

Community Support for Police Chief

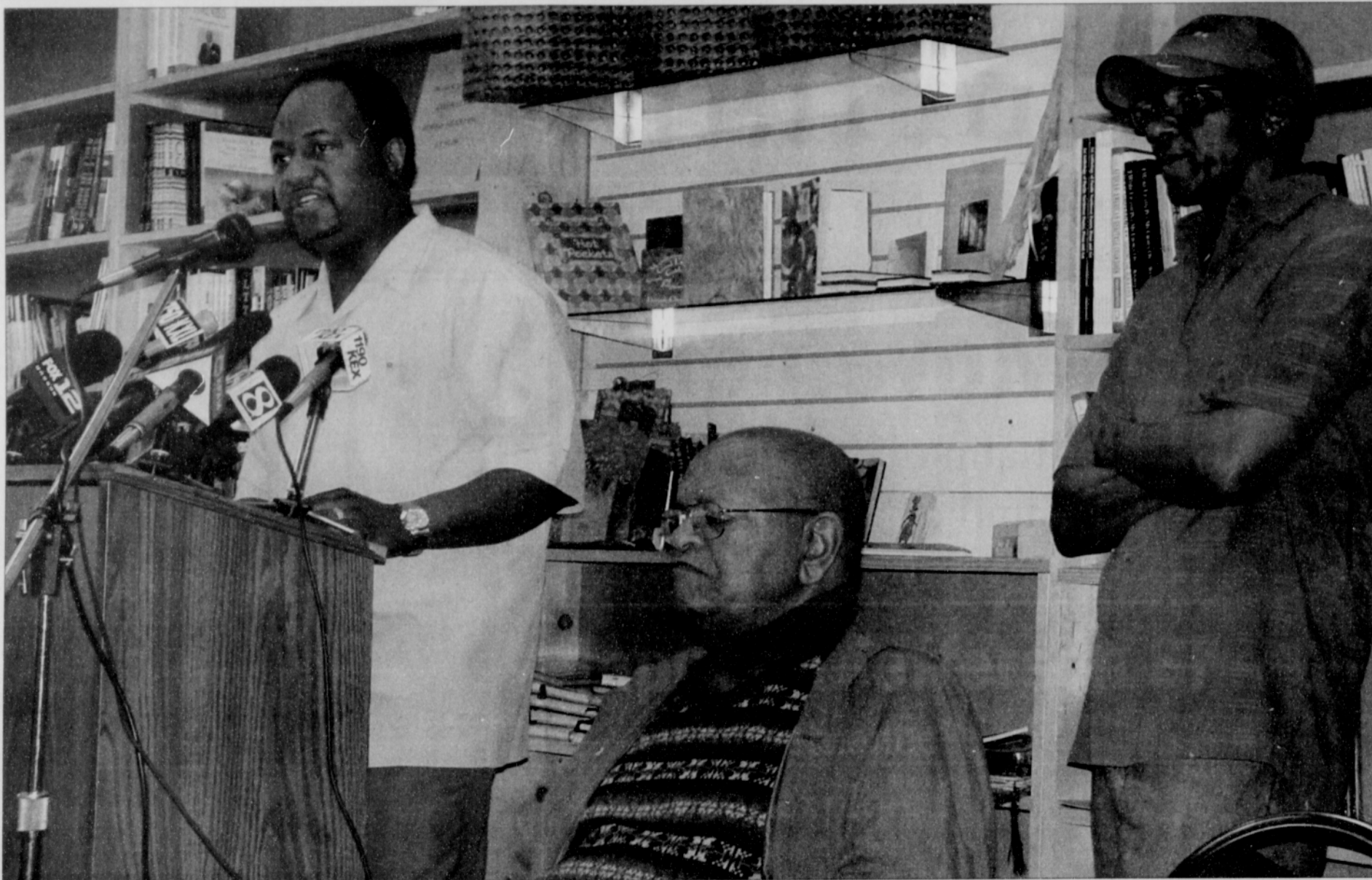
Motives behind allegations questioned

BY SARAH BLOUNT
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Supporters of Police Chief Derrick Foxworth gathered in northeast Portland Friday for a rally to counterbalance the brewing scandal that threatens Foxworth's credibility and career.

Foxworth is under investigation for alleged sexual impropriety with Angela Oswald, a police department desk clerk, when he was commander of the Northeast Precinct six years ago.

Oswald's lawyer filed a claim for unspecified financial damages with the City of Portland last week, charging sexual discrimination and unlawful workplace practices. Foxworth admitted to a "brief but intense" relationship with Oswald, but says he did not supervise the



Rev. Robert Richardson (from left) Charles Ford and Joe Bean Keller address a community rally in support of Police Chief Derrick Foxworth at Reflections Coffee, next door to the Northeast Police Precinct.



Chief Foxworth's mother Maggie Wright

employee at the time nor did he violate any city rules or regulations.

The energy at Reflections Coffee, the site for the Foxworth rally, approached fervor as a crowd filled the room. Many of those present have joined several times over the years to protest police brutality, racial profiling and even tragic

deaths at the hands of police.

Friday's gathering showed a weary but strong group, facing the potential downfall of a man they call their chief, advocate, neighbor and family. It was clear they will stand by Foxworth.

Joe Bean Keller organized the rally, inviting several community members to speak their mind against the overpowering media perspective.

He acknowledged his legitimate reasons not to trust the police department; Keller's son, Deontae

Joseph, was shot and killed by a Portland police officer in 1996.

For many Portlanders, Foxworth's appointment to chief in 2003 was a doorway to earning their trust, following the volatile leadership of former chief Mark Kroeker.

The general attitude was that Oswald's claim shouldn't be a race issue, and shouldn't be much of an issue at all until the facts surface.

"The bull's eye could have been on any of us," said Rev. Robert Richardson, church elder from Emmanuel Temple Full Gospel Pen-

tecostal Church.

"It's not a black and white thing, we're making this a right thing."

Many speakers questioned the true motives of the accusations.

Maybe he's doing too good of a job, speculated Erma Plumber. "We should make sure we find out why she waited until now to bring this against him."

There is still far more speculation than fact, but the purpose of this rally was to focus on Foxworth's personal character. Many testified to his honor and objectivity.

"Look at his track record," Rev. Richardson said. "He'd arrest me if I was out of line. There are no gray areas."

Woody Broadnax stood at the podium and illustrated that point perfectly.

"He arrested me about seven years ago and sent me to the penitentiary," Broadnax said. "He did for me what I couldn't do for myself."

Maggie Wright, Foxworth's mother, said the ordeal has been very hard for her, but held her head

high and said this too will pass. She praised her son as a man of integrity and dedication.

Wright thanked the crowd for their support, and said she's praying for Oswald.

"He's going to continue being chief," she said to an uproar of applause.

After the rally, Keller said there will probably be another one, and possibly a march.

"So far this has been one-sided," he said. "We'll continue to show our support and another side."



Protection Sized To Fit

One thing you want your family to always feel is protected. We understand. At American Family Insurance, we feel that way about our family of customers, too. That's why our agents are so knowledgeable and eager to try to help you select an auto policy that fits in perfectly with your family's needs. No feeling compares to the confidence of knowing family's got your back, no matter what comes down the road. Visit us at www.amfam.com or call today and talk to a helpful, friendly agent about the variety of auto coverage options we have to offer.

American Family Mutual Insurance Company and its Subsidiaries
American Standard Insurance Company of Wisconsin
Home Office - Madison, WI 53783
American Family Mutual Insurance Company
American Standard Insurance Company of Ohio
Home Office - Columbus, OH 43240
www.amfam.com
©2005 001831 - 7/05



Foxworth Put on Leave

Potter names interim chief

Police Chief Derrick Foxworth was placed on paid administrative leave by Mayor Tom Potter Tuesday pending an investigation of a complaint brought against him by a woman who claims sexual impropriety and police misconduct.

Potter named Southeast Commander Rosie Sizer as interim chief



Chief Derrick Foxworth

effective immediately. Sizer is the former commander of the downtown Central precinct.

Foxworth has denied the allegations by Angela Oswald, a former desk clerk who claims he coerced her into a clandestine sexual relationship when he was commander of the Northeast Precinct six years ago. He acknowledged having had a personal "relationship" with Oswald, but denies any wrongdoing.

Input on Jefferson Shared

Local 'governance' of school explored

A team of community leaders is inviting area residents to a meeting to discuss a 'governance model' for Jefferson High School.

The Jefferson High School Community Governing Board Project Core Team will host the session on Saturday, April 15 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Jefferson cafeteria. Refreshments, childcare, and Spanish language interpretation will be available.

The community is asked to attend to learn more about what school community governance is, and weigh in on whether or not this type of model would be advantageous for Jefferson High School.

A governing board, made up of parents, teachers, students, and community representatives, would have full responsibility and authority for Jefferson, including hiring of the school's principal, input on school improvement plans, and overall direction of the school.

"Given all that is going on with Jefferson



Tony Hopson

right now, this is a critical time to make sure the community's voice is heard regarding the future direction of Jefferson," said Tony Hopson, president and chief executive officer of Self Enhancement, Inc. "Most of the issues surrounding Jefferson right now would not be as acute if there was a way for

the community to not only be engaged, but to have an authoritative voice in what direction Jefferson should go."

In April 2005, Self Enhancement announced that they received a \$35,000 Parent, Family, and Community Involvement Grant from the Portland Schools Foundation to study the potential of a community "governance" model for Jefferson High School. The project is a partnership between SEI and Jefferson High School.

Black Bag Series at PSU

The Black Studies Department at Portland State University will sponsor an issues seminar on "Police Brutality and Gentrification in Portland" with Rev. Dr. T. Allen Bethel and Pastor Donald Frazier, as part of its Black Bag Speakers series.

Bethel will speak on the issues

facing Portland police and Frazier will discuss gentrification along Northeast Alberta Street.

The event is scheduled for Wednesday, April 19 from noon to 1:30 p.m. in Room 228 of the PSU Multicultural Center in the Smith Memorial Student Union, 1825 S.W. Broadway.