

## **Press Statement**

### **The Albina Ministerial Alliance Coalition for Justice and Police Reform**

WE call this press conference in light of the rapid chain of events that have recently occurred in our city which radically impact the on-going police community crisis in the city of Portland.

First, we bring attention to the settlement of the James Chasse lawsuit against the City of Portland. We rejoice with the Chasse family that their long, hard fight to achieve a semblance of justice in the unjust and unnecessary death of their son, James Chasse has come to an end. While the financial victory of the settlement for the family does not carry the force of winning in a court trial, it does send a clear message that the City feared going to trial and losing. Therefore, they settled for the largest claim in a police death suit in the history of Portland. Furthermore, the release of documents and records from the suit will clearly show that the brutal beating led to the death of James Chasse.

Secondly we would like to speak to the recent shake-up in the leadership of the Portland Police Bureau. The change in position of Police Chief caught us by surprise, as it did many of the citizens of Portland.

Our major concern, beyond the internal politics of City Hall, is the welfare of the city in general, and in bringing solutions to the police/community crises in particular.

We are greatly concerned about the lack of community stakeholders input in the process of picking a new Chief of Police. This in no way reflects judgment on the character and leadership of the new Chief,

Mike Reese, but the process speaks to one of the great values of the City of Portland, namely community participation. Our expectation is that this does not indicate a future trend regarding the leadership style of Mayor Sam Adams.

While we support the Mayor's taking the reins of supervision of the Portland Police Bureau as the City Charter intended, we believe the process of transition could have been better handled.

We look forward to working with Chief Mike Reese and Mayor Sam Adams to solve the police/community crisis as equal partners in creating a police force that reflects the expectations of the citizens of our diverse communities.

Finally, the recent tragedy in the deadly police shooting of Keaton Otis, a young, 25 year-old African American male with mental health issues, calls us to the "urgent now": we have a growing problem in the Portland Police Bureau that won't go away. As we sort through the preliminary evidence and conflicting testimonies between the police on the scene and citizens who witnessed the incident---at the end of the day, we still have a young African-American male with a mental health disorder dead and a police officer wounded. This deadly force shooting only adds fuel to the tension and mistrust between the Portland Police Bureau and the community it serves.

We call upon the Chief of Police and the Mayor for a transparent, swift and fair investigation in the shooting death of Keaton Otis.