TENTH DEADLY FORCE INCIDENT IN TEN MONTHS
Portland Police Level of Violence Unheard of Since 2001

Since our last newsletter, in which we noted Portland Police had shot, shot at or caused the death in custody of seven people in 99 days, the PPB was involved in three more incidents. All three suspects were shot and killed. On April 29, Sgt. James Mooney (#50526) and Officer Michael Gonzalez (#57135) killed Jeb Brock, 42, a suspect in the non-fatal stabblings of several family members. On June 9, Officers Jackson Oldham (#55188) and Nathan Kirby-Glatkowski (#56629) shot and killed David Downs, 38, when they say he was threatening a woman with a knife in a downtown building’s stairwell. On July 30, Officer Gary Doran (#47826) shot and killed Lane Christopher Martin, 31,* after he was reportedly swinging a hatchet at people on the street. A lot of new information also came out about the deaths of Andre Gladen (PPR #77), Samuel Rice and Richard Barry (both PPR #76), including horrifying body cam footage of Barry’s death in custody.

Jeb Brock: Stabbing Suspect Also Shot with “Less Lethal”

Mooney and Gonzales were among officers who responded to a home near SE 131st and Center St. and found two people outside who had been stabbed, and two others inside. An 18 month old infant was not harmed. (continued on p. 6)

As the Entire Oversight Body Management Quits, and Review Committee Continues Work

In May, Portland City Council voted for the first time since the current oversight system was created in 2001 to find an officer out of policy for his actions. The significance of this vote is hard to overstate: our elected officials agreed with the Citizen Review Committee (CRC) that the officer had retaliated against a community member, despite multiple Police Bureau employees including the Chief only conceding maybe the cop was wrong. Mayor Ted Wheeler, on the losing end of the 3-1 vote, declared his intent to overhaul the whole system. All of this took place about a month after the “Independent” Police Review (IPR) Director, Constantin Severe, left his job to work for the Governor as a public safety advisor, and his two deputies announced they, too were leaving. A new Director was named in July. Meanwhile, the CRC held four meetings but heard just one new appeal, following up on their Crowd Control public forum (PPR #77), the IPR’s annual report (p. 4) and the Council Hearing. They also welcomed a new member in late June.

Case #2018-x-0003: Officer Retaliated for Community Member Taking Photos, Making Face

This is the fourth time we are writing about (continued on p. 2)
Houseless Woes: Sweeps Continue, Boulders Planted

The sweeps by the Portland Police Bureau and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) continue, although information regarding where houseless people are likely to be found is still elusive. The sweeps are often not given sufficient time to allow access to those who are houseless, and the process is not always transparent. During copwatch patrols done by our members, we continue to hear of belongings taken and the difficulty in trying to retrieve them. As noted in PPR #77, City auditors spoke with those who are houseless. They were told that people on the streets are often not given sufficient time before a sweep to pack up their belongings which were then, without being cataloged, taken to a warehouse that was not easy to reach. It has been reported that valuables such as IDs, credit cards, and medication are stored along with personal items.

Houseless residents of the tiny home village Hazelnut Grove initiated and led houseless activists on a 50 mile walk from Portland to Salem in late May, calling the march “Give Us Shelter.” Walking about 10 miles a day for five days, the group of 33 people, 25 of whom were houseless, arrived in Salem on May 28. The next day they held a rally on the Capitol steps and lobbied a number of representatives and senators, asking that sweeps be stopped and camping be allowed on public land. Some of the Give Us Shelter folks were swept five times in the Pearl District in the month after returning from Salem.

The “Jason Barns Landing” village on the cross-roads trail in St Johns, named after a houseless man who was hit and killed by a drunk driver last November, was swept from its location on Metro land on July 9. Present were several Park Rangers, around eight employees of Rapid Response BioCLean, a private firm that bags and removes personal property of campers, and six Portland Police Officers. Police said they were there to “protect Park Rangers,” but one of them actively assisted the sweep by moving a railing on a camper’s site.

Two people were arrested, one camper and one supporter. Both were charged with “interfering with a peace officer” and taken to the Multnomah County Detention Center. Charges were dropped, with the possibility of reinstating them any time within three years. In 2004, Multnomah County Circuit Court Judge Marilyn Litzenberger declared “Interfering with a Peace Officer” unconstitutionally broad (PPR #33). Despite the ongoing sweeps, some improvements have recently been put in place. Whereas there were continued complaints by some in the housed community about houseless people leaving trash, bodily waste and other items strewn around, people in power finally concluded that having sufficient trash facilities, public toilets, showers and laundry facilities would alleviate much of this concern. In a joint program by Street Roots and the City of Portland, funds were allocated for these resources (Street Roots, May 17).

We reported previously (PPR #75) that 52% of the arrests made by Portland Police were of houseless people, an outrageous statistic which proves that homelessness is criminalized. The “Independent” Police Review (IPR) put out a report in July examining a sample of 727 911 calls and arrest reports. IPR found the police are confused about their role in responding to these complaints and need direction. Many of the arrests were due to misdemeanor warrants or failure to appear on an earlier arrest. If a person has no fixed address or way to be contacted, of course they will not appear in court. IPR also found the police did not write reports if there was no arrest, so it couldn’t be determined what percentage of encounters led to arrests. Chief Outlaw and Mayor Wheeler will be meeting regarding clarification of the role of the police. The report also mentioned other issues such as the failure of housing and mental health services, as well as inconsistent approaches to the enforcement of anti-camping laws (Oregonian, July 19). Perhaps if Portland Police are given sufficient guidance regarding these issues, those who have no place to live except on the streets or have mental health issues will not be viewed and treated as criminals.

Meanwhile, ODOT’s boulders are an obscene and ridiculous use of $1,000,000 of the taxpayer money. They claim to be eliminating the action to be an invasion of privacy by the state and overturned the decades of old Oregon court precedent (Oregonlive, May 9).
retaliation, it doesn’t matter whether the enforcement action is lawful. Wheeler also kept echoing the Chief’s point that she, the officer’s commander, an Assistant Chief, the IPR, and Internal Affairs all agreed with the original “Not Sustained” finding. Bowling rebutted that except for IPR, those are all Bureau members. Wheeler, the Police Commissioner, said more than once he believed there was no misconduct, which implies he thinks Parker should have been “Exonerated.” Thus, he should have voted with the majority that the Bureau’s finding was not supported by the evidence even if he disagreed that it should be Sustained. He also complained the vote was essentially an “HR decision” which should not be made by a majority of Council overruling the Bureau Commissioner.

The Bureau’s discipline guide puts Retaliation one level above Disparate Treatment, so the minimum penalty Parker will face is two days off without pay. If it is found to be “aggravated,” which it might since he was earlier found out of policy for not giving Bowling his business card during the same incident, he could get three weeks off or be terminated at worst.

Chief Outlaw let Portland Copwatch know the Police Review Board would recommend discipline in this case, but would not be able to change Council’s finding. City Council voted three times to sustain allegations of misconduct between 1997 and 2001, and each time the Chief (first Charles Moose, then Mark Kroeker) ignored the Council’s decision (PPRs #12, 13 and 24). This flaw—that an appointed Chief could overturn the vote of our elected leaders—in part led to the creation of IPR and its Citizen Review Committee. The City Code establishing the IPR/CRC system indicates Council’s vote will be final. The previous two CRC cases which made it all the way to Council (in 2003 and 2017) ended up with insufficient evidence findings.

Case #2019-x-0001: Talk to My Lawyer

In August, CRC heard the appeal of a woman who said a Detective was rude to her when interviewing her as a criminal suspect, showed favoritism to the person whose items she allegedly stole, and spoke to her despite her being represented by an attorney. CRC and Internal Affairs (IA) indicated they had recordings of the officer’s calls to the Appellant and found no rudeness. Detectives Commander Jeff Bell claimed the civilian who directly called the Detective normally wouldn’t generate an investigation, but he’d turned over text messages and surveillance video supposedly showing the “theft.” The woman says the man had left two pug dog statues (value $100) in a common area in their downtown building which she thought were abandoned. And, though the lawyer was supposed to be engaged if police called the Appellant, he technically wasn’t representing her at the time the Detective called. Despite questions about Fifth and Sixth Amendment rights, CRC voted 5-0 to affirm all three “exonerated” findings. They did, however, call attention to the fact that the Detective told the Appellant he was giving her a chance to turn herself in because she lived downtown and “not way out in Southeast,” clearly an issue of class bias. Bell agreed to talk to the officer about that statement.

IPR Staff Turnover

When previous IPR Directors have quit, there has been a deputy to take over in the interim; in fact, this is how Severe rose to lead IPR when Mary-Beth Baptista left in 2013 (PPR #60). Anika Bent-Albert, the Deputy IPR Director, left to join the City Attorney’s office less than a month after Severe headed to Salem, and Program Manager Rachel Mortimer left about a week after the first City Council hearing on Bowling’s case. This must have been stressful for the Interim Director, an employee of the Auditor’s office which houses IPR. However, that person is used to stress—Amanda Lamb, a former analyst for Multnomah County who was fired for publishing data which showed racial bias in the criminal justice system (PPR #73), took over from April to late July.

Lamb did not show a great leap forward in hearing community voices, sideling Portland Copwatch (PCW)’s questions about the IPR’s annual report at the June CRC hearing, for instance. Lamb did concede, though, that IPR would reprint the report to correct mistakes including one made about the outcome of CRC’s 2018 appeals, a mistake brought to their attention by PCW.

The new Director is Ross Caldwell, who had worked at the Criminal Justice Commission since 2015, but was previously a Multnomah County Assistant District Attorney. PCW looks forward to seeing whether Caldwell will nurture a more open, community-friendly IPR.

That said, the Auditor’s stakeholders who created a “candidate profile” for the new Director included the CRC, the Portland Committee for Community Engaged Policing, City Council, the Bureau and two other City agencies, but nobody in the general public. The group who chose Caldwell included the Oregon Center for Public Policy, which so far as PCW knows has never attended any CRC meeting or followed the work of IPR.

CRC Continues to Meet, But Doesn’t Make Much Progress

CRC cancelled its May meeting, met for only an hour in June, and considered just two topics at its July meeting: recapping the Crowd Control forum from April and talking about the Council hearing. The summary PowerPoint recapping public input about PPB crowd policy did a fairly good job capturing concerns expressed by the community, including the militarized police uniforms escalating tensions, the use of dangerous weaponry, and the apparent bias of police toward the alt-right and against anti-fascists. Despite finally getting the momentum together to hold that forum after almost a year of delay, the Crowd Work Group cancelled its May, June, July and August meetings.

CRC’s discussion about the Council appeal looped back to their ongoing effort to get their standard of review changed. The majority of Council agreed with CRC’s 8-1 vote, under the same “reasonable person” standard, that it was not reasonable to conclude anything other than that Officer Parker retaliated. However, it appears there may not be an opening to change the standard to “preponderance of the evidence.” Some Council members seem to be worried more cases would end up coming to them, while others seem to want to throw out the whole system and start again (which didn’t go so well in 2001).

At the June meeting, CRC had only set aside a total of 15 minutes to discuss both the above issues and to hear a presentation on IPR’s Annual Report. They spent most of the time hearing from Director Lamb about the Report. Only four CRC members were physically present and a fifth had to be contacted by phone to constitute a quorum.

On June 26, City Council appointed a new member to the CRC to replace Albert Lee, who resigned. The new member is a gender non-binary person, Courtney Fraser. They are in their late 20s, meaning CRC still has no member who is over age 50 despite PCW repeatedly noting this is not reflective of the population of Portland... a City Code requirement for CRC’s membership. Mx. Fraser works with interACT: Advocates for Intersex Youth, and noted in their application: “I have met some great people who are law enforcement officers—some of them in my family—while others close to me have been hurt or frightened by police.”

Contact IPR at 503-923-0146. See video of the Council hearing at <tinyurl.com/CRC2019v>.

Amanda Lamb filed a $500,000 suit against the County in June for her firing (Oregonlive, June 27).

Historic Council Vote Bolsters Work of Citizen Review Committee (continued from p. 2)
Police Review Annual Report Ignores Force, Review Boards, Mental Health

In late April, the “Independent” Police Review (IPR) released its 2018 Annual Report, now down from what was once over a 100-page document to just 17 pages. Missing from last year’s Report are sections on the Bureau’s Police Review Board (PRB) and IPR’s goals. IPR did not publish data tables representing the point-in-time when they generated their Report, meaning the only way to check on the numbers is to head to IPR’s two online “dashboards”: “One breaking down complaints and the other focusing on allegations.” Because those online databases are constantly updated, the numbers there do not match the printed Report. IPR has also continued to leave out relevant information about Use of Force, including how often officers were found out of policy for Force in 2018 (which was zero). There is also no mention of mental illness in the Report, even though that is the focus of a US Department of Justice Settlement Agreement which the Bureau and IPR are required to follow. And, for the second year in a row, IPR got the information wrong about the outcomes of its own Citizen Review Committee (CRC)’s hearings, something Portland Copwatch (PCW) had pointed out both times.

PCW determined that of 197 force allegations made from 2017-18, only one was sustained (in 2017)—a 0.5% sustain rate. The overall rate since 2002 when IPR was created is 1.0%. Though most cases are investigated by the Bureau’s Internal Affairs division (IA), IPR has investigated 122 allegations of Force since starting its “independent” investigations in 2013, and only one has been Sustained (0.8%). IPR’s Report doesn’t mention the annual review they are required to conduct each year about deadly force, published by OIR Group last February (PPR #74).

PCW’s analysis is available at http://www.portlandcopwatch.org/iprannual2018analysis.html; it includes a link to the IPR Report.

*It is not clear why all these data aren’t inter-connected in the same “dashboard” to help drill down about how race and other factors affect outcomes.

Officer Violence, Tainted Milkshake Tweet Impact Anti-fascist Protest

Past violence by the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) against demonstrators coming out to oppose neo-fascists in Portland (PPRs #72-77) was reflected again on June 29. While a variety of anti-fascist demonstrators created a positive, carnival-like atmosphere to stare down the hate, the PPB used pepper spray and pepper ball guns against crowds. There were some small disturbances and clashes, but numerous people who counter-protested did not witness any violence. The Bureau increased tensions by tweeting a rumor that vegan milkshakes provided by the group Pop Mob were tainted with quick drying cement.

With no evidence the rumor was true, the Chief, the Mayor and the Mayor’s police policy advisor, former Portland Police Association (PPA) President and PPB Captain Robert King, defended the fear-mongering. King called the tweet “responsible.”

One civilian-on-civilian act of violence recorded showed right-wing blogger Andy Ngo, who attends such gatherings to provoke leftists’ anger, was punched. Ngo spun the attack into milkshakes to see what would happen including milkshake rumors, as well as local papers according to a Portland Police Bureau (PPB) spokesperson, which went so far as to literally mix quick-drying cement into milkshakes to see what would happen (“Concrete Evidence,” July 10).

In late July, US Senator Ted Cruz and President Donald Trump started talking about labeling Antifa a “domestic terrorist organization.” On August 8 CPW posted a statement which read in part: “We are very aware that efforts by the President and members of Congress to label Antifa as a criminal and/or ‘terrorist’ organization are unfounded and can only lead to criminalization of free speech and association. Portland Copwatch and its members stand against fascism.”

Prior to an August 17 far-right rally, the Mayor and Chief discouraged people from participating. In a video, the Mayor said he would control the protests “by any means necessary,” invoking the words of Malcolm X to excuse the projection of (white supremacist) state power. The Chief implied she asked the Governor to mobilize the National Guard. The day of the event saw militarized police who escorted the alt-right crowd over an otherwise closed bridge as other cops clamped down on anti-fascists.

PCW also pointed out the Bureau always tells community members “not to spread rumors and assume wrongdoing after police shootings—even as the facts have been harder to come by in the last several years. If the PPB is going to ask for an ‘innocent until proven guilty’ standard for themselves,” we wrote, “surely at the very least any post about such rumors/suspicions can be couched in terms such as ‘allegedly’ or ‘suspected’ rather than stated as facts.” Fact-checking site Snopes.com debunked the milkshake rumor, as well as local papers including Willamette Week, which went so far as to literally mix quick-drying cement into milkshakes to see what would happen (“Concrete Evidence,” July 10).

3 arrested in rival rallies downtown

Oregonian, June 30

S E P T E M B E R 2 0 1 9  P E O P L E ’ S P O L I C E R E P O R T # 7 8

Read our whole statement at <portlandcopwatch.org/antifa solidarity.html>
Auditor Continues to Slam Police on Profiling, “Gangs” Data Collection May Improve After State Law Updated

Following up on their audits from 2018 which suggested ways to collect better data about disparate stops and called out the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) for continuing to use a secret “Gang List” after dismantling an official one (PPR #74), the City Auditor’s office issued follow-up reports in May showing more work needs to be done. In related news, the Oregon State Legislature amended the law requiring police departments to collect stop data (PPR #72) by expanding the definition of stops beyond those that end in arrests or citations. This will likely lead to improved data from the PPB, whose information about pedestrian stops dropped from hundreds to dozens per year after the initial law passed. They claimed to stop less than 20 pedestrians a month in early 2018, but that number was up to over 150 a month by the first quarter 2019 report.*

One audit looked again at the PPB’s data collection, calling out the analysis of the Gang Enforcement Team (GET)’s stops in 2016 and 2017 — 61% and 56% of people stopped by GET were African American while only 6% of Portland’s population is black. They noted, as Portland Copwatch had earlier, that using a benchmark of “gang crime victims” is not appropriate. They suggested comparing stops to people injured in traffic crashes and crime victims in general. The PPB actually does use those benchmarks, but not for the GET.

The other audit focused on the “Gang List,” for which they had previously asked the PPB to collect better information proving whether people being stopped were, in fact, suspected gang members. According to the report, the Bureau stopped using its secondary list and created a policy on “managing criminal intelligence files” Bureau-wide. The Auditor asked that information about gang affiliations include a requirement of “reasonable suspicion,” as well as quality control for accuracy and security, all of which are in the Bureau’s draft policy. However, the report notes they did not include documentation of reasonable suspicion.

The reports say the GET was “restructured” in early 2019 as the “Gun Violence Reduction Team” (GVRT), though the Bureau seems to believe that change happened in late 2018. In either case, during the May budget debates, Mayor Wheeler became highly indignant when Commissioners Jo Ann Hardesty and Chloe Eudaly, in asking to cut the GVRT’s budget, referred to it using the old name “Gang Enforcement Team.” Whether that happened three or seven months earlier, getting worked up about using the old name reeked of distracting the debate from the question of funding. Wheeler apologized during the hearing. Hardesty had support from the Urban League of Portland, who said of the Team “(an Instagram post to Mayor Ted Wheeler) were in mental and physical health issues, meaning the last year. It involved a man who appears to have been looped in on emails.

Meanwhile, the PPB’s quarterly stop data continue to show that African Americans are stopped disproportionately, making up 18% of those stopped both in cars and on foot/bicycle in Q1 2019. The good news, such as it is, is that the 2017 annual report (published in January— PPR #71) shows “contraband” was found on African American drivers at about the same rate as white drivers — 40% and 41% of the time, closing a gap that used to be spread out by 20 percent. However, African Americans made up 30% of all searches while whites—77% of Portland’s population— were only 57%, meaning black people are stopped three times more often then population would indicate and searched at five times that rate.

Find the PPB’s stop data at https://www.portlandoregon.gov/police/65520.

*- Starting in Q3 2018, the Bureau noted the difference between the state’s definition of a stop and their own, presumably starting to tell officers to collect data on more encounters after that; the numbers for Q3 and Q4 2018 were about 75 and 90 stops per month respectively.

On August 7, the Guardian revealed that a “South West Oregon Joint Task Force” had spied on activists organizing against a proposed gas pipeline, that they received training from the Portland JTTF, and that Portland Officer Andrew Heaster had been looped in on emails. Heaster killed Quinci Hayes in 2017 (PPR #71) and Merle Hatch in 2015 (PPR #50).

JTTF Resolution Disappoints (continued from p. 1)

Commissioner Hardesty acknowledged the community’s concerns and stated the report will tell her if we need to tweak the agreement further. Commissioner Fish, who had originally voted against withdrawal, agreed the reports are important. Commissioner Fritz stated on the record that the Mayor pulled the two part-time officers out of daily work at the JTTF shortly after the vote in February, showing integrity in respecting the Council’s vote. The Mayor continued his absurd argument that the PPB being in the JTTF helped modify the FBI’s behavior to meet Portland standards. Even to the extent that Portland is any better than the FBI, thinking an agency under the direction of the current Attorney General and President will bend to our local concerns is a bit short-sighted to say the least.

One provision of the Resolution requires the Bureau to create a Directive (policy) guiding the PPB’s involvement in the JTTF. That Directive was posted for public input in mid-July with a deadline to comment of mid-August. The draft mostly lifts all of its language from the Resolution.

Meanwhile, in the Bureau’s draft 2018 Annual Report, they go into detail on the Criminal Intelligence Unit’s single case working with the JTTF last year. It involved a man who appears to have mental and physical health issues, meaning the “threatening communications with intent to extort” (an Instagram post to Mayor Ted Wheeler) were in fact not a credible threat at all. Exaggerating community threats while minimizing harm done by officers does not build trust.

In short, Portland has won an apparent victory, but will have to see how things play out with the potential end-run of adding in “threats to life and/or hate crimes” when the first report is released next January.
According to the Bureau’s narrative, the officers found Brock holding a woman at knifepoint and “engaged” him. The Oregonian reported on June 22 that one officer yelled “drop the knife or you will be shot” 30 seconds before Officer Aaron Rizzo (#56653) fired a less lethal weapon. The officers said the woman “shimmied away” and they opened fire, killing Brock. Gonzales said he “wouldn’t be able to sleep” if he accidentally shot the woman. Brock supposedly yelled at the officers to kill him. The Oregon Public Broadcasting story on the incident (May 1) inserted Brock’s criminal history, which was, per their current policy, not part of the Bureau’s news release. However, that memo was titled “Police Release Identification of Suspect Involved in Stabbing,” leaving off the salient point that he was killed by the police.

David Downs: Cops Shoot at Man Holding “Hostage”

Interestingly, though Downs was allegedly also holding a woman at knifepoint, the PPB designated their encounter with him a “hostage situation,” a term not applied to Brock (a “stabbing suspect”). Downs was in the stairwell at the Safeway building in the upscale Pearl District (no doubt one reason the cops were quick to respond) on NW Lovejoy. He was involved in an “altercation” and said he had an explosive device (he did not), according to the Oregonian’s website (June 10). Oldham and Glatkowski shot and killed him, though it’s not clear whether he was in contact with the woman, who was reportedly injured before the cops arrived. The PPB mistakenly killed 12-year-old Nathan Thomas in 1992 when a suspect had a knife to his throat (they also killed the suspect), and killed Byron Hammick in 2002 while he was holding a physical toddler (PPR #26). The police had also claimed Samuel Rice’s girlfriend was a “hostage” even though she denied that interpretation in an interview with the Mercury.

Lane Martin: Eyewitnesses Say He Dropped His Hatchet

Martin was recorded on cell phone video walking down the sidewalk near SE 120th and Ash with the hatchet. A witness told Oregonlive (August 1) Martin dropped the hatchet when Officer Nicholas Bianchini (#30575) and acting Sergeant David Kemple (#39589) fired less lethal rounds at him. Kemple’s involvement is significant as the OIR group has repeatedly told the Bureau to restrict supervisors from taking hands-on roles during deadly force incidents. Martin reportedly had mental health issues and was houseless. Although other details remain sketchy, several people who live in the apartment building where Martin was eventually shot reported that they were scared of the officer’s bullets who would hit Martin. They also said Martin was wearing gloves and apparently unarmed. The neighbors complained Martin’s body was left exposed for over three hours, another policy the Bureau was supposed to fix using portable screens based on OIR recommendations.

Details From Grand Jury Transcripts of Gladen, Rice Deaths

Within a matter of days in May, the District Attorney’s office released Grand Jury transcripts of the cases of Andre Gladen and Sam Rice. The first hearing revealed Officer Consider Vosu first fired a Taser at Gladen, then reports he saw his own police knife in Gladen’s hand, backed into a bedroom and fired three shots, killing the young, legally blind man (Oregonian, May 10). Officer Kelly VanBlokland was the Grand Jury in the case that he “wouldn’t be able to sleep at night” if Rice had harmed his girlfriend. However, Rice was in the bathroom alone staring at the officer at the time, meaning there was no imminent threat of harm to anyone at the time VanBlokland shot Rice through the eye, killing him (Portland Tribune, May 14).

Two Lawsuits, One Against University Police, and Copcam Footage of Barry’s Death

Two deadly force related lawsuits were announced in recent months. The family of Terrell Johnson, killed by PPB Officer Samson Ajir in 2017 in circumstances questioned by experts (PPR #77), announced a suit based in part on the experts’ report in early May (Oregonian, May 11). In June, the family of Jason Washington, who was shot by Portland State University (PSU) Police in 2018 (PPR #75), also filed a lawsuit seeking justice (Oregonian, June 14).

On May 29, PSU’s magazine the Pacific Sentinel published body camera footage from one of the PSU officers who was involved in struggling with Richard Barry on Thanksgiving last year. PPB officers do not use body cameras. The camera in question fell off the officer, showing nothing but blackness for several minutes, but when lifted up again one can clearly see Portland Officers pushing down on Barry until he stops moving. They make jokes about not wanting him to be on their hats and barely turn him over to see if he is breathing. It is horrifying footage, but those with strong fortitude can see the recording and lengthy article at thepacificsentinel.com/richard-barry-chronicle-of-a-death-as-told.

Oregon Police Shootings Continue at High Rate

In the first 15 weeks of 2019, there were 12 deadly force incidents involving law enforcement in Oregon (PPR #77). In the following 18 weeks, there were at least eight more. Portland’s numbers remain high, and statewide totals could match the record number in 2018. Other than the three PPB incidents on April 29, June 8 and July 30 (p. 1), there are the other five—two of which ended in fatalities:

— On August 8, Washington County Deputy shot and wounded Dante James Halling, 56, a theft suspect, at Hagg Lake near Gaston. Halling allegedly shot and wounded Two deputies during the incident (KGW-8TV, August 8). Eight officers were identified: Tualatin Detective Kevin Winfield and Hillsboro Officer Jose Cabrera, and Washington County Sgt. John Cecelius, Cpl. Cade Edwards, Deputies Justin Pelletier and Steve Nichols, as well as Cpl. Jeremy Braun and Chris Iverson, who were wounded (KOIN-6 TV, August 14).
— On August 6, Oregon State Troopers’ shot and killed Brandon Christopher Jones, 39, when they say he reached for a Trooper’s gun in their Grants Pass office (KDRV-12TV, August 6).
— On July 18, Oregon State Senior Trooper Michael Lacer shot reportedly suicidal Tony Orland Mills, 73, in Gold Hill under a freeway overpass after Mills had fired his handgun. The Jackson County DA says Lacer’s bullet hit Mills in the arm, but Mills then killed himself with a gunshot (Oregonlive, July 19 and KDRV-12TV, August 21).
— On July 11, Beaverton Detective Tom Stewart fired his gun toward— but missed— Calvin Ramone Davenport, 20, who drove toward officers, then away from the site, as described happening during an undercover sex trafficking mission (KPTV, July 16).
— On May 24, a Clackamas County Sheriff’s SWAT officer fired a shot into an apartment in which Daniel Craig Wiese, 31, had barricaded himself; Wiese was a suspect in shooting another civilian, but was not injured by the police (Oregonlive, May 25).

Meanwhile, armed security guard Francisco Swafford shot and killed Eugene Pharr, 42, outside a Portland strip club on January 15, and Pharr’s widow is suing the guard and the club (Willamette Week, May 29). Swafford is certified to carry a gun by Oregon’s Department of Public Safety Standards and Training.

So, 20 shootings in the first seven and a half months of the year means Oregon could lead to about 32 incidents this year—hardly lower than the 35 in 2018. *Names not known by PPR print deadline.

SEPTEMBER 2019 PEOPLE'S POLICE REPORT #78
New Recruits Can Have Tattoos, No College Degrees

In 2007, then-chief Rosie Sizer proposed changing the requirements for hiring new officers by dropping a requirement for a two year degree, but adding that military service could waive the high school diploma or equivalency prerequisite (PPR #42). At the time, Portland Copwatch (PCW) expressed concern that “you can’t adequately learn constitutional rights on the streets, but you can’t really learn street smarts in college, so a balance is needed,” as well as the possibility that veterans “trained to kill the ‘enemy’ in combat— many with PTSD— [would be] walking around Portland with guns.” The two year degree never went away until late June, when Chief Outlaw announced she plans to go back to applicants having a GED by itself, without the addition of military or police service, to recruit more officers. The Portland Tribune quotes Zakir Khan of the Council on American-Islamic Relations-Oregon referencing research which shows more educated officers use less force.

The new rules also allow officers to have face or neck tattoos and even beards, undoing a sweeping militaristic policy started under Chief Kroeker in 2000 (PPR #21). There are some caveats, though, in the Bureau’s existing tattoo policy, which prohibit “sexually explicit, racially or sexually biased [images] or [tattoos that] could be viewed as discriminatory” (Oregonian, June 21). PCW previously weighed in on the PPB’s broad grooming standards about body art and hair noting they were out of step with modern times. As for the beards, the new policy may retain Kroeker’s concern: officers have to be able to put on their gas masks.

Portland Copwatch Meets with Chief Again, Raising Concerns About Deadly Force and More

On June 20, Portland Copwatch held its fifth meeting with Chief Outlaw to raise concerns and hear the Bureau’s position as directly as possible. We noted two more deadly force incidents had occurred since our last meeting, bringing the total to nine in nine months (p. 1). PCW had previously asked the Chief to use her position to raise concerns about the frequency of these incidents, which she has done but only in a vague way. At the meeting the Chief stated it’s part of an officer’s job. Our position is the job can be done without killing so many people. To be fair, the Chief used a good analogy: when you go to a crime-ridden part of town and say overall, crime is down in Portland, but the data in which the police used “Gang Violence Reduction Unit in either October 2018 or early 2019, *-We are aware the GET’s name was changed to the Gun Violence Reduction Unit in either October 2018 or early 2019, but the data in which the police used “Gang Violence Victimization Rate” is not a logical way to measure whether police are over-stopping the African American community in Portland. Being a victim of a crime doesn’t predict inappropriate driving behavior. PCW could concede to the Auditor’s support of the Bureau using traffic crash data to indicate the number of African Americans who are actually driving. However, in 2017 that number was 11%, higher than the 6% black population of Portland but lower than the 16.5% rate at which African Americans were stopped by PPB members. We asked for the Bureau to re-institute into those Stop Data reports the reasons for stops including “equipment failure,” an indicator of possible pretext stops. We noted the legislature passed HB 2401, which expands required data collection to include stops where no citation is issued or arrest is made, speculating that the original language of the law may be what led the PPB’s pedestrian stop data dip from showing about 900 stops per year (about 75 per month) to about 200 per year (less than 20 per month— also see p. 5). ■

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Concerns About Deadly Force and More

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We are aware the GET’s name was changed to the Gun Violence Reduction Unit in either October 2018 or early 2019, but the data in which the police used “Gang Violence Victimization Rate” are from 2016 and 2017 when it was still the GET. At least 75% of 2018’s numbers will also refer to the GET.

New Recruits Can Have Tattoos, No College Degrees

In 2007, then-chief Rosie Sizer proposed changing the requirements for hiring new officers by dropping a requirement for a two year degree, but adding that military service could waive the high school diploma or equivalency prerequisite (PPR #42). At the time, Portland Copwatch (PCW) expressed concern that “you can’t adequately learn constitutional rights on the streets, but you can’t really learn street smarts in college, so a balance is needed,” as well as the possibility that veterans “trained to kill the ‘enemy’ in combat— many with PTSD— [would be] walking around Portland with guns.” The two year degree never went away until late June, when Chief Outlaw announced she plans to go back to applicants having a GED by itself, without the addition of military or police service, to recruit more officers. The Portland Tribune quotes Zakir Khan of the Council on American-Islamic Relations-Oregon referencing research which shows more educated officers use less force.

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Michael Simon, the federal judge overseeing the Settlement Agreement between the City of Portland and the US Department of Justice (DOJ), delayed accepting the City’s current community body meant to oversee the Agreement for a second time. At a status conference on June 6, Judge Simon wound up a day of public and official testimony by noting he had approved the structure of the Community Oversight Advisory Board in 2014, and that body fell apart in 2017. Thus, he set a date for February 25, 2020 to review how the new body, the Portland Committee on Community Engaged Policing (PCCEP) is meeting expectations. Meanwhile, the PCCEP continued to meet on a monthly basis, sometimes addressing important issues. The Compliance Officer/Community Liaison (COCL) put out reports in April and July assessing the implementation of the Agreement. Even though those reports are supposed to take a broad look at the 87 actionable paragraphs, the new reports only focus on “remaining issues.” The July version only addresses 14 paragraphs and claims there is only more work to do on six of them.

Simon Says

The June hearing began with testimony from the City, DOJ, Albina Ministerial Alliance Coalition for Justice and Police Reform (AMAC), Portland Police Association and Mental Health Alliance, the parties to the suit, arguing whether Judge Simon should accept the PCCEP structure, which was tentatively approved last year (PPR #76). As has been his trademark, the judge also allowed community members to talk, with three Portland Copwatch members covering the PCCEP and other troubling aspects of the City’s so-called progress. The highlight was after the City passionately argued that the judge had to approve the PCCEP or else the group’s members would feel they were in limbo and would not be able to do anything. PCCEP co-chair Lakayana Drury said the Committee members didn’t care if the structure was formally approved, they are doing the work either way. The AMAC and Mental Health Alliance asked for a six month delay, the City, Portland Police Association (PPA) and DOJ asked for approval. Considering the former are “friends of the court” and the latter are the actual Parties to the settlement, this was a pretty big deal, even if kind of minor in the overall scheme of things.

Committee Meetings Include COCL Town Halls

The PCCEP meeting in April took place at the Unite Oregon office in North Portland. It included a summary of the COCL's first quarter report, which included tidbits about stop data, force and accountability. The group also took testimony from the public on how to increase police-community engagement. Ideas included instituting a Truth and Reconciliation process and ending the use of violence against the community. The group didn’t get to the second question about holding officers accountable due to a lack of time.

The May meeting took place at Taborspace and included recommendations from the Race and Ethnicity Subcommittee, chaired by Sam Sachs. The recommendations had no substantive research to explain why PCCEP should support the PPB: “moving forward with the Body Worn Camera Program,” expanding the staff in its Community Engagement Office, and creating a Hispanic Advisory Council. That Sachs and the PCCEP didn’t know the Latino advisory council disbanded in 2002 after the Bureau gave medals to the officers who shot José Mejía Poot in 2001 (PPR #28) speaks volumes.

In June, the group met at the New Song Community Church. The meeting ran short because nobody showed up from the consulting firm which led a community survey about the police—required by the Agreement to be used by PCCEP to help formulate a Community Engagement Plan for the cops. The survey results had been finished in April, released the day after the May PCCEP meeting, then delayed for presentation until July because DHM, the consulting group, was “sick.” This opened up time for PCCEP members to discuss the substance of a private meeting some of them held with PPA President Daryl Turner. Co-chair Drury indicated the PPA was generally supportive of the PCCEP being able to do its work, while Sachs seemed extremely thrilled to have been able to meet with “Daryl.” One piece of business PCCEP was able to conduct was to adopt recommendations for the Bureau’s Engagement Plan, including exploring the Truth and Reconciliation model.

The June PCCEP meeting was held at PCC Cascade. It began with a presentation by the COCL team— in this case, just intern-turned-partner Tom Christoff presenting with local contractor Amy Ruiz, without team leader Dr. Dennis Rosenbaum participating. Rosenbaum has made hundreds of thousands of dollars writing reports for the DOJ Agreement, moved from Chicago to Los Angeles, and doesn’t seem to have anyone reviewing his job performance. Portland Copwatch raised concerns about the report, including that the “Independent” Police Review is seeking to dismiss more misconduct cases they predict won’t be able to prove. In addition, after the City hired a new project manager, Theo Latta, in late June, finally replacing Mandi Hood who quit in late November, the COCL considered the City in full compliance with staffing PCCEP. This was a report covering the time frame until June 30, meaning there is no qualitative assessment of Latta’s performance.

DHM finally appeared to present their report, skimming over the very telltale numbers showing that people of color—especially African American and Native American Portlanders—have far less faith in the police than other people. It also shows people who personally or within their family call police to deal with a mental health crisis have worse experiences with the officers than the general public. Community members raised questions about whether there had been serious efforts to interview houseless persons for the survey. The COCL’s July report summarized the DHM report and similarly minimized the alarming statistics about people of color. The harshest words the COCL uses is to tell the PPB to “be sensitive to the groups” which gave them poor ratings. Considering how important this is to the PCCEP’s work, they should have spent more time on the report and heard it much earlier.

The PCCEP also discussed the PPB’s draft 2018 annual report, calling it more Public Relations than substantive examination and calling for it to be longer and more full of statistics. The Mental Health Subcommittee submitted a recommendation that the City express condolences and an apology after (continued on p. 9)
Training Advisory Council: Data Analysis and Officer Wellness

The Bureau’s Training Advisory Council (TAC) met on May 8 and July 10, focusing on various forms of data and their suggestion for an “officer wellness” program. The Chief has not responded to the TAC’s March recommendation for the Bureau to include demographic data in its quarterly Force statistics reports (PPR #77). This is significant since the TAC published a detailed analysis for the July meeting showing that Portland officers point guns at African Americans at a statistically higher rate than their white counterparts, and generally use force against blacks and Latinos at a higher rate.

Even though it is now seven months into 2019, the PPB has not yet published an annual report for Use of Force in 2018. At the July meeting, they presented the Q1 2019 Force Data, which show 31% of the people subjected to force are African American (in a city that’s 6% black), and that 46% of those subjected to force are “transients.” The latest report is signed by the new Force Inspector—Lt. Jeff Niiya, notorious for his friendly texts with the alt-right (also PPR #77). After being removed from the Rapid Response Team (riot squad), Niiya took over for Lt. Craig Dobson.

TAC Chair Shawn Campbell produced a data-heavy powerpoint show for the May meeting which incorporated statistics about many aspects of policing in Portland. The presentation seemed to take at face value the PPB’s ongoing complaint that they are “understaffed,” even though the figure of 360,000 calls to the Bureau in 2018 can be broken down to 986 calls per day. Divided among 351 officers that is three calls per day. So even if only half the patrol officers are working on any given day, that means officers are only responding to six calls a day. It’s not clear why that is an unmanageable workload, especially since cops work 10 hour days. In an email to the TAC, Portland Copwatch (PCW) encouraged them to consider that recruitment is down all over America since the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson in 2014.

Campbell’s presentation also touched on the fact that 51% of the Police Bureau's arrests are of houseless people, which corresponds closely to the level at which such persons are subjected to force. However, TAC did not ask why the arrest number is so high.

As for the “Wellness” program, it is focused on officers having training and activities designed to relieve them of the stress of their jobs, such as yoga, meditation, and dietary considerations. PCW has no problem with the idea of officers finding ways to go out on the street in a calm and centered way. The only concern is that the Training Advisory Council seems to be so focused on this and a related “Emotional Intelligence” program that there is not a lot of focus on the other aspects of training the group is charged with reviewing. Campbell presented the Wellness Program recommendations from TAC to the Portland Committee on Community Engaged Policing in May and they seemed supportive of the idea.

See the TAC’s force analysis at <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/police/article/738715>.

Dept of Justice Oversight Board and Assessed Compliance (continued from p. 8)

One positive development with PCCEP’s Race and Ethnicity Subcommittee: In July, they held a community forum which did not draw huge crowds but allowed community members to weigh in with concerns about the body camera program, the Gun Violence Reduction Team, and School Resource Officers.

Over the course of these past few months, several more PCCEP members resigned: Sharon Gary Smith, Rachael Benjamin, Aden Hassan and Bob Dye. This means seven out of the 13 members (plus one alternate who never got to step up) resigned in just the first seven months of the group’s first meeting. Ms. Benjamin was appointed as an alternate to fill the seat of someone who’d previously resigned. Fortunately, the community had pushed the City to select a large pool of alternates, and some members were appointed. However, those who were not part of the original alternates pool and had not been trained were unable to vote until the alternate training took place in late July. Curiously, though City Council is supposed to approve the Mayor’s selections for PCCEP members, none of the new appointees were considered at a Council meeting.

Other Assessment Information

Prior to the hearing with the judge, the DOJ released its own analysis of the City’s compliance and was, perhaps surprisingly, even more generous than the Compliance Officer/Community Liaison. After all, this is Donald Trump’s DOJ now. They showed the Accountability and Community Engagement pieces as still needing work. It is in these two areas the COCL now also claims the last bits of work need to be done to rectify the excessive force used by the PPB, especially against people in mental health crisis. Neither report addressed the shocking increase in PPB use of deadly force (p. 1), or that at least five of the ten people subjected to such force since September were in some sort of crisis. The City Attorney’s attitude about the shootings, when speaking to the Court, boiled down to “those are just the cost of doing business,” claiming that because other kinds of force are generally down, the Bureau has changed. Ultimately, even if the DOJ claims the City is in full compliance, they have to affirm compliance for a full year before the City is let off the hook.

Find PCW’s analysis of the COCL July Report at <portlandcopwatch.org/COCLquarterly0719_pcw.html>.
Hating on Houseless Humans

Having already made himself a hero to the anti-houseless crowd, Turner continued his campaign in an interview with the Oregonian, posted to the PPA’s Facebook feed on June 11. The headline was “Plan for Poop Problem” and it describes the City’s plan to reduce the $316 per call cost of cleaning up human waste by paying $900,000 for portable toilets, some of which will be decorated with PDX Airport carpet or Trailblazers colors. Turner says the hard working taxpayers of Portland “deserve better,” calling the humanitarian gesture a “pet project destined for failure” and recalling the “Portland loons.” The loons were a brainchild of former Commissioner Randy Leonard, a patented self-contained stainless steel contraption which never quite took off the way they were envisioned.

In a separate piece he wrote on June 5 as a lead-in to a Forbes article about diseases among Los Angeles’ houseless community, Turner makes the argument that such money would be better spent on mental health and drug rehab programs, complaining that the City is “only” focused on housing. This brings back PCW’s call to demand that all officers have to go through a houseless immersion program, learning how to live on the street for at least 24 hours with no money, home, or identification. Turner says “the situation is bleak and getting worse.” He quotes from the Forbes piece that in LA’s suburbs 60% of calls are about “transients,” and the cops say those only choices are to “do nothing, take the person to an ER to be stabilized, or make an arrest.” Note that none of those options are to find the person housing, a bathroom, somewhere to store their belongings, a shower or other human needs, many of which the City is taking steps to provide— albeit minimally because of the millions of dollars they waste on police salaries and overtime. Turner claims there’s nobody to handle houseless people because of the “understaffed police,” despite the verified reporting that about 50% of PPB’s arrests have been of houseless persons (p. 2).

Ironically, perhaps, in his May 14 speech at the annual memorial for officers who die in the line of duty (last one in Portland that wasn’t from an accident: 1998), Turner held up the diversity of the PPB including its members who are immigrants, and said their job is to treat everyone the same whether they are a “CEO of a company or living in a cardboard box under a bridge.” Really, does that mean the other 50% of PPB’s arrests in 2017 were of CEOs, because I don’t remember reading that. Turner ruins the dignity of these thoughts by calling out the false narratives, anti-police rhetoric and political agendas.

Backfiring Community Outreach: Pride Draws Critiques from Two Directions, Other “Engagement” Raises Eyebrows

The PPA posted a photo from the Bureau of officers at the Portland Gay Pride Parade on June 16. Leading up to the march, which marked 50 years since the uprising against homophobic New York Police at the Stonewall Inn, several activist groups questioned why police should march in the parade at all. Two comments on the PPA’s Facebook post, however, went in quite the other direction, questioning why the PPB is “pandering to special interest groups” and whether there will be a “straight pride parade.” As of August 20, the PPA did not block or remove these comments.

A photo posted on May 5 (Cinco de Mayo) shows Officer Jason Francis, a Euro-American cop (who was the subject of a misconduct appeal in 2007— PPR #42 and who injured a woman by dragging her up a driveway in 1996— PPR #19), next to a Latino convenience store clerk he befriended. The caption says Francis knew the clerk liked Lucha Libre wrestling and brought back masks from a vacation to Mexico. Somehow, this seems a little like cultural appropriation with a side of racism more than appropriate community outreach.

Putting Your Mouth Where the Money Is: Lobbying Through Facebook

On May 8 and 9, the PPA posted an excerpt from, then a link to an entire new release from Chief Danielle Outlaw which praises the work of the Gun Violence Reduction Team. They note that 322 “illegal” firearms were seized and that calls about shootings are down by 28% since the Team changed its focus from “Gangs” to “Gun Violence” in October. Only at the end of Outlaw’s piece does it become clear why these statistics were released at this particular time of year: she says that terminating the program would be a mistake. This was clearly an effort to undercut Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty’s effort to fund the GVRT at City Council on May 22 (p. 5).

Similarly, the mainstream media played a role in pushing to keep Portlanders paying for armed law enforcement in schools. On June 5, the PPA reposted a story by local ABC affiliate KATU-2 about Officer Carlos Ibarra, a School Resource Officer (SRO). Ibarra says that his job is not to look for students acting inappropriately, but to “keep [them] out of the criminal justice system.” The gushing story recounts how Ibarra is willing to listen to students and looks for “red flags” so he can “put out fires,” mentioning Ibarra’s past (and, admittedly noble) action of getting housing for a homeless family in 2014. However, the piece talks about the unknown future of the SRO program while Council and the School Board argue about who should pay for the SROs (PPRs #76&77 and p. 11).

On August 8, Turner posted a screed about the need to hire more police quickly because “nearly 150 cops will become eligible to retire” in August 2020. Returning to repeated complaints about how officers are stretched to the limit (see p. 9), Turner asks how they are supposed to respond to “livability issues [and] gun violence” while also responding to the needs of vulnerable people in the community. In un-politically correct terms, Turner lists “the mentally ill, disabled, and houseless” rather than using the same language he does for “those facing addiction issues” (which lifts up their individual humanity without inappropriately labeling people). Turner singles out Commissioners Fish and Fritz as supportive of the cops— leaving off Commissioners Eudaly and Hardesty. Quite political.
The People's Police Report is published three times a year by Portland Copwatch, a civil group promoting police accountability through citizen action. Issue #78. September 2019, print date 8/22/19. Portland Copwatch is a project of Peace and Justice Works, a tax-exempt educational organization. Find more information on line at our website: http://www.portlandcopwatch.org. Subscribe to the PPR for $20 a year, or to order extra copies or back issues, send $1.00 per issue to Portland Copwatch, PO Box 42456, Portland, OR 97242.

Letters / submissions welcome. Contact us by email newsletter@portlandcopwatch.org.

PPB Posts New and Old Policies for Comment, Copwatch Responds

Continuing their practice since 2014 of putting draft directives (policies) out for public review, the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) asked for input on about a dozen documents from May to August, some of which represented new policies. Portland Copwatch (PCW) commented on many of the directives, paying particular attention to the ones about interaction with immigrants (once again), exclusion from City property, the new Public Safety Support Specialists (PSSSs), and the Joint Terrorism Task Force (p. 1).

May: The Directive on “Contact with Members of Immigrant Communities” (810.10) showed changes reflecting collective input from the ACLU, Innovation Law Lab and Causa, but almost nothing PCW suggested. For example, PCW asked that any time the Directive refers to basing suspicion “solely” on immigration status it should instead say “solely or primarily” as it does early on in the policy, but that change wasn’t made. PCW also cautioned against vague language which could allow the PPB to support Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s rounding up of immigrants by providing traffic control or “law enforcement cover,” but that language stayed in.

The policy about lawsuits against officers (220.40) clarifies that process somewhat, relieving some of PCW’s previous concerns. It does not, however, include a direct reference to Directive 310.20 on Retaliation which prohibits officers from discouraging or retaliating against civilians who file or threaten to file lawsuits.

We also cautioned the Bureau to ensure officers will conduct themselves in a compassionate, professional manner with all due care and concern for the dignity and needs of all persons involved in Sexual Assault investigations (640.20). We repeated our suggestion for the survivor to be able to ask for a certain gender of officer to respond to them, and not to engage in repeat questioning of the survivors to avoid re-traumatizing them.

New Directives about how the Bureau responds to “Active Violence” (730.00) and burglary alarms (630.35) led us to make comments as well, with the Active Violence policy returning in July for more feedback (see below).

COPP CAM PROGRAM STILL ON HOLD

During the debates over the City’s budget in May, Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty suggested cutting the budget for the Police Bureau’s body camera program, noting that storage and retrieval of footage will escalate costs if the City adopts the cameras after a planned test-run. The budget for the pilot program was previously approved and the Bureau signaled its intention to go ahead with a test once the policy on copcams was adopted. Earlier this year, Portland Copwatch (PCW) reminded the City that Council required a stakeholder committee to review that policy before it goes into effect (PPR #70). Assistant Chief Chris Davis invited PCW to be part of that group, initially to have its first meeting in May. However, the Bureau decided to give first crack at the policy to the Portland Police Association (PPA), bringing into question whether the stakeholder group will have any influence at all in the discussion. As of PPR deadline, no meeting has been set and no policy has been published. At the time the Council voted on the PPA’s contract in 2016, the draft policy would have allowed officers to review body camera footage before writing their reports.

Writing about the budget debate, the Portland Mercury reported George Mason University found cities which adopt body cameras show “no major change in officers’ decisions to use force against civilians, no increase in prosecutions of officers who use undue force, and no increase in trust between citizens and officers” (June 20).

SCHOOL POLICE STILL FUNDED BY CITY

Commissioners Hardesty and Eudaly expressed concern the City budget included money for School Resource Officers (SROs) after Portland Public Schools rescinded its promise to pay for SROs from its limited coffers (PPR #77). However, what was included in the City budget was a continuation of the existing level of SROs, not an expansion.

New school board members were elected in May, and the student activists who helped force the reconsideration are out for the summer; PCW is hoping any developments about this topic will not be negotiated before school starts again in September. An Oregonian article about the City funding the officers quotes Jefferson High School senior Sophia Lucas, who is Latinx and Native American, saying she “feels unsafe when she sees armed police officers patrolling her school” (May 24).

June: After the City revealed the PSSS program consists of glorified desk clerks rather than unarmed authorized police officers, the new policy outlining the effort (630.26) seemed mostly designed to restrict what the Specialists will do. PCW acknowledged that City Council affirmed some of these limitations, but urged the Bureau to work toward having officers like London bobbies, who can enforce the law but don’t carry guns. PSSSs are not allowed to work undercover or make arrests, and can only use force (up to the use of pepper spray) in restricted circumstances. They are also restricted from interacting with people in mental health crisis, which again was one of the reasons people believed the program was created. One thing of real significance is that the PSSSs are now part of the Portland Police Association (PPA) collective bargaining unit even though they are not sworn personnel.

July: The Directive on exclusion from City property (835.00) has existed for years, but came under review while houseless people made up about half of the PPB’s arrests (PPR #75). PCW expressed concerns about officers’ ability to exclude people from parking garages for 180 days, and from parks for periods increasing from 30 to 90 to 180 days. We noted the Bureau needs to better define what can lead to exclusions, including the vague phrase they currently use prohibiting “loud or boisterous physical behavior.” In our follow up comments on the “Active Violence” Directive, we found a few inconsequential new sections, but no change to our most urgent concern. The draft policy includes the offensive term “neutralize the threat,” which is used regularly as a euphemism for “kill the shooter.”

August: In August the PPB posted 12 more Directives, many of which we have discussed previously. The only “new” one, 840.00 about arrests with a warrant, was pushed up along with 835.20 about clearing homeless camps in response to IPR’s report on police and houseless policies (p. 2). PCW submitted comments urging police to respect people’s property and rights. Also, the Directive on Personal Appearance came back for final comments.

Find the PPR Directives, including those posted for public review, at https://www.portlandoregon.gov/police/73677
RAPPING BACK

Hypocritical Hollering about Handcuffs and Houseless Harms Healing

PPA Misses Irony of Decrying Violence at Protests, Minimizing Impact of Shootings

In our last issue, we noted how the Portland Police Association (PPA) had greatly reduced the number of articles they posted to their Facebook page over the course of four months. While up slightly, the Police “union” only published 30 pieces from mid-April to mid-August. Continuing an ongoing trend, the largest proportion of the content (14, or 47% of posts) consisted of “bluelining,” or painting positive pictures of the police while ignoring the institutional and individual harms done.

PPA President Daryl Turner revealed the PPA’s true attitude in several of the key articles, particularly one from July 1 focusing on the protests in Portland after another clash between alt-right demonstrators and anti-fascists (Antifa) on June 29 (p. 4). In the piece, which was quoted widely, Turner asked “Where are the voices condemning violence,” completely unaware of the hypocrisy of what appears to be the city’s most violent single institution—which has engaged in 14 deadly force incidents in the last two years leaving eight people dead (p. 1). Because an alt-right blogger was the recipient of violence, Turner claims that if Antifa had been harmed, there would have been an independent investigation called. Instead, he says Mayor Ted Wheeler is “using the rank and file as a shield against the media” (not sure how that works), complaining that the PPB can’t protect free speech because their “hands are tied.” In a rebuttal email, PCW noted that this kind of language was used by those who wanted to increase the US military’s firepower in the Viet Nam war. Along the same lines, Turner asks Wheeler to tell both sides to stop using violence and to “remove the handcuffs from our officers and let them stop the violence through strong and swift enforcement actions.” To their credit, the Chief and Mayor both pushed back on the notion that there is any policy stopping the PPB from enforcing the law, but neither acknowledged the elephant in the room—that Turner wants to use state violence to show people that violence isn’t how to solve your problems.

On July 30, Turner returned to the topic: “We don’t need to reinvent the wheel, we just need to use back-to-basics policing.” He called for “pole cameras” to record the then-upcoming August 17 protest, even though collecting such information could be in violation of state law. He asked for officers to be “empowered with the resources to enforce the laws,” later calling for “zero tolerance” (August 8), and crowing about the over-militarized final result as a “blueprint for future protests” (August 17).

Turner closed the July 30 piece with the words “Enough is enough.” The name of both an anti-gang violence group and a neighborhood group organized against houseless people.

In a piece posted a few weeks earlier (on June 10), Turner went to bat for the officer who had killed David Downs the previous day. Stating that “no matter how officers try to de-escalate, no matter how many other force options officers have available, officers may have no choice but to protect life by using deadly force.” Portland Copwatch (PCW) has written repeatedly about the use of the term “the officer had no choice” to make the death seem inevitable, though it is really a way officers tell themselves that when they are the ones using violence they are justified. (And our legal system supports them.) Along the same lines in the four-paragraph post, Turner claims officers never “want to have to use deadly force.” He asserts the officers, detectives *and dispatchers* all showed “heroism” in this situation—underscoring the inappropriate merging of 911 operators into the PPA months ago (PPR #77). He closes by talking about the loss of life, the tragic nature of the incidents, how the “hostage” was rescued and “no one else in the community was harmed.” Except Mr. Downs, whose name Turner doesn’t even invoke.

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