

## PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE NOTES

FEBRUARY 10, 2021

9:30 AM via ZOOM

Dr. McKee opened the meeting with the first agenda item of discussing possible community engagement ideas for the OSU Police Division, especially those focusing on outreach to marginalized and underrepresented groups. Chief Spears-McNatt explained that she serves on an implementation committee of the Task Force of Community Safety and Wellbeing that is also working on this initiative to support the work of PSAC. That committee has come up with the following suggestion for PSAC to review:

- increase interaction with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion's Early Arrival Program
- partner with the ODI's Young Scholars program; Chief Spears-McNatt will be a presenter at their 3/10 meeting
- build better relationships with Greek organizations; Chief Spears-McNatt has already volunteered to serve on a committee related to this goal
- get more involved in orientation for incoming freshmen
- partner with Off Campus and Commuter Student Services to reach students living off-campus
- build a relationship with Redefining Athletic Standards student group
- conduct a town hall meeting in the spring and fall; propose to have a meeting soon to discuss safety on and off campus and current critical issues; propose to include Pres. Johnson, Dr. Shivers, Dr. J. Moore, Dr. Larry Williamson, etc.; put together a budget to distribute promotional items to students; felt it was important to schedule the meeting before the students leave campus this spring.

PSAC members generally agreed it would be beneficial for OSU PD to proceed with these initiatives. Dr. Moll indicated the Chief would need to engage her staff so she is not the only one responsible for making these connections by sitting on committees, giving presentations, and introducing the Police Division to groups. Yolanda Zepeda offered to assist the Chief with any initiatives related to ODI programs. Stephen Post said he has been working on collecting data to see if students and community members in general are ready to directly engage in dialogue with police again about current issues in policing, and his data could inform us on the best format for community outreach programs, such as the town hall idea. Early data may be ready by mid-March, and if so, he will bring it back to the April PSAC meeting to discuss.

Dr. McKee mentioned that due to the lower numbers of people on campus because of COVID, he has heard from some, particularly women, that they feel less safe on campus. He asked that OSU PD do increased walk throughs of academic buildings to check on those who may be one of few working in the office. Dr. Moll said the police and security officers do patrol these areas and the Chief indicated she would remind her staff to continue to do so. Dr. Moll said she heard similar feedback from students while participating in meetings for the Task Force on Community Safety and Wellbeing. Students requested an online or virtual source of safety training since many of the in-person safety programs that are typically conducted by OSU PD cannot be offered during a pandemic. That is why Dan Hedman's team (A&P Communications) worked with OSU PD to produce short safety videos recently. Dan explained the video series and the roll-out plan. Those videos can be found here:

<https://dps.osu.edu/safety-spotlight>

Dan explained that the Task Force on Community Safety and Well-Being also had a recommendation that involved creating a more centralized safety page so the various safety resources offered by other offices and units on campus could be located in one place, along with the resources offered by DPS. Not all safety resources are provided by DPS.

Dr. Moll said the Task Force is currently in the implementation phase where they are collecting information about what it will take to implement each recommendation and estimating the costs associated with them. She shared that another initiative coming from the Task Force would be a safety survey that would oversample students from underrepresented groups to try to determine what makes students feel safe. Because different people view safety in different ways, the Task Force wants to be sure their recommendations are geared toward supporting initiatives that will enhance a sense of safety and well-being for all. The goal is to get the survey out by Feb. 22.

Dr. Moll explained that another Task Force recommendation consists of adding five police officer positions to OSU PD to assist CPD with providing police services to areas east of High Street. She said these could be utilized to expand joint patrol coverage hours, or to ensure OSU PD has the staffing to police the areas east of High Street that the university owns. She said some combination of both uses of the additional resources would be likely. Both would achieve the goal of increasing the presence of OSU PD in that area to act as liaisons for our students in connecting them with university resources when they are victims of crime. She said this is a longer-term goal because it takes 18 months to 2 years to hire and train new police officers, and OSU PD already has an unprecedented number of vacancies due to unanticipated retirements and career changes caused partly by COVID. Dr. Moll said each year PSAC and university leadership could re-evaluate the best use of these additional police resources as they are added to the ranks. Stephen Post indicated the coverage of OSU buildings and property east of High is an important goal, and he hoped continuing to fund Community Crime Patrol in off-campus student neighborhoods would enhance safety there.

Another Task Force recommendation pertains to adding courses and programs to the existing diversity training received by OSU police officers. The overall goal is to take a more comprehensive and thoughtful approach to diversity training to develop a training program where the course in one year builds on the information from the prior year. They would also like to integrate the concepts from these new courses into the field training experience for brand new police officers when they begin the on-the-job portion of their training, after graduating from the police academy.

To that end, Chief Spears-McNatt has enrolled every OSU police supervisor in a six-week online law enforcement leadership training course offered by the National Center for Civil and Human Rights in Atlanta, Georgia. An overview the course content can be found here:

<https://www.civilandhumanrights.org/law-enforcement-training-program/>

Additionally, OSU PD is working with the Kirwan Institute to develop a train-the-trainer program where Kirwan Institute staff will train OSU police officers to instruct a diversity course to all police officers, and potentially to other DPS employees, such as security officers and 911 dispatchers.

Chief Spears-McNatt added that she is implementing another important training course that she hopes all OSU police officers will have completed by the end of the year. She explained the agency is conducting ICAT training (Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics), which was developed by the Police Executive Research Forum and is intended to provide officers with the skills and tools to

better defuse/de-escalate situations when possible. More information about this training can be found here:

<https://www.policeforum.org/icat-training-guide>

Committee members asked if any of the diversity training courses could be extended to CPD officers. Dr. Moll said she had discussed this idea with university leadership and intended to pursue that once OSU officers had a chance to see if the courses were informative and effective, and the officers who have been trained as trainers had some experience teaching the content.

Finally on the topic of Task Force recommendations, Dr. Moll indicated a few initiatives have already been implemented, such as expanding the hours of the Lyft ride-share partnership for discounted rides for students, and the re-engagement of Community Crime Patrol (CCP) in the university district off-campus. She said CCP has been very helpful in identifying street lights that are out in the university district, and they have been reporting them to the city so repairs or bulb replacements can be made in a more rapid fashion.

Dr. Moll spoke about the recent incident on the south oval where hundreds of students were sled riding. She explained how the event unfolded, and went into detail about the response from the Department of Public Safety (both the dispatchers and the police officers). She explained that some students were not wearing masks, most were not practicing physical distancing, some were using university property to sled ride (including a dumpster), and most stayed out past the curfew. Additionally, two OSU PD officers who responded to the scene near curfew to attempt to convince the group to disburse had actually each went down the hill once with the students before getting everyone to return the university property and leave the oval. One of those officers did not have his mask pulled up over his face when he went down the hill, and both officers agreed to take selfies with a student who wasn't wearing a mask. All of this was widely shared via short videos and photos on social media. Dr. Moll and Chief Spears-McNatt said they received several complaints about the activity of both the students and the officers. The general sentiments of these complaints pertained to the reckless behavior of students and the lack of accountability for them, the poor example the police officers exhibited by engaging in the sled riding and one of them not wearing a mask for a portion of the time, and the question of whether the police response would have been the same if it had been mostly students of color who were engaging in that activity. Dr. Moll and the Chief explained both officers self-reported their behavior to the OSU PD supervisor who arrived later. That supervisor addressed the COVID-related issues on the part of both officers right then. However, the Chief said she directed that an investigation of the officers' involvement be done as well according to the division's complaint policy, due to a formal complaint that was received regarding the officers' participation. She said the progressive discipline philosophy was followed for both officers. Neither had previous related disciplinary action, so they both received informal counseling. Dr. Moll explained the legal, practical and ethical limits for police when enforcing university policies and the Buckeye Pledge, and also the general educational approach that DPS staff attempt to take with community members who do not adhere to COVID-safety protocols. The committee discussed this incident at length. Dr. Moll shared that since the date this incident occurred, police and security officers have tried to do proactive patrols of the areas while snow is on the ground so they can break up groups when they are much smaller, and Residence Life staff have assisted by securing the moving carts and other items that are often used inappropriately to sled ride. The consensus of the majority of the committee members was that while the police response may not have been perfect, they were pleased that the two officers involved were able to disburse a very large crowd without having to resort to threats of arrest or using force or pepper spray. Many also supported the educational approach to gaining compliance from students rather than a punitive approach.

**Attendees:** Joanna Shaul, Paul Bellair, Satoru Persons, Jeffrey McKee, Robert Armstrong, Dan Hedman, Adam Featherling, Kelly Smith, Monica Moll, Mike Mandelkorn, Lulu Montes, Holly Davis, Yolanda Zepeda, Njeri Kagotho, Micah Berman, Kimberly Spears-McNatt, Simone Drake, Stephen Post, Doug McGrew, Nicholas Dang, Tracy Hahn, Margaret Bussard, Quiana Smith, Amy Young

### PSAC CHAT NOTES 02.10.21

From hedman.11 to Everyone: 09:40 AM  
Holly I think you may want to mute, there's some background noise.

From Holly Davis to Everyone: 09:41 AM  
Sorry!

From hedman.11 to Everyone: 09:48 AM  
<https://dps.osu.edu/safety-spotlight>  
<https://dps.osu.edu/resources>

From Joanna Shaul to Everyone: 10:05 AM  
<https://www.civilandhumanrights.org/law-enforcement-training-program/>

From Njeri Kagotho to Everyone: 10:09 AM  
Will the Kirwin course be made available to our partners at Columbus Division of Police?

From Kimberly Spears-McNatt to Everyone: 10:12 AM  
<https://www.policeforum.org/icat-training-guide>

From Joanna Shaul to Everyone: 10:13 AM  
Njeri, training CPD is not a part of the Kirwan plan currently.

From hedman.11 to Everyone: 10:15 AM  
I need to step away to attend another meeting. Thanks!

From Lulu Montes to Everyone: 10:35 AM  
Yes!

From Stephen Post to Everyone: 10:39 AM  
Kelly, this also makes me think of all the work we did in early fall in the Conflict Resolution group. I thought we set up processes to deal with events like this. I know this happened quickly, but would like to see those processes used next time we know of an event like this.

From Kelly Smith (she/her) to Everyone: 10:42 AM  
Hi Stephen. That is interesting. Can you give me a call to discuss how that would work. We would sure want to leverage the work done last semester.

From Stephen Post to Everyone: 10:45 AM  
To be clear I greatly appreciate the methods used, I think the main concerns I heard from grad students were related to the COVID concerns .

From Micah Berman to Everyone: 10:49 AM

More on my perspective (open letter that I joined):

<https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2020/10/15/university-leaders-should-take-more-humane-approach-students-during-covid-19>

From Yolanda Ohio State, She/her/hers to Everyone: 10:51 AM

Thank you all for this valuable work. I have to step away to set up a next meeting.

From Kimberly Spears-McNatt to Everyone: 10:54 AM

Please let me know if anyone has any additional recommendations or suggestions that OSUPD can use to engage the community.

From Kelly Smith (she/her) to Everyone: 10:56 AM

Apologies. I have to meet a student at 11:00 a.m. and need to get to another location. Thanks everyone!