

Hire

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right now.” Her LinkedIn says, “Advice for Contacting Deanna. “If you have a heart for service and social justice, but have never thought of becoming a police officer. “Please consider that it could be an amazing way to serve and truly make a difference.” Artharee, who lasted less than a year in the position, was called out in June for

She is focused on the goal of making this the best urban police departments in the country. She’s exactly who we need right now. —Mayor Hales

remarks made to a Multnomah County elected official; he says his decision to leave was made after a spate of family tragedies, including the kidney diagnosis of his son who now needs a transplant. Artharee’s work was framed by the stories he told of being racially profiled by law enforcement during his formative years in Compton, Calif. Without a doubt, Hales’ new policy advisor has her work cut out for her. In 2012, the U.S. Department of Justice filed a lawsuit against the City of Portland for operating the Police Bureau with a “pattern or practice” that violates the civil rights

of people with mental illnesses. The city and the Bureau responded with an array of fixes to hold off a trial – but completely ignored a long list of demands by the Albina Ministerial Alliance for Police and Justice Reform, angering a large swath of the grassroots community. Meanwhile the Portland Police union filed objections to the proposed new policies, saying they violated officers’ collective bargaining rights. A federal judge earlier this year demanded that city officials, federal officials and the union mediate their differences – and that the Albina Ministerial Alliance group could attend their mediations. But in the end no agreements have been reached, no DOJ agreement is in place — and the testimony given at last week’s council meeting ranged from the bitter to the gruesome. The City Council postponed voting on the proposals which include: giving the IPR the power to compel officers to answer their questions; expanding the citizens review committee from nine to 11 members; allowing the IPR to open cases independently; and releasing more information to the public when officers use force. “In no way do these recommendations address the depth and breadth of concern felt by citizens in our city,” said Michael Alexander, executive director of the Urban League of Portland. Deanna Wesson-Mitchell is a member of the Community and Police Relations Committee of the Office of Equity and Human Rights.

Changes

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become an issue in negotiating the police contract. “The bureau is not aware of any problems with the current system where the IPR participates in the investigation,” Reese said. “The current system is working very well. The IPR is able to participate in investigations and able to have their questions answered.” Commissioner Fish said he wanted to

clarify if the change would become an issue in contract negotiation since lawyers advising the IPR and the Portland Police Bureau disagree. Portland Police association President Daryl Turner also raised the question of the rights of police under labor law and the police contract. He urged council members to reject the proposed changes saying they would undermine the police line of accountability turning it over to civilians. Jan Friedman staff attorney with Disability Rights Oregon, said more transparency and accountability is needed to address the concerns raised in the Department of Justice report. “If they don’t have access to police officer they are not able to do an independent investigation,” she said. Kayse Jama, executive director of the Center for Intercultural Organizing said the changes don’t go far enough. “We must do more and we must do it now to achieve justice for the community,” he said. “The oversight workgroup made 44 recommendations. Only four have been included.” Dan Handelman of Portland Copwatch said the changes don’t go far enough. “The changes only add power to the IPR professional staff while delaying changes that would strengthen its Citizen Review Committee,” he said. “IPR similarly pushed through a package of changes in early 2010 with virtually no public input, which led to the formation of an Oversight Stakeholders group. That group put out a report with 41 recommendations, only four of which were incorporated into the ordinance previously

Community



Legacy CEO George Brown, M.D., is joined by Sandy City Councilor Olga Gerberg, left, and her staff member Betsy Velasquez, at right, at a welcome reception, Wednesday, Oct. 23, for Randall Children's Hospital at Legacy Emanuel's new Chief Administrative Officer Mady Murrey. The new CAO was formerly COO of MultiCare Mary Bridge Children's Hospital & Health Center in Tacoma, Wash.

In a statement, Hales staff outlined Wesson-Mitchell’s work history: “Since joining the Portland Police Bureau in 2004, Wesson-Mitchell has served as a patrol officer (2004-08), an investigative officer (2008-11) and recruitment coordinator for the Personnel Division. She also has been a Gang Resist-

ance Education and Training (GREAT) instructor, and has been involved with the Making Positive Choices Youth Forum; Racial Profiling Committee; Citywide Diversity Committee; Police Equity: Leadership Council; and Community and Police Relations Committee.”

AUDITOR’S PROPOSED CHANGES

Made up of nine citizens appointed by the city, the IPR reviews complaints against police officers. But community advocates have long complained that it lacks the power to be effective.

City Auditor LaVonne Griffin-Valade has proposed the following changes:

- Authorize IPR to directly question Police Bureau employees and compel their testimony
- Implement a discipline guideline to allow for fair and consistent discipline
- Create 180-day timeline for administrative investigations
- Expand the Citizen Review Committee to 11 members
- Authorize CRC members to serve on Police Review Boards in use-of-force cases
- Provide a template for PRB public reports
- Require more detailed public reports for officer-involved shootings and in-custody deaths

The changes don’t go far enough. We must do more and we must do it now to achieve justice for the community —Kayse Jama, executive director of the Center for Intercultural Organizing

cil members, and reminded them that the settlement with the Department of Justice was far from final, and had been created without public comment. “The public did not have any opportunity to weigh in,” she said. “We have departments and bureaus operating as if a settlement agreement is in place.” Portland still faces a federal court case, after a Department of Justice civil rights investigation found the Portland Police Bureau has a “pattern or practice” excessive force against people with mental illness. To remedy the problems, U.S. District Judge Michael H. Simon ordered the police union, the city and the Justice Department to find a solution through mediation. The Albina Ministerial Alliance was also allowed to participate as community representatives. So far the parties have failed to reach an agreement in mediation. Judge Simon also has said he plans to hold a fairness review next summer so the public can weigh in on the final agreement. Hardesty said that hearing will be impor-

tant in deciding the fate of the settlement. “The community fairness hearing will finally give the community an opportunity to weigh in on the settlement,” she said. And she said the fall in complaints only proved her point. “There is a good reason why the number of complaints is down,” she said. “It’s because the community has no confidence that IPR or IA (internal affairs) has the power to investigate the police.” Council members, Chief Reese, Severe and others voiced concerns about the 180-day limit on investigations. Reese said many factors could prevent the Bureau from sticking to that timeline. He said it should be looked at as a target not a deadline. Community advocates, on the other hand, worried that the 180-day timeline would allow officers to escape discipline if the timeline was exceeded. City employee Jeri Williams was one of several people who shared their own frustration with a police accountability process, the DOJ called “Byzantine” and self-defeating. Williams son, who suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder, had an adverse experience with the police. With tears in her eyes Williams said her experience had left her with “no faith in the process.”