

Patrick Nolen Statement

Mental Health Alliance

August 24 2021

Judge Simon and others,

Let me know when you want me to look at this again - Jason

I am a person with lived experience of homelessness and have a mental illness. I am a member of the Mental Health Alliance.

A couple of years ago I resigned as a member of the Portland Committee on Community Engaged Policing in this courtroom. At that time, I was against amending the settlement agreement to include the PCCEP as part of the *Department of Justice vs City of Portland* settlement agreement.

Because I resigned my position with the PCCEP doesn't mean I lost interest in police reform or finding a way to reduce police use of force against people with mental illness. So I am here again.

I continue to oppose including the PCCEP in the settlement agreement.

Over the 16 months I have continued to attend PCCEP meetings and, as a person with mental illness I continue to feel uncomfortable going to their meetings.

Very often I "forget" to go, even though the idea behind the PCCEP is something that the Mental Health Alliance feels is important and is something I have lived experience with.

The reason I "forget" is that even with the support of my mental health providers I could not handle the undertones of abuse directed toward myself and my mental illness. I feel this was because I felt strongly that the PCCEP, and the Settlement Agreement were first and foremost about fixing the City of Portland and the Portland Police Bureau's continued and unabated problems around killing people I know for no good reason. People who often times were reaching out to the PPB for help.

My friends and allies with the MHA and the Albina Ministerial Alliance will tell you about the big details, and about how the settlement agreement has not fixed anything. I am not good with big details. They will tell you about how body worn cameras, although a noble idea, do not solve our current problem in the city of Portland, although it seems, neither does PCCEP, so, maybe adding a new item, body worn cameras, will add to the inertia to help the city, the Portland Police Bureau, and the PPA decide to finally come around and help people in mental health crises rather than killing people like me.

I want to talk about Item 89/90, the "Unity Center" item. COCL and the DOJ seem ok with the Unity Center representing that item, as supposedly there is no real way to hold the city to fixing

this problem completely, as it asks the CCO to solve it instead. This frustrates me as I have been before a judge, on my own time as it were, and when I agreed to a settlement in my case, I had to agree to fix all of it, not just the parts and bits that I thought would be easiest or be allowed to avoid the parts that I could figure a way out of. As someone who has a large support network I am thankful for the fact that I have never had to visit Unity Center. I recognize that many of my compatriots, when in a mental health crisis, are not so lucky. They are left with choices like "Call the Police", or "Go to Unity" (and hope to be let in).

Item 89/90 gets to the heart of what the settlement agreement was about offering better and easier access service to people in a crisis rather than calling the police and hoping to not be shot for their needs.

thank you,

Patrick Nolen