

**AUDITOR, from page 3**

*a settlement with the Department of Justice. What effect do you think those changes will have?*

**L.G-V.:** We're very happy. One of the most rewarding parts of this job is to make a significant change in the civilian authority of police oversight in the city. Those changes, coming on the heels of very dramatic changes we made in 2010, significantly strengthened IPR's oversight authority. When I first arrived here, there was no right for IPR to controvert a finding – essentially challenging the finding – which gave us the authority to send investigations back. Now, we are voting members on the Police Review Board. We have a stronger say, we'll participate in investigations in a more fundamental way.

**A.W.:** *In October 2013, you wrote a pretty blistering memo to City Council when they delayed voting on changes to police oversight, writing that there were "alarming lapses" in police accountability. You also wrote that, "I am concerned by council's apparent lack of understanding of the gravity and urgency of moving forward with DOJ's required changes." Generally speaking, the City Council has been criticized lately as being lackluster, and I wonder if you think this is symptomatic of lacking the political will to enact big policy changes and reforms?*

**L.G-V.:** I'm definitely not ready to say they don't have the political will. I think it's easier to focus on and enact things that seem to be something everyone wants. Everyone wants clean air. Everyone wants sustainable green buildings. I'm exaggerating a little bit, but that's become a Portland value. Things that are a little more politically charged, it's a little more difficult. These are tough decisions, sometimes, that council members have to make, particularly with limited resources. Hopefully, our work helps them make smarter decisions.

The mayor and Commissioner (Steve) Novick were not part of the body that approved the agreement with the DOJ, so that is a piece of it. I also think there isn't anyone on the council who had any interaction with the DOJ when they were here. That was the way DOJ wanted to handle it. Frankly – and I don't mean to be crude – but it's been some time without a high profile shooting or in-custody death which calls into question the credibility of the police bureau.

In terms of the changes to IPR that we brought before the council, my memo speaks for itself. The mayor is the commissioner in charge of the police bureau, and he lacked engagement in this matter, and that should be

a level of concern on a number of fronts. He is the mayor. He needs to send a message to the rest of the council that he understands the changes, understands the system as it exists now, understands how it will change, and he was not able to do that. That sends a confusing message to Council.

Some had a different point of view of how the changes should come about. Commissioner (Amanda) Fritz wanted to convene a stakeholder group to talk about each and every change. I was not prepared to do that. It didn't seem appropriate to me. We had already spent a year following the DOJ requirements and the city's requirements, and spending enormous amounts of time communicating with different stakeholders.

**"If there's anything that can be said about me, it would be that the level of discomfort that has traditionally been part of the auditor's office has been blown out of the water a couple times."**

So, she had a different point of view. Some were supportive but not particularly vocal at that first hearing, and that was hard to take. And the city attorney wasn't there, and we had been promised that someone would be. In that memo, I was willing to speak very frankly and harshly about a process that didn't work for our organization, but was important to the community. I can tell you that some Council members took that very seriously. I don't do that very often.

**A.W.:** *What do you hope to get done in your last year in office?*

**L.G-V.:** We still have a few more changes to make to IPR's code in order to fully roll out the DOJ's agreement. We have some extremely important audits in our audit schedule. Among them is auditing the city attorney's office – that's not been something done in many jurisdictions, including this one. There's always been the concern that it needs some expertise that auditors don't have. I don't think it does. We've found some guidance from audit shops on how to do it. There is an odd relationship that we have to maintain with the city attorney's office, because they represent us if need be. There's always been a level of discomfort. But if there's anything that can be said about me, it would be that the level of discomfort that has traditionally been part of the auditor's office has been blown out of the water a couple times. Historically, the auditor hasn't been willing to do that...but I looked at our city code, and it doesn't say anything about it.

I hope to be able to make some changes to the internal bureaucratic processes that impact all the bureaus, including mine, through these audits of the city attorney's office, the budget process and the human resources office. The work of this huge organization is impacted by all those various functions in many, many ways. It was something that was not particularly well received, but an important decision. Maybe it can get Portland a little closer to being the city that works.

**Connection**

by Janelle Jeffries

I'm looking for that connection  
 Connect the dots  
 Things are scattered  
 Really?  
 Oh, did you not get the memo?  
 Seriously?  
 So what's a professional college student?  
 Well, now on job applications for over five years or so,  
 They ask:  
 "Have you ever committed a crime?"  
 It used to be: "Have you ever committed a felony?"  
 I could mark no for that one.  
 Times have changed,  
 Now I try to sell newspapers for change;  
 I even donate plasma.  
 Making the connection is hard  
 When you're not in the competitive pool.  
 One two-year degree, three bachelor's degrees,  
 Now almost a master's degree with over \$100,000 in student loans.  
 Connect the dots  
 Things are scattered  
 Really?  
 Oh, did you not get the memo?  
 Seriously?

**Stories**

by G.B.

Your story, my story, the world's story  
 Each moment holds millions of stories  
 from the smallest ant to the largest plant  
 We are the hero, we are the villain.  
 We listen, we share.  
 They are silly and fun. And they are sad and sorrowful.  
 They inspire, causing the heart to pound and the mind to race.  
 They bring together diverse worlds;  
 Burst forth with creativity, express beauty of humanity.  
 Risk, exposure of the heart.  
 For a second, hold your breath, waiting for acceptance or pain, applause or boos.  
 Sigh of relief, "I know what you mean. I've been there too."  
 Thank you, thank you, thank you.  
 Thank you for the stories. Thank you for the risk. Thank you for the words.

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