RESOLUTION No.

Refer a Charter Amendment to voters at the November 3, 2020 General Election to authorize a new police oversight system. (Resolution)

WHEREAS, the cry for and community interest in independent police accountability has never been more clearly heard than in the past 60 days of protesting; and

WHEREAS, we have a historic opportunity to reject violence and discrimination in policing through a transparent, empowered and independent police oversight system; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the City of Portland Community Police Oversight Board (Board) is to independently investigate Portland Police Bureau sworn employees and supervisors thereof promptly, fairly, and impartially, to impose discipline as determined appropriate by the Board, and to make recommendations regarding police practices, policies and directives to the Portland Police Bureau and with a primary focus on community concerns; and

WHEREAS, the communities most impacted by disproportionate policing and systemic racism have oftentimes been excluded from the systems designed to hold police accountable and it is of critical importance that this new system put the voices of these communities at the forefront, and current and former law enforcement officers have historically been overrepresented on these boards; and

WHEREAS, to conduct the critically important work of this Board a mandatory floor for its budget is essential to ensure it can successfully execute its mission; and

WHEREAS, the ability to exercise independent judgment from other city government bureaus and elected officials is essential to the fairness and objectivity of the Board’s proceedings; and

WHEREAS, the parameters of this Board’s authority will remedy past police oversight systems’ work that has been impacted by an inadequate ability to collect evidence, interview witnesses, effect police policies and directives, and include sufficient transparency; and

WHEREAS, certain actions of sworn members of the Portland Police Bureau and their supervisors are of paramount importance and concern to the community. Furthermore, many of the most harmful actions by police have disproportionately impacted some communities more than others. Thus it is critical that the Board is tasked with investigating and reviewing actions involving deadly force, bias, violations of federal and state constitutional rights, complaints of force that result in injury, and other matters the Board deems of great consequence for them to investigate.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City Council will submit a Measure for an Act creating Section 2-1000 of the City Charter to authorize a new police accountability system in accordance with language in Exhibit A, to the voters of the City of Portland in Multnomah County, Clackamas County and Washington County at the November 3, 2020 General Election; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City Council submits the ballot title contained in Exhibit B, consisting of a caption, question and summary, to be contained in the November 3, 2020 General Election Ballot; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City Council directs the Auditor to publish the ballot title as shown in Exhibit B in accordance with City Code; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the sponsoring elected officials may submit an explanatory statement to the City Auditor for publication in the voters pamphlet; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City Auditor is directed to forward to the County Elections Office all material necessary to place this measure on the November 3, 2020 Election Ballot.

EXHIBIT A

Proposed Charter Changes

PREAMBLE

Chapter 2: Government

Article 10: Community Police Oversight Board

Section 2-1001. City of Portland Community Police Oversight Board. A Board is hereby authorized and shall be established upon compliance with any legal obligations the City may have under the Public Employees Collective Bargaining Act, other state and federal laws, and upon adoption by City Council of an implementing Ordinance. The mission of the City of Portland Community Police Oversight Board (Board) is to independently investigate Portland Police Bureau sworn employees and supervisors thereof promptly, fairly, and impartially, to impose discipline as determined appropriate by the Board, and to make recommendations regarding police practices, policies and directives to the Portland Police Bureau and with a primary focus on community concerns. The final name of this Board will be established by City Code.

Section 2-1002. Nature of the Board. Board members shall be appointed by approval of Council to a term of years established in City Code. Members may not be removed from the Board prior to the completion of their term except for cause. Successors to an unexpired term shall be appointed by approval of Council for the remainder of the term. The Board shall make provisions to ensure its membership includes representation from diverse communities including those who have experienced systemic racism and historic disproportionate policing.

Section 2-1003. Restrictions on Board Membership. People currently employed by a law enforcement agency and their immediate family members are not eligible for service on the Board. People who were formerly employed by a law enforcement agency are not eligible for service on the Board.

Section 2-1004. Budget of the Board Funding for the Board shall be proportional to be no less than 5% of the Police Bureau’s Annual Operational Budget.

Section 2-1005. Professional Staff of the Board The Board shall hire a Director to manage the professional administrative staff and professional investigators, and to make operational and administrative decisions. The Director is a “Bureau Director” for purposes of Charter section 4-301 and shall be appointed by, and serve at the will and pleasure of, the Board. Professional staff of the Board, other than the Director, shall be appointed by and serve under the direction of the Director as classified employees.
Section 2-1006. Independent Authority The Board shall have authority to exercise independent judgment in performing all legally assigned powers and duties. The Mayor, City Council, Auditor, and City departments, bureaus and other administrative agencies shall not interfere in the exercise of the Board’s independent judgment. The physical office of the Board shall be located outside of a Portland Police Bureau facility.

Section 2-1007. Powers of the Board

(A) The Board shall have the power to the full extent allowed by law to receive and investigate complaints including the power to subpoena and compel documents, and to issue disciplinary action up to and including termination for all sworn members and the supervisors thereof within the Portland Police Bureau.

(B) The Board shall have the authority to make policy and directive recommendations to the Portland Police Bureau and City Council. The Portland Police Bureau shall consider and accept or reject all policy or directive recommendations made by the Board. If the Portland Police Bureau rejects a policy or directive recommendation, then at the request of the Board, City Council must consider and vote to accept or reject the policy recommendations received from the Board. Council’s decision will be binding on the Portland Police Bureau.

(C) The Board shall have the authority and ability to gather and compel all evidence, to access all police records to the extent allowed by federal and state law, and the ability to compel statements from witnesses including officers. The Board shall make provisions for regular and open meetings, public transparency, and reporting on the Board’s activities. One of the goals of the Board will be to remove barriers for Board members to fully participate in the work of the Board.

(D) The Board shall have the power to compel sworn members of the Portland Police Bureau and their supervisors to participate in investigations and to completely and truthfully answer all questions. Refusal to truthfully and completely answer all questions may result in discipline up to and including termination.

Section 2-1008. Duties of the Board The board shall have the authority to investigate certain Police actions, including but not limited to;

(A) All deaths in custody and uses of deadly force.

(B) All complaints of force that result in injury, discrimination against a protected class, violations of federal or state constitutional rights.

(C) The Board may investigate other complaints or incidents of misconduct as they see fit or as mandated by City Code.

Section 2-1009. Severability For the purpose of determining constitutionality, every section, subsection and subdivision thereof of this Section, at any level of subdivision, shall be evaluated separately. If any section, subsection or subdivision at any level is held invalid, the remaining sections, subsections and subdivisions shall not be affected and shall remain in full force and effect. The courts shall sever those sections, subsections and subdivisions necessary to render this Section consistent with the United States Constitution and with the Oregon Constitution. Each section, subsection and subdivision thereof, at any level of subdivision, shall be considered severable, individually or in any combination.

EXHIBIT B
Ballot Title

Community Police Oversight Board

CAPTION
Amends Charter: Authorizes new, independent community police oversight board. (9)

QUESTION
Shall Charter be amended to authorize new, independent community policy oversight board to investigate complaints against Portland Police, impose discipline? (20)

SUMMARY
The measure adds a new Charter section authorizing an independent body to: investigate complaints against police employees and agents; investigate all deaths in custody, uses of deadly force, complaints of force that result in injury, discrimination against protected classes, violations of constitutional rights; impose discipline deemed appropriate by the Board; recommend policy focused on community concerns to the Police Bureau and City Council. Board members appointed by approval of City Council. Board membership shall include representation from diverse communities, including those who have experienced systemic racism and historic overpolicing. Current, former employees of law enforcement agencies and their immediate family members may not serve on the Board. The Board’s funding shall be no less than 5% of the Police Bureau’s annual operational budget. The Board shall appoint a Director who serves at the pleasure of the Board and who will, in turn, appoint staff and investigators.

Board powers include:

- Investigate complaints
- Subpoena documents
- Access police records
- Compel witness statements, including from police officers
- Impose discipline, including termination

Other provisions to be established by City Code. (175)