

Thank you for having me again, Council. I'm Robert Patterson. I'm homeless; I'm a homeless activist; and I'm the Executive Director of Emerald Alley.

I turn 41 today, and coming as it does in the middle of May, my birthday has always been a time for my family to enjoy a baseball game. I hear that a group of billionaires are about to sign a lease to build a stadium to locate a major league team here in sleepy Portland. Given the money this city will have to shell out on infrastructure, I hope the billionaires can at least kick down some dough to balance the books of Parks and Rec, so that Portland youth can play their sports as well. By the way, Commissioner Fish, thank you carrying our parks through this difficult time. I like the new playground in Northwest. I'm fond of Couch Park for the giant redwoods there; they remind me of Humboldt County.

Speaking of old trees 🕶️, Summer is coming, and despite today's rain, the threat of dragonfire licking at the city gates is real once again. I wonder if King Donald the Bronzed has given any thought to the threat to national security posed by fire in the Gorge. I doubt that he has; his trencher seems full with double helpings of treason and reelection. I hope that this Council is working with regional leaders to keep ash off our streets this year.

I recently signed up to volunteer for Ms Elizabeth Warren's campaign for my party's nomination, largely on the basis on her \$100 billion dollar plan to combat opioid addiction. I can't think of any proposal I've ever heard from any party leader that will literally save the lives of tens of thousands of homeless. Yes, it is revolutionary, but I've spent too many nights laying beside a friend wondering if they would ever wake up to accept anything less than revolutionary with regards to heroin and the homeless.

You see, we homeless are generally a patient and peaceful lot - I daresay we've been lulled into a meek resignation by the indifference of political leaders - but I am new to being homeless, and have untapped reserves of both piss and vinegar, especially when it comes to the safety of homeless people.

Mayor Wheeler, I'm pleased to hear about your proposed mobile showers, but I believe that without sufficient attention given to the risks that they pose, an overdosed corpse will be found in one. Showers are needed - and more of them,

to be sure - but what is revolutionary are Safe Injection Facilities, which I hope this Council will explore bringing to the Portland Street. Such facilities would create a space for users to inject under the watchful eyes of a nurse, to test the purity of their drug, and to access clean needles and find a safe place to dispose them. SIFs would save lives, decrease the spread of infectious disease, promote moderation, and act a portal to services of recovery, employment, housing, and mental health.

Furthermore, we know that Naloxone saves lives, as does the outstanding training in Naloxone administration that Outside In provides. What is lacking, however, is having Naloxone nearby when it matters the most: in the minutes following an overdose. Therefore, I hope the Council will work with regional leaders to equip every Tri-Met bus with the life-saving medication, and to train every driver in its administration. It's an easy precaution to take, and it will save lives.

Commissioner Hardesty, I heard you once speak of angels shepherding you through difficulties. Well, through your commitment to Portland Street Response, you are an angel to thousands of Portlanders in crisis. Thank you. \$500,000 isn't nearly enough for the good works Street Response will perform, but we'll get there.

Most of you know me with regards to Everyone Counts! and the work I've done to insure that the homeless are counted accurately and fairly in next year's Census. That work continues, and I'll leave you with this reminder: Many of us homeless turn away from the Census for the same reasons that we turn away government and from society itself. There is a gnawing sense of loneliness that comes when one is ostracized, an aching otherness that leaves one lacking trust and with only spit and spite for one's tormentors. The traumas of the past bear a thick scar indeed. What is needed now is not just the tokenism of being counted for a decennial census, but rather a constant mission of understanding us, of honoring us, of asking our forgiveness at your indifference, and of inviting our attendance to the national family and the American dream.

Thank you.

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**PORTLAND CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION REQUEST
Wednesday Council Meeting 9:30 AM**

AUDITOR 03/19/19 AM10:35

Council Meeting Date: May 15, 2019

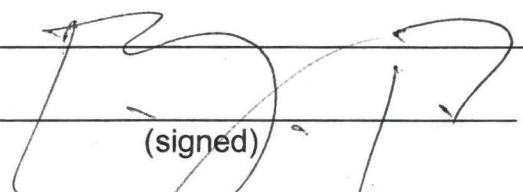
Today's Date March 19, 2019

Name Robert Patterson

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email robert@emeraldalley.org

Reason for the request: To give communications on the subject of homelessness.



(signed)

- Give your request in writing to the Council Clerk's office to schedule a date for your Communication. Use this form or email the information to the Council Clerk at the email address below.
- You will be placed on the Wednesday official Council Agenda as a "Communication." Communications are the first item on the Agenda and are taken at 9:30 a.m. A total of five Communications may be scheduled. Requesters are limited to one scheduled communication per calendar month. Individuals must schedule their own Communication.
- You will have 3 minutes to speak and may also submit written testimony before or at the meeting. Communications allow the Council to hear issues that interest our citizens, but do not allow an opportunity for dialogue.

Thank you for being an active participant in your City government.

Contact Information:

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Request of Robert Patterson to address Council regarding homelessness
(Communication)

MAY 15 2019

PLACED ON FILE

MAY 07 2019

Filed _____
MARY HULL CABALLERO
Auditor of the City of Portland

By *Kale* _____
Deputy

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Hardesty		
4. Eudaly		
Wheeler		