

**Sylvan Fraser**

Sylvan grew up in Western Washington before moving to Portland in 2008 to begin studying at Reed College. They graduated in 2012 with a B.A. in Linguistics and temporarily relocated to California to earn their J.D. from Berkeley Law. They currently serve as Staff Attorney at the national legal non-profit interACT: Advocates for Intersex Youth, and live in Southeast Portland with their loving partner, two cats, and a dog. In their free time they sing in two choirs, host tabletop game nights, and cook elaborate vegetarian meals.

**Statement of CRC nominee Sylvan Fraser to City Council:**

I am honored to be under consideration for a position that would allow me to participate in the police accountability process as a representative of my community. If this trust is vested in me, I will review the matters that come before the Committee to ensure fair and just outcomes. If my appointment pleases the City Council, I look forward to the opportunity to serve.



**Describe your experience in working with culturally diverse communities.**

My current position with interACT centers on intersex rights advocacy. Intersex people are a diverse community, with racial and ethnic demographics approximately mirroring those of the general population and significant transgender/non-binary representation. Our constituents come from all socioeconomic backgrounds and areas of the country.

Previously, I interned with the East Bay Children's Law Offices, an organization providing advocacy and representation on behalf of youth in the dependency system. Children and families involved with our local child welfare agencies and dependency courts were disproportionately low-income and from communities of color. I worked compassionately with families affected by domestic violence, drug use, racism, immigration concerns, incarceration, disability, and homelessness.

**Describe any relationships or experiences that could create the appearance of positive or negative perceptions for or against the police?**

As noted above, my uncle and cousin work in law enforcement, and I have worked for a District Attorney's office.

I have participated non-violently in demonstrations during which fellow protesters have been arrested and tear-gassed by police. I have voiced support on social media for Black Lives Matter and for police accountability in general.

**Please provide an example of your experience analyzing, interpreting, explaining and applying relevant laws, regulations, ordinances, and policies.**

As an attorney, I engage in these activities almost daily. Recent experience includes researching all 50 states' criminal statutes and probate codes for laws preventing female genital mutilation and involuntary sterilization; determining whether those laws are implicated in the case of medical procedures performed on intersex children; and explaining -- both orally and in writing -- to several Attorneys General how these laws apply and why they should be enforced in such cases. I have also analyzed and explained the statutory language of multiple states' anti-trans "bathroom bills" in order to help construct legal arguments against them.

**Describe your comfort level in reviewing complex deadly use of force investigations and making recommendations for findings and discipline.**

I will be comfortable with this. My current job requires me to engage with detailed accounts of medical abuse, including childhood genital mutilation and forced genital examinations. While working daily with information and images that may be considered highly disturbing, I also interface with medical professionals, some of whom perform these surgeries and exams. This requires me to meet them as individuals while bearing in mind the grievances I have heard against them and their institutions, and decide when progress can best be made via collaboration (e.g., on concrete policy changes) or confrontation (e.g., with a formal complaint or lawsuit). I anticipate my service on the CRC would parallel this work -- assessing grave scenarios while viewing all involved parties with empathy and an eye to pragmatism.

Would you be willing to take six hours of equity/diversity training as part of the 40 hours training you will be required for the Police Review Board/Citizen Review Committee?

Yes  No

Would you be willing to participate in 911 sit-along?

Yes  No

Would you be willing to participate in at least one police ride-along each year you serve?

Yes  No

This important community service will require a significant time commitment (an estimated seven to nine hours each week). CRC members act as an appeal body, and must become familiar with all relevant City codes and protocols in appeal hearing and other duties. CRC members attend regular monthly evening meetings (the first Wednesday each month) that often require advance preparation – such as reviewing case files for upcoming hearings, on occasion, there are additional meetings scheduled. CRC members also serve on various workgroups (sub-committees), which meet separately (generally, one or two meetings each month) and have additional workloads – such as reviewing complaints or policies. Additionally, CRC members will periodically serve on the Police Review Board to make thoughtful impartial, fact-based recommendation for discipline in use of force incidents to the Chief of Police and Police Commissioner. There are orientation and training sessions that members attend, including ride-alongs with police officers.

Are you willing and able to make the above CRC time commitment?

Yes  No

Service on this committee requires honesty and integrity. If any of the questions are not answered truthfully, the applicant will be disqualified from membership on the committee.

**Resume:** Please include an updated resume with this application.

**References:** Please provide names, addresses, and phone numbers of three people who may be contacted for references (non-family members).

(1) [Redacted]

(2) [Redacted]

(3) [Redacted]

Describe any personal attitudes, life experiences, and prior examples that demonstrate you can make objective, impartial, evidence-based decisions about complaints against the police.

As recounted in this application, I have had experiences and relationships that shaped my attitudes toward the police in both positive and critical ways. As a child, I was taught that police officers were there to help me and keep me safe. It was a number of years before I learned that this is not what all communities tell their children. This dissonance was hard for me to grasp, but doing so has helped ensure that I am working for the best vision of justice that I can. It has also kept me fair-minded. I've met some great people who are law enforcement officers -- some of them in my family -- while others close to me have been hurt or frightened by police. From this vantage point, I'm aware that both do happen, and the available facts in any given situation must guide the inquiry.

In law school, most of my friends interned in public defenders' offices. I opted for the office of the Alameda County DA. It's not that I disagreed with my friends' fundamental values -- but I saw the work there was to be done on the "other side" to further those same ends. I believe protecting our civil liberties requires that our police officers be able to do the best job they can -- which itself requires being held accountable by the communities in which they work. I would very much like to be a part of that effort.