

# AFSCME #189 suspends labor-management work with Portland mayor

The City of Portland's largest union temporarily suspended all labor-management committee work with Mayor Tom Potter after the Portland Police Bureau placed an officer of AFSCME

Local 189 on administrative leave for refusing to answer questions related to union business.

The issue arose out of an Internal Affairs investigation in the Police Bu-

reau. During that interrogation, desk clerk Angela Oswald, a vice president and steward for Local 189, was threatened with discipline and termination if she didn't answer questions related to confidential discussions she had with other union members.

Local 189 represents civilian employees at the Police Bureau.

Last year, Oswald accused former Police Chief Derrick Foxworth of abuse of power and sexual misconduct, which led to Foxworth's demotion. Oswald, who had an ongoing affair with the police chief, later filed a lawsuit against the bureau that is still pending.

James Hester, a council representative for AFSCME Oregon Council 75, said that two of the top brass at Internal Affairs are close friends of Foxworth.

"I'll let you draw your own conclusions on that," Hester told the NW Labor Press.

But this isn't about what happened between Foxworth and Oswald.

"This is an absolute deliberate attack to single out a steward and an officer of this union," he said. AFSCME maintains that Oswald has no obligation to answer questions about the union's internal business or her private discussions with other union members.

The union has filed an unfair labor practice complaint against the City of Portland and the Police Bureau.

According to Hester, Oswald, the union steward, was sought out by a colleague for advice regarding a work-related matter. Oswald consulted with the union, and all agreed the employee should file a complaint with Internal Affairs.

"The next thing you know, Angela is being called in by Internal Affairs" wanting to know about her conversation with the co-worker and questions about her personal life, Hester said. "We told them that was privileged information."

A second interview was held, at which time Oswald answered the questions about her personal life, but refused to talk about her union business despite threats of disciplinary action if she refused.

The union filed the unfair labor practice complaint after that interview.

It was shortly after the second interview when Oswald received a hand-delivered memo from Assistant Chief Lynnae Berg informing her that she was being investigated for three complaints of improper conduct. One of the complaints was for her conduct during

the IA interview, another was about her handling of a citizen's request for information, and another involved union-related matters.

At a third Internal Affairs interview on March 30, Hester said Oswald answered all the questions except those involving union business. IA pressed for answers, so the union ended the conversation by leaving.

Oswald was put on paid administrative leave on April 2.

"I am incredibly shocked by what they did," Hester said.

On April 5, the union sent a letter to Potter announcing suspension of all labor-management committees under Potter's control. Those include the Police Bureau, Office of Neighborhood Involvement, Office of Management & Finance, the Planning Bureau and the Revenue Bureau.

The letter to Potter said that the key to the labor-management process was that elected union officers and other member leaders needed to be free from threats and intimidation.

"We didn't want to do this," Hester said. "But their actions are totally unacceptable. We can't allow it to happen."

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## AFSCME Local 350 member honored by Milwaukie for giving lifesaving CPR

By DON LOVING

Inherently, Juli Howard knew taking CPR classes was a good thing.

"They offer them every year here at work, and I've taken the course three or four times," said Howard, a member of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 350 in Clackamas County and president of the City of Milwaukie sub-local. "But I don't know that I ever thought I'd use the training, or if I'd even be brave enough to try."

She found out on St. Patrick's Day (March 17). While setting up tables at a Parent-Teacher Organization-sponsored bingo night at her children's elementary school, another volunteer had a heart attack and collapsed.

"I didn't even think about it," recalls Howard. "I didn't have time to be afraid or second guess. I just ran to her aid. I checked for her pulse and she didn't have one, so I started CPR. Another volunteer knelt down beside me to help. He gave the woman the rescue breaths while I continued the chest compressions until an EMT arrived."

Later that night the woman's heart was beating on its own, but she was put on a breathing respirator and remained on the machine for two days. She is still recovering, but should be fine.

"The emergency personnel said that if it hadn't been for the CPR that we performed, the woman's family would be making funeral



JULI HOWARD

arrangements," said Howard, an administrative specialist for the city. "That's a day that I will never forget, and it certainly proved a point. Anyone who has the opportunity to take a CPR class should do so, because you never know whose mother, daughter, wife, husband, father, sister or brother you could be saving. The City of Milwaukie offers CPR classes to all employees that wish to take the class. I wasn't able to take the class this past year, but have taken it every year previously and the training definitely paid off."

Howard was honored April 3 at the Milwaukie City Council meeting. Though a little embarrassed by the publicity, Howard says it's well worth it if it inspires others to take CPR classes.

(Don Loving is the director of communications for Oregon AFSCME Council 75.)