

PDXFTL4: The City Council

Sat, Oct 16, 2021 6:48PM 52:01

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

portland, people, police, hardesty, mingus, vote, project, city council, power, talking, impact, dan, portland police bureau, wheeler, commissioner, jo ann, chloe, election, neighbors, carmen

SPEAKERS

Piper, Josh

J Josh 00:03
Friends and neighbors, you're listening to Portland from the left. I'm Josh

P Piper 00:07
and I'm Piper. And today we're going to be talking about the four city council positions in addition to the mayor that are on the Portland City Council. So first, we wanted to start with talking about the most senior member Jo Ann Hardesty,

J Josh 00:21
I'm actually pretty pro Jo Ann Hardesty, I always feel bad about this, because I feel like I spent a lot a lot of time publicly critiquing things she's done. But that's just cuz she's a politician. She's in power, her ideology, her perspective seemed pretty well aligned with me and like generally where I would want an elected official. She's not like, you know, an incredibly radical anarchist or anything, but she generally wants more power to people and less power to police and other state institutions, and also seems to be interested in funding services for Portlanders. So that's like

P Piper 00:51
Pretty solid

J Josh 00:52
as a base level, that's just what I want anybody in power. I think one of the things that sometimes I end up getting hung up on, let's say, is her kind of strategic alliances and where she's decided to either endorse somebody or cosign some other politician or work with them in

order to get something done. My experience so far is that when she's working with other politicians, whether that's because there are only, you know, a certain kind of politician available to work with, you know, not super progressive, not super lefty folks in town to work with. Or maybe it's just bad strategic alliances, they actually end up hurting her political projects instead of helping them.

P Piper 01:29

And so what's what's a good example of that for you that you come back to

J Josh 01:33

Back in June 2020, there was a vote to cut the Portland Police Bureau's budget and the cut was a cut of the proposed budget, right. So it wasn't even a budget that was currently in effect. And then the cut was really small, it just amounted to a small, you know, a couple percentage points cut related to COVID income realities and what was going to happen, as we were kind of getting into quarantine and people were being less active and buying less stuff. And they were kind of preparing for

P Piper 02:01

they were cutting off all city bureaus at that time. Most of them

J Josh 02:05

yeah, Wheeler had already put out a call for all the bureaus to put out a cut. And so this is just kind of the Portland Police Bureau's version of that. And now when Hardesty worked with Wheeler, how they presented at the City Council, how they pass it off to the media was that this is a defunding of the police. This is a reaction to the uprising and to protesters demanding \$50 million to be cut from the police budget. And right now the Portland Police Bureau's budget is around \$230 million. It's been around \$230 million for the last couple of years when we got into office and bumped it up. The last time it had a significant increase. And so you know, a \$50 million cut would be a significant chunk, it wouldn't be half,

P Piper 02:44

it'd be a noticeable percentage

J Josh 02:46

it would be a noticeable percentage, it would be something they'd have to actually change some things about. Now, the small cut that we got was just a couple million dollars. It didn't actually impact staffing levels. It didn't impact.

P Piper 02:56
Josh it didn't impact staffing? I heard we don't have any police?

J Josh 03:00
It's true. We don't have any police. And that's because beautiful Portland protesters have run those motherfuckers off. I said quit your job and go back to Camas. And that's what they did.

P Piper 03:08
We actually have lost quite a few police that way

J Josh 03:11
at this point, roughly 17 or 18% of them

P Piper 03:14
not from the budget cut, but from just attrition.

J Josh 03:16
So yeah, not from the budget cut. These people are just quitting because they don't like Portland, basically and are nervous about potential for literally just like liberal police reform where we actually have somebody that can hold them accountable instead of them getting away with murder.

P Piper 03:28
Yeah. So how do you think like you were talking about that as sort of a strategic misstep for Jo Ann to like, sort of why do you think that was such a misstep? Because it I mean, it was directionally, I guess correct. Just very, very tiny. So like, how come that was such a strategic misstep in your view?

J Josh 03:46
If you take a broader look right, the political project is to give less power to the police. And I think Jo Ann Hardesty would agree with that political project and has said before the Police Bureau needs to be reigned in needs to be had their budget cut, etc. The impact of the cut meant that, number one, that Wheeler had an opportunity to say he had responded to

protesters that they had reacted to them in some way. When really this was not what we asked for. This isn't something we agree to, and it's not what testimony called for. And it also gave media, local media. So we're talking to Oregonian, even the Merc' and the Willamette week and other organizations, the news stations in town KGW and Koin and stuff. They all had now language that said Portland has defunded the police, they've decreased the funding. And while it's not inaccurate, you know, like we're saying it's not really a defunding when you're talking about a small budget cut that all the other bureaus went through, that didn't affect staffing at all. And they did attach to it shutting down a couple of the more gnarly teams inside of PPB, but even those have been restored. A few of those have been restored already. So it's, it's really a question of doing something that looks like it's in it's a Looks it appears to be in the right direction from a leftist perspective. But that actually doesn't accomplish any of our goals and even enables our enemies. So in this case, I think the most clear enemy is the Portland police union. Excuse me, "Union" I didn't put air quotes when I was saying I noticed the audio podcast, but how do you do air quotes?

P

Piper 05:21

quote unquote, you just say it.

J

Josh 05:22

You say it like that right? When the police union so the Portland Police Association is our enemy in this case, they're the people we're trying to remove power from and keep power away from and what they have been able to say is like, Listen, of course the police can't respond to your 911 call on time. That's because the police have been defunded. You can see back in June of 2020, where Ted Wheeler and Jo Ann Hardesty led the city council vote and they defunded the police. When the reality is the money that got taken away. It didn't affect staffing levels. The staffing levels have been affected literally by Portlanders yelling at the cops. This is why they've left you can go through some of the documentation and a couple different articles. And they all say, you know, Portland's not a good place for me. And I don't like not being supported by the community and city council doesn't have our backs. Like that's what they're saying. And that's the story they're broadcasting, which isn't true. It's just like, fundamentally, it's true that they're not welcome in Portland, but their financing just wasn't touched. And so I think that's, along with some of the stuff that we're trying to fix on this podcast is is just misinformation just like clarifying and talking about things that are going on as plainly as we can from a non expert perspective. And so Jo Ann Hardesty, this is a good example of a decision that like she was voting for a cut to the Portland Police Bureau. They even closed a couple of the departments that are the most sketchy. But the net impact was that I think the Portland police union has more power and more kind of a better story to tell and pitch when they say we've been defunded and we need more money.

P

Piper 07:01

It gave them a rhetorical tool with actually like no real impact on their like operational abilities or anything like that.

J Josh 07:09

The net impact is just I mean, it's just budget numbers and and somebody that would understand this better, would have better ideas about it. But as an example, you know, they're missing over 100 cops I think at this point that they have funding for they have money that they can pay a person that doesn't exist salary, but they can't, cannot successfully hire them. So even if we give them you know, millions and millions of more dollars, they're still like can be hired these cops. So what are they going to do with the money as a question, and I don't want to find out Honestly, I don't think we should give them that leeway or autonomy.

P Piper 07:40

So Hardesty made a bad strategic decision, allying with Ted Wheeler and she has before she has allied with him on other instances. And it generally seems like, you know, at least in hindsight, the allying with him is just a bad move period, right? Like that's he's harmful.

J Josh 07:58

My perspective is that in each of the cases where she's done this where there's been some alignment or some agreement with another politician, the net impact has been negative. And so I don't necessarily mean that Jo Ann Hardesty meant for it to be negative. I think that she was just trying to do our best and trying to work with colleagues and trying to like, get some stuff moving and trying to do something. That's one thing that we appreciate about Jo Ann horsey, she actually is doing things you can look at the commisioners' desks, and their their public output and stuff and you can tell they're not doing things, they're not making moves.

P Piper 08:30

That's something that I want to point out about Hardesty is while like, from like a, I don't know, wheeling and dealing sort of a perspective, she maybe can't get some of the big things done that requires collaboration with other commissioners both through maybe her decision making, but also certainly through who she has available to collaborate like certainly, certainly, that's a fact. Right?

J Josh 08:52

If you've only got Wheeler, and I mean, who did she have at the time? She had Eudaly wish she worked with

P Piper 08:58

She had Eudaly. But like Amanda Fritz? [talking over]alled with her. So. So while that has not been like a good path for her to accomplish things for Portlanders, she has still found other ways to help Portland and like I've been thinking about a few examples. And maybe maybe they're things that we don't pay enough attention to some of the time. And maybe the media

doesn't pay enough attention to them. But when there have been like really big crises that there are things she can do unilaterally, she has done really cool things for Portland and like one of the examples I like to think about is she put she put on all those porta potties during the pandemic when a lot of public restrooms were closed for COVID safety reasons. She was like we still I mean there's people living outside and they need sanitary conditions we need to make sure that there's more human dignity in our city for our neighbors. So she did that she just put put them all out there. She got a lot of flack for it, people don't like it because people don't want a porta potty on their block. But, you know, it's obviously the right thing to do and it helped Portlanders. And then she also has Fire as her bureau currently and Portland Street response is reports to fires to that's been like one of the most important things that has happened in Portland that is good in recent years from the City Council, and they she used that bureau during the heat wave and they were going out and finding people and helping them they were just like driving around and looking for people experiencing heat distress and helping them out like so that was a lot more than really anyone else is doing with their bureaus

J Josh 10:31

particularly interesting because there are other commissioners with bureaus with more and less money and bigger and larger bureaus and stuff. Of course, the fire department supposed to help people right but you know, housing supposed to help people also the police, they're supposed to help people. And during the heatwave, the stories that we saw were, there were a few stories about Hardesty's--PSR's specifically street response going out

P Piper 10:54

They're just very small right now.

J Josh 10:55

No, it's just for people, right? It is what it is. But the other stories were like Wheeler going to the MAC and going on dates and stuff during the heatwave were like, I mean, it was like what 50, 60+ Portlanders died. Yeah, just from like sitting in apartments and being overheated and stuff. So that the, I think the juxtaposition between the two of someone who may be imperfectly but certainly is trying shit and has a political ideology that cares about people and wants good for Portlanders. I mean, I admit that it's a little bit of a maybe a low bar like to pass. Hardesty passes it very, very clearly. And you know, generally just encouraged by the stuff she's done so far. And even if I have some critiques and stuff, absolutely happy with the way she's like doing stuff and want to support her, particularly because she's one of the people on the council that's recipient of, like a really, really incredible amount of hate and hate speech and aggressive like, Yeah, all kinds of stuff just like mostly racist shit. As a black woman in power. I think that's just the nature of the thing.

P Piper 12:04

The first black woman in council

J Josh 12:06

like, it's so heavy, because it's comes from the whole state, not just Portlanders, because Portland had voted for her, right, Portlanders like her. But you know, our neighbors just outside the city, tend to be largely can be more racist, tend to be more white, more conservative. And frequently, she's on the receiving end of a lot of hassle, when like, you know, even when there's protests and stuff that are more aggressive, that she's not necessarily co signing, she ends up hearing about, you know, your Antifa Black Bloc are out there again, and like it's not like she organizes a demo for a bunch of anarchists or something.

P Piper 12:40

[laughs] Yeah, she has done really good things that have been under her power to do that in a way that other counselors haven't, her values seem pretty in line, at least with a lot of the things we're trying to accomplish currently. But she's strategically it seems like not making always great choices, which partly, definitely admit is due to not having great people to make alliances with, like one of those examples is, you know, she's at least partly responsible for Dan Ryan being in office because she endorsed him in that election. And then he immediately voted against her, like what she was working her main project that she was working on his first vote. So maybe we can talk about a little bit about Dan Ryan now as her as one of her alliances, it didn't work out very well.

J Josh 13:28

Yeah, Dan Ryan, as someone that Jo Ann Hardesty endorsed is really interesting, because at the time, you're talking about Nick fish's seat on the city council. So it was a special election because Nick had recently passed away. And it was a run off after primary with a lot of people in it. And the two people were Dan Ryan, and then Loretta Smith, who is someone that's been in and around local politics for a long time, does not have a big progressive cosign or anything, kind of just another power

P Piper 13:59

past history of seeking funding from the Police Association

J Josh 14:02

yeah. So it's not like she had a lot of good options. Dan Ryan, is from Portland. He's born in North Portland, he has, I believe, is eight or nine siblings. So like a massive family, and spent a lot of his time doing stuff with schools, he worked with a nonprofit that I like, looked into a little bit and really wasn't able to get my head around if I even like them. But they're called All Hands Raised. And they did some stuff with school. So it was like about school testing or quality or whatever. I'm always suspicious of nonprofits. They just appear like, you know, buckets of money for fancy people to move around. And so like, you know, until you show me a nonprofit that actually has some, like pretty serious material benefits to people around them. I don't

really care. But you know, he's working on school stuff, which I think is interesting, because in Portland City Council, they don't they basically have no impact on schools. So spending so long of your life on school stuff, and then shifting is pretty interesting to me. It actually I think, reveals a little bit about his lack of a political project. I don't think not, not to impugn Dan, I'm not saying he is evil. But I would say that he doesn't necessarily have a specific political project. He has a lot of ideologies moving forward. And so the moves I see him making are mostly about gaining power and elevating himself, which again, I don't like but like, I'm not saying that's evil in and of itself, but without an ideology to track for, you know, you don't know what ways the winds gonna blow, right?

P Piper 15:32

And my general impression of him comes primarily from like that start of his time and in on the commission. And my impression of him is he's he goes, where power is like, that is just what seems to be happening. I don't know his internal motivations. But what he's done. So like telling a quick story about that, I think is illustrative here. So he ran with Hardesty's endorsement and Hardesty's project at the time was continuing the project of defunding the police. So she was viewing it as like, we are still doing this. We didn't really do it before. Okay, guys, let's keep going. You told me you wanted to do it incrementally. So she's working on the next round of that in the fall budget session,

J Josh 16:10

and Dan made a public statement. He said that that at some point, he said that we should continue defunding.

P Piper 16:15

Yes. In fact, was still on his website, the last time I checked, which might have been..it might be gone now. But so he This is his first votes. And because it was a special election, and the timing was weird. He is on the council before we have the election for the rest of the people that were up for election,

J Josh 16:34

the election that would have had it in early November when normal elections were going on.

P Piper 16:38

So this vote, this budget vote had Ted Wheeler, who was up for election, so we didn't know whether we were going to have him as mayor. We had Chloe Eudaly, who was allied with Jo Ann Hardesty on this project. We had Amanda Fritz who absolutely was not allied with Jo Ann Hardesty this project. And we had Dan and Chloe Eudaly was also up for election. So it was a question of, you know, we might have three people vote for this. And the winds might blow one way or the other. Or really, we might have a really progressive City Council: we might have

Chloe Eudaly, and we might get rid of Ted Wheeler and have Sarah Iannarone. Or we might have a really conservative Council. And it could you know, at that time, we didn't know which way it was gonna go. The first thing he did was he voted to delay the vote on the police budget until after we knew the outcome of that election.

J Josh 17:34

Now as a progressive as a lefty, as a person with a political project. When I'm trying to get things accomplished, I the the question of waiting to see how an election will shake out is not important to me. No, because it's a pointless, right? Even if, right, even if you even if you know or have a pretty confident about it. If you have the opportunity to do something before an election happens where you don't have any certainty or confidence about it. Again, if you have a political project, right, if defunding the police as part of your thing that you want to accomplish in office, it's pretty clear to me that he would have voted yes, of course, it's sort of delaying In fact, it was just a vote whether or not to vote right. It was just a vote on

P Piper 18:15

the first vote. Yeah, it was. So whether we vote now Yeah,

J Josh 18:18

voting to delay it and waiting to see how the council would shake out is such a I mean, it's easy to call it weaselly, right. But really, I mean, it it specifically reveals a lack of ideology. And again, I say that when I say it out loud, it sounds like I'm calling him some kind of evil auto-- automaton. But I just mean that like, it's not on Dan Ryan's list of things to do to defund the police. if most people want him to defund the police and the votes are already there. He probably will agree with people defunding the police, but like, it's not on his list of things to do.

P Piper 18:52

Yeah. And so then, when it turned out, we learned that we would actually have a more conservative city council than before because Ted Wheeler stole the election and Mingus Mapps won, that he then voted against it, the thing, the thing that he it was, he was the thing on his platform. And clearly, Jo Ann Hardesty wanted him to support it because it was the project she was working on and endorsed him. So there was a general impression that he probably would vote for it. It was like a pretty modest reform. And he didn't. His very first vote was to delay it. His second vote was to vote it down once we knew that we would in fact have a more conservative City Council. So I think I generally view him as going where the wind wind blows a bit.

J Josh 19:38

Yeah, it says political alliances and strategies on how to, you know, get multiple people in power to agree with you that I think reveals a lot about what the people of power are doing and what they're thinking. So when we think about Dan Ryan getting this endorsement from Jo Ann

what they're thinking. So when we think about Dan Ryan getting this endorsement from Jo Ann Hardesty you know, we're thinking context of an uprising happening. We were out in the streets every night. Many of us allegedly, again,

P Piper 20:04

many people, Portlanders, "we"

J Josh 20:07

are the people of Portland. And so like, thinking back to those times, and thinking to how much energy there was for rethinking public safety in a more fundamental way, and realizing now that for Dan Ryan, his endorsement was based on the fact that he was backing this idea of defunding the police and for him to not only delay the vote, till after the election, presumably just in order to save himself some conflict, so that he wouldn't have a vote on the record that was like one way or the other.

P Piper 20:42

I think he threw her under the bus. I view it that way. I view it as a betrayal.

J Josh 20:45

Yeah, it seems like a betrayal. I mean, it seems like you know, it's not like a trade, right? I don't really necessarily think Jo Ann was thinking, I will endorse you, you will give me this, it was more like, I'm going to endorse you agree with these ideas, and then you lied. So it's just

P Piper 20:59

He's a liar. Lyin' Dan Ryan,

J Josh 21:01

Lyin' Dan Ryan, and those relationships and things that we don't see I think are a lot of what informs that. And so to say, a little bit about Carmen Rubio, because in your research, you found out a current Rubio and Dan Ryan have like worked in and around each other right?

P Piper 21:17

When I was planning for this, I was like, recently, kind of a little disturbed that Carmen Rubio and Dan Ryan were working together on the clean and safe project, because Carmen Rubio I kind of was up in the air about like, I hadn't actually formed a strong opinion on. It seems like sometimes she voted in ways that were good. And sometimes I wasn't sure, like what she was

going to do, right, and she doesn't have a background of like, police reform stuff. So I like I didn't know what she was gonna do with that, because the clean and safe part of the issue of it is there, they get extra policing their private police paid for by businesses. So it is a policing issue really, in a lot of ways. And so she worked together with him on some like weird amendment that is unimportant to me that didn't address any of the problems I care about, and then voted against Hardesty's Amendment, which was at least intending to address problems I care about because it was being like, hey, there's some problems with them. Let's only certify for a year instead of instead of five years so that we can like maybe not do some of that stuff and make it not so bad. And she voted against that. So I was like, What the heck, why is she working with Dan Ryan. Dan Ryan, he's not like we said he doesn't have like a strong political project to really... so I was like, what's going on there. And I learned that actually they have worked together before so they've been on boards together, or like one of them has been on a board and someone else worked at a place so they've, they've like worked together at nonprofits or like at U of O in the past and have a history of working history. So that was new to me. To learn that.

J Josh 22:49

So Carmen is about 10 years older than I am so she's like in her late 40s but she graduated from U of O with a poli sci degree the same year I graduate high school so she like kind of went to school a little bit later in life. After working for local politicians, she she actually worked in the offices of Tom Potter, who's a cop ACAB of course. I feel like we should just mention everything in time there's a cop we should say ACAB. And then Nick fish who he already mentioned city commissioner has now passed away and then Serena Cruz who I don't remember her specific position but at the time she was working in the Multnomah County government she may have been the chair but like I said didn't write it down and don't really fucking care. So the the reason I point this out is that she has a long history of working with really like very Portland politicians so I'm not I don't know much about Tom Potter other than that he's a cop so I just assume all his decisions were wrong but I know the name and I know like that he's been in the in in and around power for a long time and it's like well known dude and someone that had a lot of connections right? It was a former police chief and all that kind of stuff. Nick fish kind of the same way just a very like Portland politician. Someone you can just like in the image of your head if you know anything about local politics, you could like imagine this dude, either fishing somewhere in the woods, or or yelling about some housing issue. And so while they may not be politically like in agreement with us as leftists, or whatever, they're like, people that are of a Portland politics are very like, so Carmen Rubio, my first impression was more like, oh, who is this person, new person, cool, whatever. I think it was actually some racism on my part that I assumed that a Latina woman was like, disconnected from the white politics of Portland and when really she's been around forever. She was born in Hillsborough, and it comes from grandparents who immigrated from Mexico and and has a kind of working class background that way and seems in her interviews and things she's talking about seems very concerned with working class issues was running something called Latino network, which is about getting services for Latino people. For more than a decade, I think, yeah. And was doing that, you know, up until becoming a city Commissioner. So someone that actually has a political project unlike Dan Ryan, but is absolutely part of you know, calling someone part of the establishment i think is like a weird, I don't know what even that means just

P Piper 25:22

She has connected to power

J Josh 25:24
to the political people in power, the people who have been making decisions for decades

P Piper 25:28
She's not an outsider candidate

J Josh 25:29
Not an outsider candidate, someone that's connected all these people connected to the money these people have connected to the business people to make decisions. So while I would say this, I think Carmen Rubio's political projects that actually maybe interesting and like has some good vibes to it, especially working class,

P Piper 25:44
Probably some things we agree with for sure

J Josh 25:45
Yeah, a lot of a lot of stuff where we can align with and maybe find some room for strategic movements and stuff. But I definitely, I definitely understand, given that context, why she might side with someone like Dan Ryan, rather than who I would see, again, I really, I sincerely think this is a little bit of racism on my part, just assuming that the Latina woman is going to agree with Jo Ann Hardesty because she's brown, it's like, some bullshit racism from a white guy. When the reality is I should have looked at her as an individual, someone that has grown up, and then worked in the seats of power, and has been working with these people all the time. So it doesn't necessarily mean that she's like, you know, some kind of, I don't know, has some project that we don't know about that secret and private and evil and whatever. But it does mean that she's like, connected to power and knows how to move in rooms of powerful people. So it's interesting to know that when you're talking about the decisions she's making,

P Piper 26:39
and I like one thing that makes me really nervous. So there's like promise of working like, there's promise of people who want to do things good working with Carmen Rubio, it seems there's definitely some projects that can get done. Yeah, but there's some things that make me nervous on issues that I particularly am focused on. And one of them, of course, is policing. And one of the things that made me nervous, and it just like brought it up to my mind is like, her

having worked for Tom Potter. Like, I didn't know him know him that well at the time, because I had just moved to Portland as like a college freshmen. So like, I don't really, I wasn't really keyed into what was going on.

J Josh 27:10

Are you saying that some college freshmen don't pay attention to municipal politics.

P Piper 27:14

I did not. But there are plenty of people that are much cooler than me are engaged when they're 19. And just moved to the city for the first time. But, um, his his sort of like, way he positioned what he wanted to do with policing, like his like police reform, part of his platform was community policing, which community policing is like kind of an old idea of like, how to reform police. But what it actually results in is you need more police to do it. You need because you need like them to be very present. That's what like it means.

J Josh 27:49

Yeah, the community policing thing is like, you know, beat cops on the neighborhood that you know, the name of and stuff. It's like, Oh, yeah, that's Jim, he takes care of these couple blocks. And he's our cop and whatever, we know him, and that's gonna make it better somehow, when he murders us.

P Piper 28:02

And so that makes me really nervous that she like works. I don't know what her position on this is. But because she like worked for someone that's like that was their thing, related to policing. And that's currently Mingus Mapps' project is positioning increased funding for the police is like a "community policing" project. Like that's the terminology he uses. That's like the old literature, he references about policing. Like, I've read some criminology like, these are like old papers.

J Josh 28:32

You know, they might have been new when he got his PhD in government from Cornell, which as far as I'm concerned, is really the place you go, when you're looking to really make an impact in municipal government, the Pacific Northwest, you got to go get a PhD in government from Cornell that's the place to go.

P Piper 28:50

So, so maybe, maybe this is a good time to talk about Mapps? Who is, in my opinion, the farthest right person on Council, including Ted like I think he's farther right than Ted. I think he

has a fundamentally conservative project and I don't care whether it's Republican or Democrat, it's conservative, absolute small c conservative project and, and I so I have fears that like there are issues that Carmen Rubio might ally with him on. So let's talk about like, why we think Mingus Mapps has a dangerous, a dangerous political project.

J Josh 29:20

So yeah, so Mingus Mapps got his bachelor's from Reed. And then like I mentioned a PhD in government, which is sounds very, very fancy and good. from Cornell, which I'm sure really informed his modern thinking on policing. And I think Mingus Mapps is pretty interesting. So this is an audio podcast, I should mention that he's a Black man. I think his his political project is conservative. And when when we say political project, we're just talking about the goals and the things that people want to accomplish. It's hard to hard for me to think of my political ideas as a project but Like, you know I am, I generally want police to have less money. I'd like my neighbors to have more services. So those are my projects. That's like what I'm trying to do. What Mingus Mapps is trying to do is to make things easier for businesses and to fund the police. Because he believes it will provide public safety, or because he says it will. He thinks that's the other thing. It's like, I don't know what you believe. So like he says, it will provide public safety, which is like documented, untrue. So whatever

P Piper 30:28

he does it, he positions it that way, he clearly wants to increase funding of police. And he positions it as if it's about public safety, regardless of whether he truly believes that I don't, I don't really know it might be more about property values. Who knows?

J Josh 30:40

Yeah, and he was a professor before this and doing that kind of stuff. I don't I don't have any interesting notes about projects and things he was up to before. But specifically, I think it's interesting the race he entered, and his winning over Chloe Eudaly, who previously held the seat Chloe Eudaly, solid, progressive, you know, he might not call her leftist, but definitely was like, her political project was very much aligned with mine. She did a lot of good work, especially for renters, my family benefited like materially from stuff she did in office, I am grateful to our team, we're talking about 1000s of dollars that I did not have to pay my landlord because of Chloe Eudaly and her team. So thank you very much to those people. And Mingus Mapps decided to run against her. And from, you know, a, I'd say A Portland politics observer perspective, it seemed clear that it was a NIMBY versus YIMBY thing. Forgive me for using acronyms. But just generally, the idea is that there's like a chunk of quote unquote, progressives, I think we should build housing and a chunk that think that building housing only makes rich people richer and doesn't house people. And so Eudaly's project was more YIMBY and Mapps' project is less. And so it seems like you just took advantage of that and took Eudaly out of the seat. He had a very clear win, once it got down to the the runoff won by 40,000 votes. And that's like, you know, it's it's not like Ted's where he barely won after, you know, loaning himself illegally, money to keep this project going, you know, Mingus Mapps has Portlanders support. He won. And so the question here is, I think there's a couple things. The first thing is I think he was lying. I think that, like the thing he's saying that if we increase

funding to the police, things will be safer is inaccurate. And so he has a perspective that's like, very liberal in that, you know, he talks a lot about wanting data and research and documentation and stuff, and even held up PSR, Portland Street Response from, actually, I guess it was just like from securing their additional funding for the next round, by saying he demanded a report, right, he demanded some documentation of what was going on. Of course, we didn't do that with the Portland Police Bureau,

P

Piper 32:59

we need to be clear here. This is while he claims that data is really important to him, this is definitely a critique that he raises selectively. Like you know, you mentioned that he didn't do that for the Portland Police Bureau like he he literally asked for an ROI on Portland Street response. But like, what is our ROI on Portland Police Bureau, they're killing our neighbors like this is we're not getting a good return on this,

J

Josh 33:26

right. And the relative numbers, I mean, just just as, as some perspective we're talking about, right now, the PSR thing is, I think it's a million and a half dollars or something for the four people plus some infrastructure and stuff. It's just like, it's hardly noticeable in Portland's budget. We have projects that are like you had no idea what they are, or what their names are, who they benefit that we spend much more on. And this is a thing that is literally going to change public safety in the city. If it succeeds, you know, I'm optimistic, but it's a state sponsored thing, you know, whatever. But like if it succeeds, it could have the biggest impact that we have felt in decades. If it helps with basically, you know, homeless services as a broad like emergency response thing. There's just like so much potential baked into it. And Mingus Mapps says, For for that dollar you want to spend, I need to see, you know, 700 pages proving why we're going to spend it and not because he wants the data, because we already have data that proves that these approaches work. It's because he's slowing down the project so he can maintain power and push for money in service of power for the police bureau.

P

Piper 34:34

Another way of like thinking about the scale is like Portland Police right now half of their interactions are with people that they like code as are probably homeless, and their budget is like almost \$250 million a year. That's almost a quarter billion dollars. So I know the math isn't like quite do half half but let's say it's like roughly 100 100 million dollars a year might be the amount they're spending on That will just as a number. It's something in that scale, that scale is appropriate. Like, and we're not being willing to expand a program right now that is like, the single digit millions.

J

Josh 35:11

And we have the reports, right? We, I mean, this podcast is only about how PPB is bad. But you know, we have reports, we know number one that, again, like Piper said, about half of the arrests, and interactions, even of ppb are with folks coded as houseless in some way. And then

a massive chunk of those are warrants service. So it's stuff like, Hey, you had a warrant out for your arrest, or, hey, you forgot to check in for this appointment, or, hey, you forgot this paperwork. It's not you stab somebody, it's not you, even you broke a window. It's just bullshit paperwork that nobody cares about, and fines that nobody can pay. And so they arrest folks and treat them poorly. And again, we have the documentation, we know what happens, people get caught up in the justice system, quote, unquote, justice system, even Oh, yeah, and end up, you know, just doing more and more poorly through that cycle. Like it's documented, we know this, and we dump money into it, no problem. Whereas Mingus Mapps, you know, literally, we were just talking about securing the small amount of additional funding was like \$1 million over the course of a year. And he said, Whoa, we need a report on this, right? I'm not just gonna give you money for nothing.

P

Piper 35:46

Now, what Mingus Mapps is doing now that there is a report and it is glowing. That in fact, Portland Street response is going quite well. Now he's trying to like rhetorically bundle, his push for expanding Portland Street response with an increase in funding for police and body cameras. He's like, bundling them all is kind of like one movement to to help Portland with its "crime problem."

J

Josh 36:45

Now, we do have a public safety situation, right? We've got an increase in homicides, it's very serious that we need to think about and gun violence stuff that's going on the situation with folks camping in public right of ways, is a problem that needs to be resolved with housing, housing people, that's how we resolve that is with housing. But I mean, it's it's not that the problems don't exist. So Mingus Mapps has a real opportunity here to kind of convince Portlanders that, yeah, we're going to get that Portland Street response funding and let's just give a little bit of police to they're not doing too good. Let's just spread it around. And that's going to give him a lot, a lot of energy with Portland Police Bureau, if you've managed to successfully do this. I think it will be more than enough for him to have plenty of money for his reelection. And plenty of you know, of their support going forward. So I think I think your insight that he's kind of tying these things together, not I mean, he is tying these things together. But you're like identification that not only did he block this funding initially for report that we didn't need we already knew about. But then once he does get the report, he says, Oh, this report says we need body cams and public safety. not explicitly, right. But he's tying it together as though it's one thing when it's not at all. Portland Street Response is a a unarmed emergency service department inside the fire Bureau, right? It should be replacing functions of the police. Absolutely.

P

Piper 38:11

Taking functions away from the police as you build up Portland Street response,

J

Josh 38:15

the idea that when they got I'll link to this in the shownotes. But there is a really great city

the idea that when they got I link to this in the shownotes. But there is a really great city council meeting. It was very encouraging. If you're an anti police person and supportive of the Portland Street response. It's just their report back to city council. And even the commissioners had pretty good questions and stuff. And it was actually is just very encouraging because all the numbers are better than they expected. Everything is going above and beyond what they had hoped for, and is incredibly successful. So the fact that that meeting, I sent this to Piper twice, I keep texting her like you gotta watch. The fact that Mingus Mapps and the other city commissioners didn't leave that meeting saying we need to cut a \$50 million check to PSR right now and get them ramped up immediately is just another example of the lack of urgency on any of these situations. Portlanders are living in Portland with a dangerous situation with a lack of services, day to day. And we're making do we're taking care of our neighbors. We're working it out through mutual aid. And Mingus Mapps' project says, You know what, I think more police funding. That's what we need.

P

Piper 39:18

Before we just sort of summarize on Mingus maps. You pointed out something on his website.

J

Josh 39:24

I feel like both of us were pretty well informed but needed to do a little more research to have a more in depth conversation about the commissioner. So we both kind of had the last couple of days digging in their websites and watching all the interviews and stuff. And one thing I noticed when I googled Mingus maps I said like Mingus Mapps, Portland. One of the results This is about page on his elections website. And specifically, the quote I noted was, I am a democrat and a feminist. And it was just like one sentence all by itself, just like not like responding to something and not like, really, there wasn't even a photo next it was just like a sentence by itself on his about page.

P

Piper 39:58

So I wanted to talk about this. I want to talk about why it's so inappropriate for Mingus Mapps to call himself a feminist in this moment and why it actually infuriates me. Is first let's start how he got elected. Let's start. Let's start about Chloe Eudaly's term and the coverage she got all throughout her term, painting her as basically an unruly woman crying in meetings, yelling at people being not knowing what she's doing, being uneducated, all leaning hard to mysogyny and it worked. And Portlanders leaned in on mysogynist criticism of Chloe Eudaly.

J

Josh 40:35

Absolutely.

P

Piper 40:36

And I am not saying that like you can't criticize people for like the way they conduct themselves. But it was obviously over the top and mysogynist. And Mingus Mapps positioned

himself in that environment as I am an educated man

J Josh 40:52
Professor Mapps.

P Piper 40:54
Yeah, there's, there's no way to like that he didn't benefit from misogyny in that situation. And then, more recently, he is the only Commissioner. And we're including the mayor Ted Wheeler here who's been you know that we hate

J Josh 41:12
We hate him so much.

P Piper 41:12
He's the only Commissioner that voted against two different attempts for the City of Portland to stand in solidarity with reproductive, the attack on reproductive rights. So there were like two different proposals for how to do that. He voted against both of them

J Josh 41:28
those bare minimum symbolic, you know, things that bare minimum that Wheeler could have done as a gesture to say, Hey, we're with you, or whatever. So there's not that much credit to Wheeler, but you're absolutely right, both times he voted against him. And even these wouldn't have cost him anything. It's not like there's a pro life contingent in Portland is like really rabid about shit like that people have to drive in from all over to protest our abortion clinics. Right? The The question here is, what is Mingus Mapps' project?

P Piper 41:43
It's not a feminist project. It's

J Josh 41:57
not Yeah, the question is, what is this project? And it's definitely not a feminist project. I mean, you know, you can maybe have your caveats about how you describe yourself as stuff. I am definitely a fucking feminist and Mingus Mapps is definitely not one. That's very clear.



P

Piper 42:11

Yeah. So anyway, that makes me very, I do want to, I do want to give like sort of my fears right now, because we've sort of gone from we've gone from Jo Ann Hardesty who we think is like someone that aligns enough with our values that you know, definitely were supporting, you want to keep her there. We've seen a swing in the city council to a more conservative Council, and we've kind of gone through everybody and like, there are some like movable people in there. Dan Ryan and Carmen Rubio, like don't have this, like really strong project against what, what we want most of the time they

J

Josh 42:45

Yeah, they don't have a pro police project. They're like softly pro business, but not super aggressively. They can be like, there's some room there for them to vote in ways that we would agree with no, we're not optimistic about their opinions, but like, you know, there's some space for them to be shifted right?

P

Piper 42:59

Maybe someone else has an overtly conservative project, and especially on policing he keeps what he wants to accomplish is very, very much counter to the goals. I have the goals, Josh has the goals probably most of you listening have with policing, certainly. And what scares me the most about him right now. Is that he, we are activated as a city from just a really long period of protest, yelling Black Lives Matter for the city. And what he seems to be doing is taking that message and taking the concern that people have for black people being able to survive, like literally, like Black Lives Matter caring about like Black people surviving in Portland. And he's using that terminology when talking about giving more money to the police. When talking about expanding the power of the police, the exact thing we were protesting against, he wants to empower that. And that really scares me.

J

Josh 43:59

I think that obfuscation of like using language and descriptions that align with, you know, social justice projects, and then obscuring them so that they benefit those already power, they benefit the police, they benefit the wealthy business class, I think is one of the things that Portlanders are most susceptible to not very good at critiquing Black people fairly. And we're not good at seeing past a liberal veneer.

P

Piper 44:31

I want to be more specific about what he's saying. He's saying that because gun violence is disproportionately impacting Black men in Portland, that if you care about Black Lives Matter, you have to fund the police. Like that, that's the way you have to respond to that

J

Josh 44:47

His like Professor data boy, whatever project that says like, you know, we need to see reports we want to respond to data, all this kind of stuff that Ted Wheeler also says frequently. He talks about how he's like, going to really do some research and whatever. The research tells us very clearly that police make things more dangerous. Police kill people and hurt people that particularly with Black and brown people, they're they're more impacted by the violence and the detrimental effects of policing. So the idea that caring about Black Lives Matter and caring about Black lives necessarily means funding the police is actually the opposite. It's incorrect. It is incongruous. He's gonna keep repeating this, and the newspapers are going to publish the things he's saying, and they will be wrong.

P

Piper 45:37

Particularly The Oregonian

J

Josh 45:38

Particularly the Oregonian. So when we talk about Portland from the left, we're talking about politics, but we're also talking about ways to kind of move the needle to affect your material conditions to even change government without voting. Because in Portland, if you live in Portland, you already get your ballot in the mailbox. So I assume you're gonna vote if you don't vote, I don't really want to have that conversation with you. I'll let you figure it out yourself. But if you're looking for other ways to move the city council, I can tell you one thing that I think has some benefits, but it's not moving city council is testifying City Council, I think it's totally beneficial to get on the record. To get your words out there. We've seen some really powerful testimony from different Portlanders whether that's about policing, or about other things as City Council's talking about. I don't believe it has any maybe not any, but it has much impact on how, city council members are gonna vote.

P

Piper 46:32

We certainly have seen like overwhelming testimony. And then the vote goes the other way.

J

Josh 46:37

Yeah, we did hundreds and hundreds of testimony when we're talking about a couple defund votes. And they just they listened to it. And it's, I don't think they're necessarily ignoring it. But it's just like, it's not it doesn't seem weighed into the vote. They they do the testimony before the vote, it feels like they're listening to you and then making a decision. But that is not what's happening. What's happening is they've already made a decision. And then they also have space for other people to say things. So yeah, I'm not necessarily saying that they're not listening, but they're certainly not it's not affecting anybody's vote. That's what we've seen. That's been the results so far. So I would say testifying at City Council is totally beneficial. But it's actually beneficial because it gives you a place to talk to your neighbors, most of us, you know, maybe only have a couple 100 friends, you know, he might have a Facebook or Instagram or whatever. But really, in order to talk to a lot of people, you're going to need a platform, you're going to need a place to say things. So for me testifying in front of City

Council, that's what good that does is it's about talking to your neighbors, not necessarily about moving city council and moving that vote right then, but is about getting the correct information on the record for everyone to hear,

P

Piper 47:43

and maybe even get coverage of it potentially,

J

Josh 47:46

yeah, absolutely get coverage. One of the kind of more memorable testimonies of city council was from, I'll call him friend of the show, Javier, and I'll link to that in the show notes here, too. There's a great clip of it. And the reason why, for me, his testimony was so powerful, because it was just really by the books, it was just talking about the things we all talk about about policing, but real frankly, and plainly to city council in a really organized fashion, just kind of laying out the case. And it didn't have any impact on city council to vote at the time. In fact, I don't even remember what they were voting on at the time. But it did have an impact on people listening, including me, it encouraged me it benefited me just in hearing someone else so plainly state the case for why policing is bad in Portland. And so looking for opportunities to publish, I think, whether that's testifying City Council, the Oregonian publishes letters to the editor. As far as I know, I think that is the like most accessible place to a large audience you can get to with political ideas in Portland right now. And then just make a podcast, write a blog, write your Facebook, talk to your friends, whatever you can do to get these ideas to people because the problem is we don't actually have much impact on elected leaders once they're in office. This is kind of an ongoing electoralism conversation about like, how much we can impact people that are already in power. So then the really the question is about impacting Portlanders and changing public opinion not necessarily changing city council because there are individuals who you know, we certainly can find room and space to make them uncomfortable particularly with people like Mingus Mapps that have an anti person political project I'd say you know, his his project is so conservative if you're funding the police you're anti people. So he shouldn't feel comfortable in Portland his this should be like a situation where Oh, it's Mingus Mapps. Do you want to tell me why like Portland Police should continue killing people for millions of dollars a year.

P

Piper 49:41

Make him make him deal with that in public.

J

Josh 49:44

Yeah. That one of the things that I actually certainly love that the city council meetings are more, you know, approachable zoom and stuff, but like the idea that we can't be in the same place to address folks and like have a central place of protest, when stuff like this is happening, it really has had, I think, a negative impact on getting energy around this stuff. So it's really publishing and talking to people I think is the biggest thing I want other people to be doing.

P

Piper 50:11

Sometimes when people think about influencing their neighbors, they're oftentimes thinking about influencing them to vote. Again, go back to voting, and it's like, we're gonna convince them of a project, they'll vote for our thing. But actually, like, I think, especially with policing, let's just use that as the example. Because that's, like, really urgent is like, you can convince your neighbors to just not call the police, like, you can convince your neighbors to be like, Oh, the police aren't trustworthy, they kill people. I don't want to call them when something happens. And so you could have like a direct effect on the behavior of your neighbors, even if they don't even agree with you like, on everything. And you don't even have to like ally with them on a project. You're just like, hey, think about it this way, and they maybe think about it differently and do a different thing.

J

Josh 50:52

Yeah, absolutely. I don't think you know, there's lots of space to move the needle on this. And you know, if you convince your neighbor, hey, maybe it's not a good idea to call 911 someone might die the next time they're thinking about voting for someone and they're saying like, blah blah blah public safety means funding the police they're gonna have that extra question in their head about like, Well, does it mean I mean, my my bad My bud Piper said, If you know, the cops come they might kill somebody. I don't know if we want that. And it's a lot about moving the perspective of people on what what's possible even. Is it possible to have a city like Portland without police? We think so we think that we can have a much better imagine, dude, imagine if we could put that 230 million and just like fucking buy houses, build apartment buildings, just like for a couple years build so many apartment buildings.

P

Piper 51:41

It could really be a different place.

J

Josh 51:43

It could be a different place. It could be a better place, and I think that's what Portlanders want.