy dog during his time with Portland police.

The Schnauzer will be taken to debriefings on officer-involved shootings, hang out at the bureau's Employee Assistance Program office and make visits to precincts and other specialty police divisions to aid officers and bureau civilian staff.

Hurley said she's already seen seasoned officers drop to their knees to rub Jocko's belly or cuddle with the dog, a way that helps officers "disconnect" from the stresses of their job. She expects the dog's presence will help lower officers' heart rates and blood pressure when they're around the playful puppy.

The bureau's developing wellness program has been funded from within the bureau's existing budget, with an officer and sergeant reassigned to the bureau's training division to help develop the program.

[Read more about the program here.](#)

The Portland Tribune

Audit: Portland cannabis regulation falling short

By Jim Redden

January 30, 2020

Audit released Thursday says the city's Office of Community & Civic Life does not have fundamentals in place to successfully regulate the emerging industry

The Portland program to regulate the emerging cannabis industry is not up to the task, according to an audit released by the City Auditor's Office on Thursday, Jan. 30.

"The Office of Community & Civic Life does not have fundamentals in place to successfully manage the Cannabis Program. Program strategy has not been completed, and budget and licensing fees are not based on strategy and workload. The regulatory program doesn't have a system to ensure data on the licensing and enforcement process is valid and complete and has not formalized a plan to do so," the auditor's office said.

As the audit says, "The State of Oregon legalized the sale of recreational cannabis in 2014, and in early 2016 the City of Portland began regulating businesses that grow, produce, or sell cannabis. City Council directed the Office of Community and Civic Life to develop and manage the regulatory process and to be responsive to the developing industry, while balancing business and public health needs. As the industry, public consumption, and city and national policy evolves, the City's regulatory purpose and priorities may need to be revisited, but this requires information on program performance, industry needs, and public impact."

The audit recommends the Office of Community & Civic Life develop a program strategy, implement a data management system to consistently track program performance and results, and develop communication tools to inform Council and the public about cannabis regulation.

"While I appreciate the challenge of implementing a regulatory system for an emerging industry, fundamental management tools must be prioritized and in place to ensure the success of any program," said City Auditor Mary Hull Caballero.

The audit made the following recommendation to improve the program:

1. Using the program's vision and goals, develop and communicate a strategy for the Cannabis Program, including coordination with other City Bureaus to streamline the licensing and enforcement process and focus work of the Cannabis Program.
2. Implement a data management system to consistently and accurately track data on licensing, complaints and enforcement processes. Use the data to manage program resources, adjust licensing fees, and report program performance.
3. To inform Council and the public about cannabis regulation, develop an monitoring report or other communication tools that include information on program performance and the cannabis industry. Use this information to revise and update the program strategy as needed.

In its letter of response, the office largely agreed with the recommendations, but said the audit needed context about some of the issues.

You can read the audit www.portlandoregon.gov/auditservices/article/752527.

City to spend \$8 million to extend North Park Blocks

*By Jim Redden
January 30, 2020*

Portland Parks & Recreation will spend System Development Charges to transform a city-owned parking lot next to the Pacific Northwest College of Art into new public green space

Portland Parks & Recreation has announced it will spend \$8 million to extend the North Park Blocks by transforming a city-owned parking lot adjacent to the Pacific Northwest College of Art into a new public green space.

The funds will come from Parks System Development Charges assessed against new development. The project will extend the parks blocks toward the former US Postal Service site, which will be redeveloped by the Broadway Corridor Project in coming years.

"Extending the North Park Blocks will add valuable green space to the Central City and give Portlanders additional access to the housing, offices, shops, and transportation routes which the Broadway Corridor project will offer," said Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler. "Parks are an integral part of this new neighborhood that is adding thousands of new households and offices."

According to PP&R, when complete, the northernmost park block will transition straight to another new park on the redeveloped post office site. It will also help improve connections between the Pearl District and Old Town/Chinatown.

"The newest North Park Block will provide an important place for neighbors and visitors to relax, to play, and to reflect," said PP&R Director Adena Long. "We appreciate the partnership the City enjoys with key stakeholders, including area businesses and the highly-regarded Pacific Northwest College of Art, as this project continues."

The Pacific Northwest College of Art moved into a former federal building along the North Park Blocks several years ago. The Broadway Corridor includes the former U.S. Postal Service site just north of the college, as well as several adjacent blocks at the southern end of the Broadway Bridge. Its redevelopment will be one of the largest urban renewal project in Portland history, allowing for the creation of a new master-planned urban neighborhood.

Council praises FBI terrorism task force changes

*By Jim Redden
January 30, 2020*

Report on the first year since Portland pulled out of the task force is unanimously accepted

The City Council has expressed its support for the new relationship between the Portland Police Bureau and the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force.

Last year the council voted to withdraw the bureau from the task force, which includes all other law enforcement agencies in the region. The council praised the transition when it unanimously accepted the first annual report on bureau and task force interactions on Wednesday, Jan. 29.

"I want to give a shout out to our federal partners. They could have given us the cold shoulder, but they kept the lines of communications open," said Mayor Ted Wheeler, who had voted against the withdrawal.

The three council members who voted for the withdrawal also praised the separation between the bureau and the task force documented in the report. It said the task force had referred 10 cases to the bureau and the bureau had referred 12 cases to the task force, but they never worked together on any of them.

"I wanted the engagement to be very limited," said Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty, who pushed for the withdrawal with the support of commissioners Chloe Eudaly and Amanda Fritz.

Commissioner Nick Fish, who opposed withdrawal, passed away on Jan. 2 and has not yet been replaced.

Critics of the task force, including the ACLU, protested the ongoing relationship between the bureau and the FBI outside City Hall on Tuesday, Jan. 28. The council said they were satisfied by the transparency of the relationship, however.

Only one of the 10 cases received from the task force is still under investigation by the bureau. The others were resolved after police contacted the suspects and determined the threats were not serious, the report said.

Even though all but the current investigation ended with no arrests, the report stresses that terrorist attacks are still a potential threat.

"Sadly, 2019 saw a number of attacks throughout the world that led to significant losses of life. In some of these incidents, the suspects exhibited a clear ideology and motivation for the killings, in others the motivating factors were less clear. Certainly, racially motivated violent extremism, specifically white supremacy and anti-Semitism, were factors in several attacks, including two of the most significant attacks in Christchurch, New Zealand, and El Paso, Texas," according to the report, citing two of the most prominent attacks around the world.

The council voted to withdraw from the task force on May 8, 2019. The resolution still requires an annual report by the end of January that contains the following information:

- The frequency with which the FBI's Special Agent in Charge requested the assignment of Portland officers for an investigation.
- The number of cases that were referred to the PPB by the FBI.
- The number of cases that were referred to the FBI by the PPB.
- The nature of closed cases referred to the PPB by the FBI, including the demographics of persons investigated, and the disposition of those cases.

No details were released about the ongoing bureau investigation.

Willamette Week

Another Heavyweight Special Interest Group Endorses City Council Candidate Tera Hurst Without Interviewing Others

*By Nigel Jaquiss
January 30, 2020*

Contrary to its own policy, the Oregon League of Conservation Voters throws its heft behind Hurst without interviewing others.

For the second time this week, a key interest group has endorsed a candidate in the crowded field seeking to replace the late Portland City Commissioner Nick Fish, without interviewing any other candidate.

This time, the group is the Oregon League of Conservation Voters, which today put its heft behind Tera Hurst, a onetime chief of staff to former Mayor Charlie Hales and the current executive director of Renew Oregon, which is pushing for statewide action on climate change.

"Tera Hurst is the most exciting candidate for Portland City Council that we have seen in a long time, and I can't wait for Portlanders to get to know her," said OLCV Executive Director Doug Moore. "Over the last several years, I have seen firsthand how Tera brings people together, and how she never gives up when the future for our kids and our climate is on the line.

"She's OLCV's first 2020 endorsement for a reason—she's an extraordinary person and a strong progressive leader who will make our city proud and the future brighter for all."

OLCV is a big player in Oregon politics. Since its founding in 1972, the group has been active at the local and state levels, issuing endorsements and scorecards that hold elected officials accountable. OLCV also spent more than \$1 million on campaigns in 2018, putting it in the big leagues of advocacy organizations.

On its website, OLCV describes its endorsement process:

"Any candidate seeking an OLCV endorsement—from someone running for a local water district board to someone running for state Senate—must first fill out a comprehensive questionnaire," OLCV says. "Following review of the questionnaire, OLCV conducts face-to-face interviews with each candidate. We consider each candidate's environmental record (if they have one) and their level of commitment to protecting Oregon's environmental legacy. We also endeavour to determine if they are a serious contender for the office they are seeking."

There are certainly a number of serious contenders in the race to replace Fish, who died Jan. 2 of stomach cancer.

It's a field that includes former two-term Multnomah County Commissioner Loretta Smith; current Metro Councillor Sam Chase, who is in his second term; Margot Black, a leading tenants' rights activist; and environmental activist Julia DeGraw, who challenged Fish in 2018, getting 33 percent of the vote.

DeGraw, who has worked on environmental issues for 15 years, including leading opposition to the siting of a Nestle bottled water plant near Cascade Locks, says she's worked closely with OLCV and was surprised to get a call today telling her the group had decided to endorse Hurst without a process.

"It's disappointing," DeGraw says. "I would have hoped for a more transparent and democratic process. But it's not just about me, it's about everybody in the race."

Chase who served as Fish's chief of staff from 2008 to 2010 before winning election to Metro, says he's also disappointed.

"They did not contact me, provide any opportunity to present my vision for Portland, or review my lifelong record of commitment to protecting our environment and climate—which frankly stands up to any elected official in our region," Chase says.

Moore, the OLCV executive director, says his group's decision was unusual but not meant to slight other candidates. He says OLCV did ask Hurst to complete a questionnaire and an interview but gave no other candidates that opportunity.

"This is the rare instance when you have somebody who's a climate champion and would be a game changer in City Hall, so we decided to move right away," Moore says.

This is the second time Hurst has been the beneficiary of an interest-group organization without an interview process. She's also been endorsed by NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon, where she holds a seat on the board.

"I am very proud and honored to have both these organizations in my corner," Hurst tells WW. "I have proven myself to be a tireless advocate for these issues I care deeply about and have a long track record with them. I will continue to fight to address the climate crisis we face as a central part of my work on the Portland City Council. I am extremely proud of the endorsement from OLCV and believe that I deserve it based on my long record of leadership and activism at the forefront of this movement in Oregon."

The Portland Mercury

Former Mayor Sam Adams Wants to Return to City Hall. Portlanders Aren't So Sure.

*By Alex Zielinski
January 30, 2020*

It's been 27 years since Sam Adams got his first job in Portland City Hall. As a 29-year-old chief of staff to then-mayor Vera Katz, Adams built a reputation as a fiercely loyal and politically savvy aide, eventually serving as city commissioner before becoming the first openly gay mayor of a major American city. Now, after his political career was cut short by several scandals, Adams wants his longtime employers—the Portland public—to give him another chance.

“The level of dissatisfaction in City Hall right now is profound,” Adams, now 56, told the Mercury in mid-January, shortly after announcing his plans to run against incumbent City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly. “I think, being the experienced outsider, I offer a value proposition for people to consider.”

But some Portlanders aren't convinced that Adams deserves the job.

Portland has changed in the eight years since Adams left City Hall. While no longer gripped by an economic recession, the city has been incapacitated by skyrocketing housing prices—a crisis that's pushed middle-class families into poverty and low-income households into homelessness. While job growth has kept up with the city's growing population, high rents in central Portland have made paychecks flimsier and commutes longer.

As Adams gears up for a race against City Hall's strongest advocate for affordable housing, city hall insiders, civic leaders, and a new generation of activists—many of whom spoke to the Mercury on the condition of anonymity, given potential employment concerns—are conflicted whether Adams' past accomplishments, and past missteps, would help or hurt a Portland that's very different from the one Adams left.

Before entering the mayor's office in 2009, Adams was known for his passionate, bullish drive to succeed in City Hall—a spark that helped him champion weighty transportation projects, like expanding the Portland Streetcar and installing the OHSU aerial tram.

But City Hall veterans say that changed weeks after he was sworn in as mayor, when Willamette Week broke the news that Adams had lied about a past romantic relationship with a legislative intern named Beau Breedlove, who at the time was 17 years old. Adams eventually claimed he didn't have sex with Breedlove until his 18th birthday, but the admission did little to extinguish the scandal, and after battling two unsuccessful recall elections tinged with homophobia, Adams became a more passive leader, attempting to regain the trust of colleagues and constituents. Despite his change in demeanor, polls showed Adams wouldn't survive a re-election run in 2011. Instead of risking a loss, Adams left after one term to lead the civic-minded nonprofit City Club of Portland before landing a job in Washington, DC at the World Resources Institute (WRI), a climate change think tank.

Portland all but forgot Adams until 2017, when Cevero Gonzalez, a former mayoral staffer who worked under Adams, sent a letter to City Council that accused the former mayor of inappropriate workplace behavior. Gonzalez said that when he had worked in Adams' office, Adams had routinely quizzed Gonzalez about his sex life, made him scout gay bars when Adams traveled, and once drunkenly tried to force him to go to a downtown strip club. What's worse,

Gonzalez said, Adams' staff condoned his behavior and dismissed Gonzalez's complaints. Ultimately, Gonzalez didn't press charges, and since neither of the men were still employed by the city when Gonzalez made the claim, the city declined to investigate. Shortly afterward, Adams left WRI under undisclosed circumstances; in May 2019, he moved back to Portland. In October, Adams told Willamette Week that Gonzalez's allegations had made it challenging to find work.

But it seems there's one place where Adams still might have the support to land a job.

On January 15, Adams submitted his paperwork to join the City Council race for Commissioner 4. Some were surprised that Adams chose to challenge Eudaly, an established, if sometimes divisive, sitting commissioner, instead of either joining the race to unseat Mayor Ted Wheeler or running for one of two open council seats with no incumbent. Others saw a calculated decision to go after a candidate whose work to protect renters has made her the scourge of landlords and business owners—groups that Adams has a history of getting along with.

“I think we have different outlooks on what it means to be a public servant,” says Adams of Eudaly's leadership. “My style is to treat people like adults... I tell them what I know, ask them for what they know, and say, ‘Let's figure this out together.’”

Adams says he never considered running for retiring Commissioner Amanda Fritz's seat, claiming he's eager for the leading candidate in that race, Carmen Rubio, director of nonprofit Latino Network, to join City Council. And while Commissioner Nick Fish's unexpected death in January left another council seat available, Adams said he saw “a lot of great talent” throwing their names in the race and didn't want to get in the way. And—for now—he says he's uninterested in returning to the mayor's office.

That's when he zeroed in on Eudaly. “In this particular race,” Adams says, “I think that I offer a contrast to the incumbent.”

Eudaly, a community activist and independent bookstore owner, was elected as a political outsider in 2016, after campaigning on a promise to protect renters from unreasonable rent hikes and no-cause evictions. By challenging Eudaly, Adams knows housing will have to be one of his flagship issues—and has already pitched a plan to fast-track the construction of affordable housing, encourage cooperative living situations for people transitioning out of homelessness, and use the Portland Clean Energy Fund to hire houseless people for short-term environmental restoration work. While on City Council, Adams helped form the City's Housing Bureau in 2009 and steered funding toward affordable housing.

“I seek to be appointed to be the renter/homelessness/housing commissioner,” says Adams, proposing a new position that would prioritize the city's housing crisis.

Since entering office, Eudaly's passed a policy that requires landlords pay moving costs for tenants evicted without reason, introduced limits to renters' security deposits, and cobbled together a plan to keep landlords from using discriminatory screening practices on prospective tenants.

Eudaly calls Adams' positioning as a renter advocate a “bold move,” given that he was hardly known for his housing advocacy during his time in office.

“That's interesting, seeing as he was the mayor of Portland in the years leading up to, and following, what is now a 10-year housing crisis,” Eudaly says. “As far as I know, he did nothing to prevent mass displacement. I don't recall any meaningful work around protecting tenants from exorbitant rent increases. I think that's a big thing that he has to answer to.”

Eudaly's supporters—many of whom say they would vote for Adams if he was in a different race—agree. Portlander Henry Kraemer, a longtime progressive activist, says he was baffled to hear Adams was choosing to run against “the strongest and most steadfast champion for tenants and housing-insecure people” on City Council.

“The housing crisis didn't just magically appear. It was the result of inaction and bad decisions over decades, including the 20 years when Adams was [in City Hall],” says Kraemer. “You can't let a crisis fester under your leadership for two decades and then ask for take-backsies.”

“It will be really hard,” Kraemer adds, “for Adams to look tenants and housing activists in the eye and say, ‘Forget everything Eudaly has done for you. I promise I can do better.’”

Others cite Eudaly's record on addressing the climate crisis, improving public transportation, and promoting racial justice as reasons Adams should be supporting—not competing against—the newer commissioner. One environmental activist, who asked to remain anonymous, is disappointed that Adams' run may threaten the city's newly majority-women council.

“A lot of people who don't identify as cis men are pretty frustrated that he would take on a woman on council and challenge an incumbent who... has been really good on a lot of issues that matter to us,” they said. “I think there's certainly a gendered element there.”

Adams argues that City Council seats “are not hereditary titles” that incumbents should expect to retain.

“Portlanders like their elections contested,” Adams says. “And look, I'm a gay guy. I have a lifetime of people saying, ‘Step aside, it's not the right time.’ I long ago stopped doing that.”

Because of Adams' long history in City Hall and strong relationship with monied business interests, Eudaly says it feels like she's running “against the establishment.”

“This moment with Sam has made me realize that, even though I'm the incumbent, I'm still the outsider in this race,” says Eudaly. “I'm not connected to a lot of the behind-the-scenes mechanisms that he is.”

Eudaly's perspective on Adams' campaign is markedly different from how some of the most powerful members of Portland's real estate and business communities—whom Adams cultivated a trusting relationship with during his time in City Hall—view the former mayor's return to politics.

Homer Williams, the developer behind the Pearl District and South Waterfront, recalls working closely with Adams during Katz's tenure.

“That was a period of time where the city was actually getting things done,” Williams says, adding that Adams' time in City Hall was marked by progress, not the stagnancy he's perceived more recently in council chambers and with city-backed development projects.

“Sam bought into what he was doing, and he was a very good implementer,” says Williams. “He realized that not everyone had to agree to get things done.”

In his single term as mayor, Adams tackled a number of major projects. From funding free bus passes for public school students to securing 15 miles of new bicycle routes to luring Major League Soccer to downtown Portland, Adams was consistently able to name a challenge and solve it on deadline.

“My biggest frustration with City Hall right now is that you have a group of progressive people that espouse the right values, but when it comes to implementing those values, they can't actually do them,” says Felisa Hagins, political director of Service Employees International

Union (SEIU) Local 49. “Sam never said he was going to do something he wasn’t going to do. There’s a level of respectful honesty between people with a shared vision, and we had that with him.”

Local 49 represents janitors, security officers, nurses, and manufacturers in the private sector. Hagins recalls Adams once showing up at the Moda Center at 3 am to greet janitors as they left after a work shift.

“I can’t recall a time I brought workers to his office. He always came to them,” Hagins says. “That’s the kind of mayor Sam was.”

Dubbed the “green mayor” and the “bike mayor,” Adams also moved the needle on Portland’s commitments to reducing the city’s carbon footprint.

“He really had a vision for Portland, and what we could do for transportation as a progressive city,” says Brian Davis, a local transportation engineer who’s consulted on city projects. “That vision hasn’t really been duplicated since he left office.”

Of Adams’ tenure, Davis says if there was one thing that “hindered his ability to really move things forward,” it was the Breedlove debacle.

It’s been more than a decade since Adams apologized for lying about his relationship with Breedlove.

After becoming mayor, Adams brought a newfound focus on LGBTQ+ issues, instituting a transgender-inclusive health plan for city employees and co-founding the Q Center. But for some LGBTQ+ Portlanders, the fracture in the queer community caused by his relationship with Breedlove has yet to heal.

“The Breedlove scandal really did change how I view Sam, in part because I’m queer,” says a transportation advocate who also asked not to be named. “Having an out gay mayor confirm a lot of right-wing stereotypes about gay men grooming younger men—it just really offends me, honestly.”

Other members of Portland’s activist community—including many who weren’t active in politics when Adams last held office—demand a more transparent explanation from Adams regarding both the allegations from 2009 and 2017.

“It harms the community when a person in a leadership position does something problematic,” adds the environmental activist. “Was there an accounting and a restorative process with the community? I don’t know if that really occurred. We really do deserve to understand how he’s changed.”

The day before Adams filed to run for the Commissioner 4 seat, Adams’ lawyer, Mike Fuller, released a report asserting that Gonzalez’s 2017 allegations lacked the evidence needed to support a legal claim of sexual harassment. Fuller’s independent investigation was based on analysis by an employment law attorney and a former Oregon judge, both of whom reviewed city emails, with the subjects’ identities removed, and the already-public facts of the allegations. Fuller did not contact Gonzalez during his investigation.

“I know that my accuser believes what he says,” Adams tells the Mercury. “But I didn’t sexually harass.”

In interviews with Willamette Week, three of Adams’ former chiefs of staff independently dismissed Gonzalez’s workplace harassment claims.

But another former city hall staffer says Gonzalez's 2017 allegations didn't come as a surprise to those who worked with Adams at City Hall. According to the staffer—yet another source who asked to remain anonymous—the mayor's office under Adams' leadership was rife with “locker room behavior,” and those who complained were retaliated against.

“There was a cult of personality around him. People would just go along with whatever he said,” says the staffer. “The power dynamic wasn't healthy.”

Adams says he was driven to return to Portland politics to mend the public's frayed relationship with local government.

It's a valid concern: A study conducted by the city in 2009, when Adams entered the mayor's office, found 30 percent of all Portlanders surveyed felt like they weren't able to influence government decisions. A decade later, that number had doubled: In 2019, a city study found that 61 percent of Portlanders don't feel empowered to influence city decisions.

“I fear people have moved past their frustration [with city government] and are now settling... essentially throwing up their hands and saying, ‘Apparently, there is nothing we can do about this,’” says Adams. “The desire for change is palpable.”

He might need a stronger argument to convince Portlanders that a former mayor can bring that change.

Portland has seen significant changes since Adams left City Hall, and not just within the housing market. Along with newfound commitments to equity within city bureaus and an increasingly progressive business community, the city's witnessed a surge in political activism and protests that has proved far broader and more durable than the city's Occupy movement that sprung up while Adams was in office. In December, Fritz—the last of the four commissioners who Adams worked alongside as mayor—will leave City Council, and there's no guarantee the success he had collaborating with one group of commissioners will carry over to a new council.

“City Council seats are few and precious, and if you want to serve, you better be ready to make a damn good argument about what you, and you alone, have to offer,” says another City Hall insider who asked not to be identified.

“‘It's the only job I think I can get,’ isn't enough,” they add. “Experience is good, but it's not everything.”

The Adams campaign is still fresh. When the Mercury spoke to Adams on January 21, he was still assembling a campaign staff and putting together a website to formally unveil his policy positions. Portland's waiting.

“I'm sure there's some reason he's running for this particular seat, at this particular time, against this particular candidate,” says transportation engineer Davis. “I can't wait to see what it is.”

Complaint Questions Sam Adams' Eligibility in May Council Race

*By Alex Zielinski
January 30, 2020*

A Portlander has filed a complaint with the city questioning former mayor Sam Adams' eligibility to run in the May 16 Portland City Council race. Adams joined the race for city commissioner, position 4, on January 15.

"I believe the determination that Sam Adams is eligible to run for City Council was based upon a misinterpretation of the applicable law," writes Bob Weinstein, a Portlander who previously filed a complaint against the city for not enforcing its e-scooter rules.

Weinstein sent this complaint on January 29 to City Auditor Mary Hull Caballero, who oversees the city's election department.

To enter a Portland City Council election, candidates must prove that they've lived in Portland for at least one year prior to election day. Adams, who served as Portland mayor from 2008 to 2012, has been living in Washington, DC until recently. Last week, Adams told the Mercury that he moved back to Portland in May 2019. In an July 2019 interview with Willamette Week, however, Adams said he was moving back to Portland "full time" in August 2019. Adams has not responded to the Mercury's request for clarification (but we'll update this post when he does).

As WW pointed out last week, a state statute defines candidate residency as a "place in which habitation is fixed and to which, when the person is absent, the person intends to return."

City elections officer Deborah Scroggin told WW that Adams has been registered to vote in Portland for at least a year—meaning, in the eyes of the city, he's met the state qualifications.

Weinstein disagrees, and argues that being a resident of Portland is different than being a voter in Portland. In his complaint, Weinstein cites the WW article in which Adams said he was moving to Portland in August, writing: "Mr. Adams is therefore ineligible to be a candidate in the May primary election because he did not maintain residency within the City of Portland's limits since May 19, 2019."

It Oregon state statute, "residency" is defined by "place in which habitation is fixed and to which, when the person is absent, the person intends to return." Weinstein, meanwhile, offers his own definition: "'The word 'residency' means physical presence."

Scroggin declined to comment on the complaint "due to its preliminary nature." According to the elections office, Adams has yet to gather enough signatures to be formally qualified for the May ballot—meaning there's no actual document to appeal at this point.

What's more, any complaints against city election decisions must be filed through Multnomah County Circuit Court, not the City Auditor's office.

Weinstein ends his complaint by suggesting the city is unfairly biased towards Adams: "Finally, this preliminary determination appears to be a very favorable decision for a former mayor that in all likelihood would not be available to an average citizen."

OPB

Audit: Portland Needs Better Strategy For Cannabis Regulation

*By Donald Orr
January 30, 2020*

In a new audit released Thursday, Portland's independent city auditor says the city's cannabis program needs to implement an improved strategy to better regulate the emerging industry.

Alexandra Fercak, a performance auditor with Portland Audit Services, said it comes down to the Office of Community and Civic Life, which oversees the cannabis program, struggling to meet obligations.

“In order to effectively regulate the cannabis industry here in Portland, we found that the program does not have some very basic management fundamentals,” Fercak said.

“We found that the program doesn’t really budget based on workforce development and strategy.”

The audit found the Office of Community and Civic Life lacks a system to track data on cannabis licensing and enforcement.

The report states auditors interviewed managers and staff from the Office of Community and Civic Life and cannabis regulation stakeholders, and reviewed industry feedback on regulation challenges.

Oregon legalized the sale of recreational cannabis in 2014. In early 2016 the city of Portland began regulating businesses that grow, produce or sell cannabis.

The audit recommends the Office of Community and Civic Life should “develop a program strategy, implement a data management system to consistently track program performance and results, and develop communication tools to inform Council and the public about cannabis regulation.”

“While I appreciate the challenge of implementing a regulatory system for an emerging industry, fundamental management tools must be prioritized and in place to ensure the success of any program,” Portland City Auditor Mary Hull Caballero said in a statement.

“Our recommendations are well within the reach of the Office of Community and Civic Life, and I am pleased to implement them.”

This is the second audit on cannabis regulation conducted by the Portland city auditor. In 2019, a report from the auditor revealed that most of the collected taxes from cannabis have gone toward the city’s general fund, police and transportation programs.

The Office of Community and Civic Life, headed by director Suk Rhee and overseen by Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, formally responded to the cannabis audit.

“The effort to develop a city-wide strategy requires alignment of perspectives on regulation from City Council,” the response reads.

“The program did not benefit from such alignment in the first three of its four years in existence; emerging agreement over this last year is a positive step forward for the City.”

The office said it looks forward to continued improvement as it adapts to emerging economic, cultural and regulatory conditions for cannabis.

Portland's Regional Arts And Culture Council Announces Job Cuts As Part Of Restructuring

*By Donald Orr
January 31, 2020*

The Regional Arts and Culture Council announced plans this week to lay off 15 employees and eliminate five vacant positions as part of an initiative to reflect “a new vision and priorities.” In a statement, council leaders said they plan to hire 15 new positions in the future to take the arts council in a new direction. The arts agency said it aims to reorganize and expand its advocacy and fundraising programs with a deeper focus on reaching underserved communities.

“We take this transition very seriously and deeply appreciate the work of RACC employees, especially those leaving the organization,” RACC board chair Linda McGeady said in a statement.

“These changes respond to what we are seeing and hearing from our community, and position RACC to better serve our region today and in the future.”

The proposed changes are a response to a 2018 audit that determined the city had failed to set budgeting priorities for the arts agency. Oregon Arts Watch reported that the changes come one year after RACC hired executive director Madison Cario, who's leading the initiative.

“To achieve this vision, RACC needs to become more fiscally sustainable, diversify our funding sources and streamline our organization,” said Cario in a statement.

RACC is different than the city bureaus — it gets its money from the city budget, but functions under its own volunteer governing board. It also performs advocacy work and administers arts grants and technical assistance in Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas Counties.

As part of the restructuring, RACC plans to create an advocacy team to make the case to the public and partners about the value of arts education and the city's Arts Education and Access Fund. Portland's “arts tax” puts money in that fund, where it's distributed to school districts and grants for arts organizations.

“When RACC connects artists with resources, opportunities and each other, our communities become stronger,” said Portland Arts Commissioner Chloe Eudaly in a statement. “We have a vision of establishing RACC as a champion for arts and culture locally, regionally, and nationally. The organizational changes proposed by RACC will help us all better achieve that vision.”

At the same time RACC announced layoffs, it also said the management of The Right Brain Initiative, an arts integration program for K-8 students, will move to Young Audiences of Oregon & SW Washington, a nonprofit arts-in-education program.

RACC will present its “State of the Arts” report to Portland City Council on Feb. 27 at 2 p.m.

FBI, Portland Police Build New Relationship A Year After JTTF Withdrawal

*By Rebecca Ellis
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A year since withdrawing from the region's Joint Terrorism Task Force, City Hall appears pleased with the new relationship forming between the PPB and the FBI, in which the lines of communication remain open, albeit significantly confined.

On Wednesday, Police Chief Jami Resch and Sgt. Pete Simpson fielded questions from the City Council on the nature of this new relationship as they presented an annual report recapping interactions between the bureau and the task force.

It was the first accounting of the city's relationship with the FBI-led task force since council members voted to leave in February 2019. The move was championed by Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty, who feared the city did not have enough oversight of the FBI's work to prevent officers from potentially violating Portlanders' civil rights.

Despite the end of Portland's involvement in the JTTF, the task force can still ask for assistance from the police bureau. For example, Portland can temporarily provide PPB officers to assist with an investigation spearheaded by the task force. The task force can also refer cases to the Portland Police and visa versa, if one agency feels the other has better resources on the ground to handle the investigation.

According to a PPB report, this exchange of cases happened just under two dozen times in 2019. The Portland Police passed 12 cases on to the FBI, and the FBI gave PPB 10 cases.

The last time this report was generated, in 2019, it showed that Portland Police officers working with the task force had looked into 29 incidents.

This year's report provided only a brief overview of the cases moving from the PPB to the FBI. They included investigations into individuals threatening to bomb places of worship, racially motivated extremism and threats to public officials.

The report also included more details on cases the FBI handed over to the bureau. Three of the subjects were affiliated with "a racially motivated violent extremist group." Three involved violent threats made on social media. One person had threatened the Portland Police and another the British royal family.

Nine of the 10 reported cases had been closed; the bureau found the allegations didn't amount to a crime. Of the nine, all of the people being investigated were white, and all but one was male.

At Wednesday's City Council meeting, Hardesty said she was pleased with the bureau's transparency and that she intends to make sure "our participation with the joint terrorism task force is extremely limited."

She also questioned the chief on what the new process was to determine whether the FBI and PPB exchanged cases. One example she gave: PPB would hand over a case if they found evidence of a potential terrorist attack.

"We would look at it and we would take that investigation to the end of our limits, and realize maybe this doesn't have anything city or state related but it could have a possible federal nexus," Resch said. "I would be notified by Pete [Simpson], and I would contact a member of the FBI and forward that information to them."

And if the task force wanted a Portland officer to help with an investigation?

“Then they would have to call me,” the chief said. “I would have to be briefed on it, and I would have to make that decision.”

Simpson told the Council that Resch would be closely monitoring all cases in which the task force played a role.

“Moving forward, Chief Resch has indicated she will take an active role in this process and regularly meeting with the criminal intelligence unit to review and discuss any information going to and from the FBI,” Simpson said. “That is an added layer of oversight we are going to do this next year.”

Dan Handelman, an outspoken critic of the task force and head of Portland Copwatch, a group that advocates for more police transparency and civilian oversight, staged a protest earlier in the week outside City Hall over the continuing relationship between the FBI and PPB. He was joined by groups including 350 PDX, League of Women Voters of Portland, Portland Democratic Socialists of America and Jewish Voice for Peace-Portland.

After leaving the council session, he said he remained concerned about when exactly the Portland Police had the green light to work with the task force.

He said the lack of details included in the report made it difficult for a reader to determine if the subjects represented “an actual terrorist threat.”

He added he was particularly concerned about the incidents included in the report about individuals associated “with a racially motivated violent extremist group,” as he felt that simply being associated with an extremist group, such as a white supremacist group, was not sufficient for task force involvement and could start police down a slippery slope.