



## The League of Women Voters of Portland

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**DATE:** October 2, 2019

**TO:** Mayor Ted Wheeler, Commissioners Eudaly, Fish, Fritz, and Hardesty,  
Chief Danielle Outlaw

**FROM:** League of Women Voters of Portland  
Debbie Kaye, president  
Debbie Aiona, Action Committee chair

**RE: Portland Police Bureau Community Engagement Plan**

The League of Women Voters of Portland appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Portland Police Bureau's (PPB) Community Engagement Plan and to suggest improvements to the Communications section. We share the aspiration stated in the resolution that "meaningful public engagement involves the ability of community members to affect policies, practices and PPB culture, thereby improving outcomes and eliminating unconstitutional actions." We believe, however, that the Bureau could be doing more to connect to interested community members through its communication practices.

The League has already shared with the Department of Justice, PPB staff, and the Portland Committee on Community Engaged Policing (PCCEP) our concerns about the methods the PPB uses to inform the public. We believe there is room for improvement in the PPB's communications about important policy considerations, events, and opportunities for participation.

As an example, when the Annual Report was scheduled for precinct presentations, a good place to start would have been reaching out through the email lists for the many PPB Facilitated and Participatory Advisory Committees (see Appendix A, p. 4). In addition, connecting with groups such as the PCCEP, Training Advisory Council, and the Citizen Review Committee might have drawn a larger audience. After all, the Annual Report is meant to provide an overview of the Bureau's accomplishments and challenges, so it should be of interest to community members already associated with these advisory groups.

The PPB also should consider adopting some of the techniques used by other city bureaus. Many provide sign up sheets at community meetings where they gather contact information for future notifications. In addition, there are links on project websites where the public can sign up to receive information. When we shared our disappointment about the lack of notification for the precinct meetings, PPB staff responded that the information was on the website and recommended signing up for the Media Alert system. The alert system requires creation of a

password, a barrier for some. Furthermore, we understand that the alerts include media notices about criminal activity and are not necessarily devoted to the types of policy issues that interest members of the public who might want to provide feedback.

Utilizing social media and the outreach opportunities listed in Appendix A are important. In addition, the Bureau should build email distribution lists and use them in a tailored fashion to get the word out when there are opportunities for the public to engage in discussions related to policies, practices, and Bureau culture.

In conclusion, the League urges the Bureau to be more proactive and intentional in its communication techniques rather than relying on members of the public to come to them to find opportunities to learn and participate.