Gardner
cont'd from pg 1

The Skanner News: Congratulations on your new role. What kind of changes can people expect to see under your leadership?

John Gardner: Thank you, first, for the congratulations. I'm not quite ready to make a proclamation around changes, but I think continued progress to move forward and grow where there are opportunities.

I think TriMet is already in a really good place as it relates to partnering with communities of color and disadvantaged businesses and our work around Title VI programs.

> "I think TriMet is already in a really good place as it relates to partnering with communities of color

But first you need to diagnose before you prescribe, so I am still learning the ropes around here and getting a sense of all the places of success and places where we can continue to grow.

TSN: What are the challenges of diversity and equity for TriMet?

JG: What's exciting about coming in to TriMet is that they literally have a track record of investment in partnership and inclusion.

We all still exist in the Portland metro area, so there is clearly, currently historically a lack of diversity. Still given that TriMet has shown, especially most recently with its partnership and investment in the Orange line, it is more than just a willing partner as it relates to increasing access and equity, it's an investor.

Despite the fact that Portland is still the whitest city in America, you would see TriMet as an incredibly diverse employer and a champion of historically underrepresented firms and populations.

TSN: Does the displacement of the Black community to East Portland affect TriMet's equity work?

JG: I think it affects every agency services in terms of where and how to locate and provide services to the populations and communities that need them.

I don't know if it changes the conversation. It just focuses it. The good news is that we have partners in East County as we have in all of the counties we serve. That becomes one more place where we need to sit down and meet with the residents and the organizations that serve that community to make sure our services are being provided in a way that benefits everybody to the extent possible.

TSN: TriMet has decided to Ban the Box.

JG: That's right. In our history of being a progressive partner and employer, that will no longer be one of the initial considerations for employment.

We want to know about your skills and your desire to work for us as an individual, criminal history notwithstanding. That's another barrier TriMet has removed.

TSN: How will you bring your previous experience to this new work?

JG: There is a lot of overlap with the community-based organizations that are served by the public workforce system and those that partner with the public regional transportation system.

I have a lot of really good relationships and respect for agencies like IRCO, NAYA and the Urban League, Hacienda CDC, Human Solutions and Central City, Washington County STRYVE, OACC. These organizations that have long histories of connection, ideas and expertise to serve communities that are transit dependent and needing support from TriMet.

Every day TriMet moves over 100,000 people to work. Understanding the regional economy and the workforce development challenges that individuals and communities face is going bring that voice to the equity and access conversation.

At the end of the day, transit is the key to opportunity. People need to get to work, people need to get to school, they need to get to training. They need to get to their places of faith and worship, they need to get to their community opportunities, to engage and strengthen those connections. We are that river that runs through it. We are that connecting service.

Cameras
cont'd from pg 1

police departments that adopt body cameras to follow certain standards.

At the center of the discussion was privacy. Participants discussed when it is and isn't appropriate for officers to tape as well as the subsequent rules of access to the film.

"When we talk about body-worn cameras, a lot of people think — and I did too — that it's a simple device. It should be obvious you turn it on and you start recording," Schoder said. "But when we start looking at these separate instances, where you record and all of a sudden it gets really complicated."

In Portland, adopting cameras is expected to cost around close to a million dollars, and around $5,000 to maintain annually, police say.

Mayor Charlie Hales, who serves as police commissioner, has earmarked money for in the city's budget Scruggs said.

In cases where no crime has been committed, footage will be deleted within 30 days, according to police. However, if the video is considered evidence, police can store it up for two years. In instances where a death is involved, videos will be stored forever.

While going through a list of agencies that will likely have access to body camera video, factions mentioned included, patrol officers, transit, gang enforcement, special emergency reaction team, and others.

> "Participants discussed when it is and isn't appropriate for officers to tape

One agency not mentioned was the recently reinstated Joint Terrorism Task Force, which has two Portland Police officers assigned to work directly with the FBI full time to combat terrorism both locally and nationally.

When asked by *The Skanner* about the Joint Terrorism Task Force's access to body cam videos, Schober said, "Just like everything else we do over the years, we share information and evidence with each other."

A joint poll conducted by the Washington Post and ABC News this year found the majority of Americans favor police use of body cameras.

It's been a growing conversation in the past year, one that's gained significant steam since the events surrounding 18-year-old Mike Brown's death at the hands of a since-retired Ferguson, Mo. police officer last year created a surge in the Black Lives Matter movement.

In the months following the non-indictment of Brown's killer, Darren Wilson, the Obama administration announced a project that would fund 50,000 body cameras to be distributed to police bureaus throughout the U.S. in an effort to curb what the president had previously called "a simmering distrust that exists between too many police departments and too many communities of color."

In a talk posted online by the Ford Foundation in December, Michelle Alexander, author of The New Jim Crow, offered opposition to body cameras, calling them "another form of surveillance for poor people and communities of color."

Data released by the Portland Police Bureau in 2012 showed that despite making up only a fraction of the city's population, African Americans are more likely to be stopped by officers than Whites, yet less likely to have committed a crime.

PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

The Rent Party Prologue

Writer and director Valerie Curtis-Newton talks about her play, "The Rent Party Prologue," at a script read-through Dec. 13, at the Theatre Off Jackson. The one-act play is the beginnings of a full-length play called "The Rent Party Project," which the director hopes to present in 2016.

Statue
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Key Delta Community Center is a living building and community center built with the goal of attaining "net zero" energy use. It includes an educational garden and hosts programs intended to encourage sound and healthy social, educational, artistic, economic and environmental development and awareness. Colas Construction was the primary contractor on the building. Others were Greenswale Garden Design, Mye Architecture, Raimore, Verde NW, and All American Concrete Company. PDC commissioner Tom Kelly has announced that PDC has forgiven the loan balance on the building. No more funds will need to be paid.

> "It includes an educational garden and hosts programs intended to encourage sound and healthy social, educational, artistic, economic and environmental development

Cathy Cotton speaks at Saturday's dedication of a sculpture in memory of her sister, Christine Poole-Jones.

The building is available for rent by organizations and private parties for meetings, receptions, etc.

The center is dedicated to the work of the late June Roe Runnells Key, one of 10 members of the Portland Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority at the time its charter was recognized in 1945. Key taught in the Portland Public Schools system and is said to have embodied the sorority's focus on economic development. She was also instrumental the chapter's acquisition of property to serve as a meeting center.