

**From:** Kathleen Saadat saadat.coab@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Fwd: Resignation  
**Date:** June 28, 2016 at 12:05 PM  
**To:** Hood, Mandi mandi.hood@portlandoregon.gov

KS

----- Forwarded message -----

From: PdxTrauma Free [redacted]  
Date: Tue, Jun 21, 2016 at 8:02 PM  
Subject: Resignation  
To: Geissler, Jonas (CRT) <Jonas.Geissler@usdoj.gov>, Brown, Adrian (USAEO) <Adrian.Brown@usdoj.gov>, Kathleen Saadat [redacted], Amy Ruiz <amy@strategies360.com>, Marshman, Michael <Michael.Marshman@portlandoregon.gov>

It is with deep regret that I must respectfully resign my position on the COAB effective Thursday June 23, 2016. As you know, I am a survivor of police related trauma and an advocate for the rights of all people with lived experience of mental health. I am also one of the last remaining black members from the original community members chosen for this Board and possibly the last queer, trans, and qtpoc voice from that same cohort. These identities brought me to this work and have kept me here until now. I have also avidly voiced my concerns about the structure of this process and the ways in which our voices, our work, and the needs of the most impacted communities struggling to be safe in a world that pathologizes and often reacts violently to mental health issues seem to be consistently overlooked. I do not think the COAB was ever really granted the voice or the access needed to do the work effectively that community partners envisioned when they created this body or we envisioned when we joined it.

And yet, I have had endless faith in the work of the mental health subcommittee and the hard work we have done with limited guidance and zero feedback on the outcome of that work without repeated requests. Our subcommittee not only has widescale community input but also has had members of the community who are now organizing to shut down our larger meetings attend, actively participate, and be included in the work without incident. I am also deeply moved by committee members and former members who have taken the work the community asked for in creating the COAB and the COAB members do to heart and used it to ask the most impacted what they think about policing and what they need to feel safe moving forward. These community led studies and community based organizations are a powerful testament to community led change. And I have endless respect for AMA and the other community partners who worked so hard to ensure community voices were centered and who continue to work tirelessly to change policing in this city. The creation of the BHU and ECIT are also important steps toward change and I am grateful for the mental health sub committee's strong work on reviewing these, engaging in thoughtful dialogue about them, and creating shared space for lasting change in how MH issues are handled by the police. All of this work is essential to the safety of people with lived experience of mental health in Portland.

Everyone of us came to this table because the deadly use of force against those with lived experience of MH was unacceptable. Everyone of us has put in the work to change that. Yet the ongoing inability to get feedback from the DOJ directly to the COAB or from the COCL located in Chicago about what happens to our work product and sometimes even statements that the Chicago team do not know or were not given clear information about that work has left the community not on the COAB frustrated and disillusioned and many of the community members on the COAB equally so. To be told as late as our last full meeting that the COCL did not receive specific directives, page numbers, and highlighted text that we critiqued after all of us discussed these issues in subcommittee and as a larger group with 1 or more members of the COCL present during some of these discussions is inexplicable. Equally, the current level of discord is disturbing and the fact that it is turned on those with the least power, disempowers us all. I believe everyone impacted by mental health stigma and doing the work to address it deserve respect and representation and the ongoing failure to address multiple oppressions concerns me deeply. In keeping with our state's commitment to trauma informed service, community members on and off the board with trauma deserve trauma informed practice. To invite people to the table without it harms people who have been harmed enough. To invite a diverse board to the table without confirming and/or establishing shared language and practices around MH and diversity, harms people on and off the Board who have been harmed enough.

One needs only look at the involvement at the beginning of this process and the involvement now to understand the message that has been sent about our relevance. I am saddened by how many voices from this city we have lost to a structure in which few of us feel heard. When this process is over, we are the ones who will have to live with the outcome regardless of what decisions are made without or with limited reference to our input.

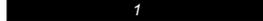
As a community member directly impacted and serving others directly impacted by the decisions being made in this settlement agreement, I will continue to advocate for the safety of my communities and my clients. I deeply appreciate the work we have done, the colleagues I have met, and the vision that formed this body. The conversations we have had form a solid base for continuing the work.

We live in this city. We care about the safety of people in this city. We, the COAB, former COAB members, community partners, and every member of this community must continue this work until no one in crises is shot or harmed and the police are no longer expected to do the work of medical professionals. We cannot lose sight of the goal no matter which direction we approach from. I look forward to engaging in other effective ways to do the work and I respect each of you for working hard to make the vision of a Community Oversight and Advisory Board work under these conditions.

Sincerely  
Ime Kerlee

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Ime Kerlee | PC: PhD WGS

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"<<Unspecified redaction code>>" (<<Unspecified redaction code>>): 5 instances

By Page:

Page 1 - "<<Unspecified redaction code>>" (<<Unspecified redaction code>>): 4 instances  
Page 2 - "<<Unspecified redaction code>>" (<<Unspecified redaction code>>): 1 instance