

# An Open Letter to Mayor Ted Wheeler, from Teri Jacobs

April 5, 2021

Dear Mayor Wheeler,

Over the summer, near the Multnomah County Sheriff's office, I was brutally attacked. I am a petite white woman. (I am not the only person protesting on the street, who is not a 'white man'. Stop spreading this lie, now.) On August 18, 2020, a large man grabbed me, striking me with a truncheon multiple times in the back and in my head, until the force of the blow sent me flying headfirst, onto the pavement. Once I regained my bearings and was able to sit on the pavement, this same large man came and stood over me. He waited until I looked up at him and proceeded to strike me with yet another violent blow, directly to the front of my head. The man who assaulted me is Portland Police Officer #37 and he needs to be held accountable for the violence that he inflicted on me and the criminal behavior that he engaged in.

I was not under arrest; I was not cited. I was not accused of committing any crime. I was, however, the victim of a violent criminal act by a Portland police officer. Portland Police Directive 6.4.1.2.1 states that, "Members striking or jabbing with a baton shall not deliberately target the head or throat, neck, spine, or groin unless deadly force would be authorized." #37 used his large body in an attempt to intimidate me and deliberately targeted my head, using violence in order to silence my voice.

On November 6, 2020 you tweeted, (in response to what you claimed to be an attack on Commissioner Ryan's home) "Those responsible must be found, investigated and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. I condemn anyone who uses violence to attempt to silence the voices of others."<sup>1</sup> Anyone means everyone, and Portland Police officers are included in your statement of "anyone." **Condemn officer #37 now.** He not only caused me physical and emotional harm, but he engaged in criminal destruction and damaged my property! I was thrown to the ground, along with my camera, which resulted in serious damage to my property. This was a crime that you have stated so many times is "unacceptable and will not be tolerated."<sup>2</sup>

I was fortunate that this criminal act was captured on video, which clearly shows the violence of the Portland officer.<sup>3</sup> I brought a lawsuit against the city and reached a settlement for my injuries, both physical and emotional. However, this is not enough. As mayor, you must hold the people responsible for this criminal behavior accountable. On November 21, 2020, you tweeted, "To those participating in violence, I want to be clear: I denounce your actions. Law enforcement

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<sup>1</sup> Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/tedwheeler/status/1324759490713907200>

<sup>2</sup> Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/tedwheeler/status/1324759451119755265>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PuBj-HPJ3To>

will do everything possible to find you and hold you accountable. We all agree racial justice is past due, but I absolutely denounce the violence and criminal destruction.”<sup>4</sup> Denounce the violence that was inflicted on me and the criminal destruction in which Portland police officer #37 engaged.

On November 3, 2020 you tweeted, “There will be no tolerance for any violence, intimidation or criminal destruction. We want everyone to be safe while using their voice to advocate for their perspective.”<sup>5</sup> I do not feel safe in this city because your police officers continue to assault, kill, and harm the people of this city, with no repercussions. You have stated many times that you will not tolerate any violence, intimidation, or criminal destruction, yet I was the victim of just that, and I have yet to hear you denounce the perpetrators of this crime. Publicly hold the Portland police officers accountable for their behavior, denounce the violence and criminal destruction. Otherwise, you are sending a clear message to the city of Portland, to the state of Oregon and the entire United States, that the laws of the city of Portland, Oregon, do not apply to police officers and that they can do whatever they want, whenever they want, to whomever they want, without any consequences. If you do not publicly denounce the actions of the Portland police officers involved in this crime, then you are publicly admitting that you are a liar. And it would be best for this entire city for you to resign as mayor.

Many of the people that have been standing up for Black people and involved in the Black Lives Matter Movement, since the murder of George Floyd, have been injured by members of your police force. On November 6, 2020 you tweeted that, “I condemn anyone who uses violence to attempt to silence the voices of others.”<sup>6</sup> I asked the Portland community if they have had an officer use violence towards them, in an attempt to silence their voice. I asked them to comment on the tweet with what happened. Here are some of the responses. Content Warning: these accounts of police brutality experienced by people in our community are violent and extremely disturbing to read. (Tweets were copied from the twitter.com website, with permission from the authors. Twitter handles were not included, in order to conceal identities.)

- PPB declared the gathering an unlawful assembly and told us to go a certain direction. I began walking that direction and trying to get a younger comrade to safety PPB grabbed me, pulled me back toward said unlawful assembly all while hitting me in the head/back with a baton.
- PPB hit me with a baton, and attempted to throw me to the ground, they shot me with impact munitions. They pepper sprayed me in the face when I was unable to retreat.
- I’ve been hit seven times with various impact munitions, shoved and batoned, goggles pulled and maced in the eyes, and I still have a very large bruise from AUGUST.

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<sup>4</sup> Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/tedwheeler/status/1330255186372259842>

<sup>5</sup> Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/tedwheeler/status/1323785156449116162>

<sup>6</sup> Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/tedwheeler/status/1324759490713907200>

- They shot me in the chest with a 40mm sponge round for standing with my hands up.
- PPB sent the Asian officer I was speaking to towards the front of the rush line to hit me with a baton and shove me to the ground just for them to gag me with my respirator, confiscate that, and rip my goggles off.
- PPB hit me across the face with a baton while I was attempting to follow orders. Glasses were broken.
- A PPB officer bunted me in the face with his night stick knocking me to the ground as I tried to retreat, then proceeded to rip my respirator off my face.
- You can only RT (retweet) once but if one could RT for each PPB attack I would have retweeted 10 or more times. If the detectives & jail guards counted it would be 15 times.
- PPB dragged me through the street with my speaker hitting me with night sticks after they knocked me down as I tried to retreat.
- I was tackled by 3 officers and held down and beaten while a 4th stood on my head till I fainted
- PPB maced me in the eyes/face from about 3 inches away when I was trying to tell them to stop touching [another human] the night he got arrested.
- I would say the most noteworthy one is them breaking my arm but reaching out for who I thought was a medic after being blinded by mace and getting met with an officer shoving me to the ground sucked too.
- I've been gassed, hit with projectiles, arrested (twice) sexually harassed by officers (squeezed my ass), put in arm lock with knee on neck, pummeled from behind with club, head shoved into pavement and nose ring ripped out, once had a gun pulled on me, chased through pdx, etc.
- They pulled me off the pavement, pulled my mask over my eyes so I was covid exposed and couldn't see and then put me in the back of a police car that drove around to try to intimidate and confuse me before locking me up in the (Justice Center) and threw the book at me. (Suffered a concussion and sprained wrist that was never treated while in jail.) Charges since dropped.
- (PPB Officer) blocked me from running at PPA and laughed while throwing me into the air on onto the ground and then ran after another person to assault them.
- As I attempted to follow orders a PPB officer grabbed me by my backpack, throwing threw me to the ground, causing me to tumble. When I tried to get up, a different officer shoved me back down to the ground.
- Beat me for asking if he wanted to beat me. BTW he said yes as he was beating me.
- Helmet&goggles ripped off then tackled/by multiple officers backpack cut off of me and then they cut the sleeves of my hoodie while removing zipties. Also hit in the head with a 40mil teargas canister multiple pepper/impact balls, mace, flashbang about a foot from my head,etc.

- I was violently arrested by PPB after witnessing a horrific assault on a restrained medic, carried out by PPB. After desperately pleading with PPB to stop and consider what they were doing to another human. I was thrown to the ground by an officer twice my size.
- The officer proceeded to throw the entirety of his body weight in his knee on my sacrum. I'm 5'2. When I screamed out in pain another officer stood over me as I had already been cuffed and threatened to mace me in the mouth if I didn't "shut up". This was back in August. It's the end of January now... I still have mobility issues and nerve pain in my lower back, right hip, thigh and knee.
- Kettled a group of us at the donut shop, maced us, beat us from behind with their batons, pushed me into the fence, feds shot me across from the square.
- I was standing around a group of ppl by Director's Park and got flashbanged.
- Stole my walker from me, as a press person, causing me to get a faceful of tear gas.
- Maced, ripped off my headgear and punched me. Also lost my prescription glasses. I wish I had video of it.
- PPB maced me while I was helping an injured person up off the ground. They have repeatedly punched me, grabbed me, and beaten me with batons while I was ~tweeting~.
- A few thousand ppl downtown and we all got gassed and shot at with pepper rounds.
- shot in the face @ my own car no big deal.
- PPB threw a flashbang that blew up as it made contact with my torso. (Alix Powell, who asked to be identified, has a permanent scar from their injury).

Black Lives Matter. Property is replaceable, human lives are not. If Portland police continue to kill Black people with little to no consequences, the people of Portland will continue to protest.

Denounce the Portland police officers who have been participating in violence towards protesters and hold them accountable. Either you keep your word and hold all people accountable for their actions, equally, or resign.

Thank you in advance for choosing to do the right thing,  
Teri Jacobs