

From: [Portland Copwatch](#)
To: [Commissioner Hardesty](#); [Wheeler, Mayor](#); [Commissioner Ryan Office](#); [Commissioner Rubio](#); [Commissioner Mapps](#); [Auditor, CRC Mail](#)
Cc: [Auditor, IPR Mail](#); [Hull Caballero, Mary](#); [Clerk General](#); [Council Clerk – Testimony](#); [News Media](#)
Subject: COMMENTS on Citizen Review Committee Crowd Control Report (item 703)
Date: Tuesday, September 21, 2021 1:00:10 PM

To the members of City Council:

As we wrote to the Citizen Review Committee shortly before they adopted their Report earlier this year, Portland Copwatch is supportive of the majority of this report on Portland Police Crowd Control tactics and policies. We are particularly glad to see the note that police should not take protest organizers' lack of communication with law enforcement as a justification to harm community members.

We also appreciate that CRC included community concerns about kettling. Historically speaking, when they created an earlier report on the same topic which was presented to Council in early 2015, the Bureau told their Work Group that Portland Police do not use kettling as a tactic. Despite first-hand testimony from people (including a member of our group) to the contrary, that earlier report did not decry the tactic of encircling an entire group of people who are not necessarily suspected of criminal misconduct.

Current lawsuits challenging the legality of kettling have been narrowed down, saying individual officers can't be held liable for using the tactic. However, so far as we understand there has been no decision on the constitutionality.

CRC directly references their 2014 report in noting that, for example, the issue of officer identification has gotten worse, not better since then. Last year, officers were told they did not have to wear nametags. Members of the public were told that to connect the numbers on the officers' uniforms/helmets to a person, they had to have a name first-- a maddening Catch-22. In many complaints sent to the Independent Police Review, they could not identify the officers in part because of the lack of nametags. This is a serious accountability issue.

PCW also praised CRC for contextualizing their recommendations by pointing to the Portland United Against Hate report on police violence as a hate crime and the (less impressive) National Police Foundation report on Portland crowd tactics. CRC also wisely referred to the Compliance Officer/Community Liaison report which highlighted the case of a protestor hit in the head with a baton, which took external pressure from the Department of Justice and Compliance Officer to get investigated as potential deadly force.

We agree with and have long supported many of CRC's recommendations including officer not showing up in riot gear when, to echo a protest chant, "there's no riot here."

And while there are many other aspects of the Crowd Control Directive and Portland Police tactics that could be addressed, Portland Copwatch thanks the CRC for putting together a detailed and even-handed report on recommendations around Portland Police Bureau responses to protests

and other crowd events.

One final comment: The four members of City Council other than the Mayor have the authority to allow for contemporaneous, oral testimony on this agenda item. However, due to COVID, the many members of the community who wish to testify will not be able to sign up because access to the sign-up form closes down at 4 PM on Tuesdays. We urge Council to vote to take testimony as soon as the agenda item is introduced, and to post on the screen the appropriate contact information for the Council Clerk for those who wish to sign up.

Thank you
dan handelman and other members of
Portland Copwatch