

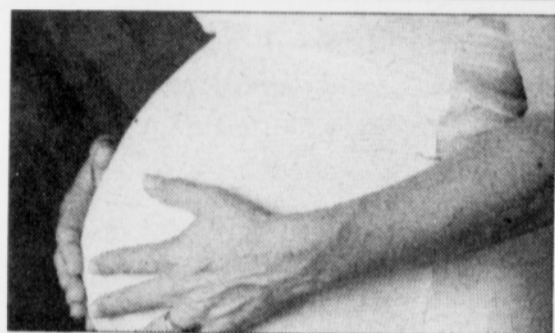
The INSIDE LOCAL NEWS

WOMEN IN HISTORY



page 5-7

HEALTH MATTERS



page 8-9



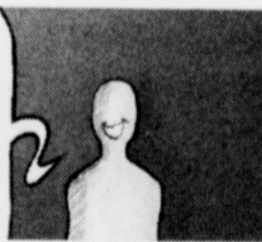
Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

page 10-13

OPINION

page 14-15

HERE AT THE OSCARS WE APPRECIATE ANY FILM THAT DEPICTS BLACKS AS IGNORANT, PRIMITIVE, ILLITERATE, POOR, DIRTY, LAZY, CRIMINAL, ABUSIVE, UNHEALTHY AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST - VIOLENT.



CLASSIFIEDS

page 16-17

EL OBSERVADOR

page 18



FOOD

page 20



PHOTO BY JAKE THOMAS/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Longstanding issues with the Portland Police Bureau got an airing Sunday before the Citizen Review Committee.

Police Reforms Gain Steam

New calls for independent oversight

BY JAKE THOMAS
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Portlanders concerned about police accountability gave up their Sunday afternoon to gather at a forum at Portland State University organized by the Citizen Review Committee, a board that reviews complaints regarding police officers.

The event was initially intended to address the 2006 death of James Chasse, a mentally-ill man who was beaten to death during an arrest confrontation, but the forum took on a broader range of issues due to recent events surrounding the police force.

In January, Aaron Campbell, a distraught and unarmed man was killed in another police confrontation. His death has deepened resentment and mistrust of the police among broad swaths of the community.

The meeting was also held just as the city is gearing up for tense negotiation with the police union, which could address a host of issues, including officer accountability. Commissioner Randy Leonard and Auditor LaVonne Griffin-Valade have introduced an ordinance to be considered by City Council this week that will strengthen independent oversight of the police.

The chair of the nine-person committee, Michael Bigham, opened

the meeting by acknowledging that a considerable amount of grief, fear, confusion, and anger has welled up in the community following the death of Campbell.

"Right now is a very difficult time in our community," he said.

Bingham noted that the CRC has limited powers, but said that the committee would listen carefully to peoples' thoughts and do the absolute most it could with what it had.

"Remember we are here to listen to you," he said.

Joe Walsh began the citizen comment period by faulting the bureau for quickly returning the officer who shot Campbell, Ronald Frashour, to work while the outrage of the incident remained at a fever pitch. He said that the bureau should have suspended him with pay.

"That would have been a wonderful message to send to the citizens of this city," he said.

He also pointed out that the dispatch tapes of the Campbell incident, which were released to the public, reveal that Campbell was shot with a beanbag gun, had a dog released on him, and was ultimately shot by the police.

"Now when people listen to that and they read that in the newspaper they do not believe they own the police department. They are in fear of the police department. That is a disaster," he said.

Chris O'Connor, a public defender who often handles cases with the police, pointed out that the police can quickly conduct an investigation when a crime has been committed, and defendants can get a trial in

a short period of time, but when an officer is charged with misconduct the process is much more drug out.

"There is no prompt accountability for any police bureau officer," he said.

O'Connor also brought up the point that many police officers don't live in Portland, weakening their connection to the community they serve.

"It's not just a question if people feel that they're members of the community; they're not," said O'Connor.

He said that because so many don't live in Portland, they become more like an "occupying army."

David Cox, a resident of north-east Portland, said that his interactions with police have been largely positive.

"However, obviously, I am a white middle-class, middle-aged person. I was treated with respect," he said.

Dan Handelman, of Portland Copwatch, pointed out that the Independent Police Review division, of which the committee was a part, is served by the city attorney, which also works for the Police Bureau. He said that this constitutes a conflict of interest.

"You need your own attorney," Handelman told the committee.

Speaking on a number of subjects, Handelman suggested that the Police Bureau become the responsibility of all of City Council, not just one commissioner as it is currently. He also said that medical

continued ▼ on page 17