

**PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE NOTES**  
**SEPTEMBER 8, 2020**  
**1:00 PM via ZOOM**

Dr. Monica Moll opened the meeting indicating committee Chair, Dr. Jeff McKee, would not be able to join due to a power outage. She stated the main objectives for the meeting were to finalize the Values Statement, with noted suggestions, and discuss the most recent Public Safety Notice that went out to the OSU community.

A minor edit to the latest version of the Values Statement was suggested in the Self-Restraint portion of the document. Some indicated they were hopeful that other terms such as anti-racism and transparency would be included in some way. Others thought the wording needed to be as concise and as focused as possible, saying we have to pay close attention to language, and that race is not the only challenge. The suggestion was made to work on a header or pre-ambule to the Values Statement that included broader language about anti-racism and transparency. Dr. Moll suggested we finalize the version we have now before large events resume on campus, begin to use it to prepare the short training piece that the Police Division wants to put together for outside law enforcement officers who work events, and then revisit the idea of adding an introductory paragraph for the statement in future meetings.

Dr. Moll discussed OSU's protocols for issuing Public Safety Notices (PSNs) and how they align with the Clery Act. She explained the difference between a Buckeye Alert (emergency notification in the Clery Act), a Public Safety Notice (timely warning in the Clery Act), and a Neighborhood Safety Notice (not required by the Clery Act). She noted Neighborhood Safety Notices (NSNs) are for off-campus incidents, and are dependent upon information from the Columbus Division of Police. Follow-up information to NSNs regarding additional details, arrests, etc. is usually controlled by the city police as well. Information about each type of notice can be found here:

<https://dps.osu.edu/alert-notices>

Discussion ensued regarding the factors surrounding the information contained in the most recent PSN and the two follow-up messages. This discussion included the reasons for the omission of the derogatory term in the PSN (and mistakenly the victims' race in the original message), why race was used at all for suspects and victims, why it was classified as a hate crime according to the Clery Act, and why the update that was sent about arrests included the arrestees names. Each of these aspects of the PSN were sources of concern and confusion for many people in the university community. Members expressed the feedback they received from students, faculty and staff on all of these points. Chief Spears-McNatt and Dr. Moll indicated they also have received a great deal of feedback and have been meeting with students who have reached out to hear their concerns and explain the process that was followed for the notices. The underlying sentiments of all of the concerns they heard were that the messages left many Black members of the university community feeling less safe, and with the impression that the university is not concerned about the safety of Black students.

Dr. Moll explained that current protocol for safety notices is that race is not used to describe victims, and is typically only used to describe suspects when there are more descriptive details to go with it, with a few exceptions, such as the most recent PSN. She said when a notice is sent that says "suspect details are limited," it usually means OSU PD did not have much more than race and gender for a suspect description, so they did not include it in the notice. She often gets complaints via email regarding the limited information about suspects when this occurs, and she tries to make contact with those

individuals to explain the reasons for the protocol. She asked the group for feedback on other ways to describe a hate crime based on racial bias (as defined by the Clery Act) without using race for the victim or the suspect (when there is not a good suspect description), yet still convey the basic information the community needs about the incident to feel informed and enhance safety.

She also asked the group to consider whether an update about an arrest following a PSN was necessary, and if so, whether sharing the information about who was arrested is useful. She explained that current protocol is to share this information when a PSN has been issued for something that caused serious physical harm to someone and an arrest was made in short order after the message went out. She said that set of circumstances is rare. The last time an arrest update was issued after a PSN was in June of 2018. That message to the university community can be found here:

<https://dps.osu.edu/news/2018/06/28/police-make-arrest-kidnapping-and-rape-investigation>

Upon discussion, some members felt identifying who had been arrested is never necessary, and that even though the information is public record and will likely be posted and reported on by media outlets, it should not be the university sending that information to the community. Others felt full information and transparency were important, or could be for some incidents. Some felt protocols needed to be consistently applied to be trusted and understood by the community, and others argued consistency might not always be valuable. Dr. Moll suggested the group think over other kinds of crimes and scenarios to determine whether the protocols they wish to see implemented would work in all cases, and we will make this an agenda item to pick back up at the next meeting. When we have settled on a recommendation, she will then bring that to university leadership for consideration, as they will be reviewing the PSN/NSN processes/protocols as well.

She explained that the university does not have much discretion regarding the way crimes are classified under the Clery Act. She indicated information obtained by investigating officers from multiple independent victims and witnesses on the night of the incident required these offenses to be classified as a Clery hate crime and aggravated assault, and required a PSN. However, Ohio law does not always match up with the crime categories in the Clery Act, so the suspects were charged with felonious assault and assault. Chief Spears-McNatt pointed out that one of the student victims had his jaw broken in two places and required surgery, and others suffered injuries that did not require medical treatment. The Clery Handbook, published to assist institutions with compliance with the Clery Act, can be found here (see p.76 and pp.81-82 out of 265 pages for hate crimes info):

<https://clerycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/handbook-2.pdf>

Members expressed the need to find better ways to provide all of this contextual information to the university community, saying most are probably not aware of the Clery Act or the existing protocols for safety notices. Suggestions were made to provide a link in the safety notice to a web-page that contains this information, holding town halls with students to explain the process, and changing some of the introductory information in the safety notices to give more info about the Clery Act.

In addition to talking more about potential changes to the PSN/NSN protocols in the next meeting, Dr. Moll stated the group would also be discussing the creation of a DPS Action Plan that affirms a commitment to Black student safety and overall university safety. Chief Spears-McNatt gave examples of the ways she and her officers currently attempt to interact with under-represented groups on campus.

Committee members offered other suggestions as well. Dr. Moll and Chief Spears-McNatt offered to come and talk to any groups who were willing to host them as time permitted.

Dr. Moll noted the need to improve the DPS web-presence, and said creating a future sub-committee of this group to assist with web-page improvements might be a good idea. Several initiatives suggested by the committee will involve adding information to the DPS web-site.

The next meeting will be held on Monday, October 12 at 1:00 p.m.

**Attendees:** Katherine Betts, Lulu Montes, Aryn Hubbard, Mustafa Abubakr, Nicholas Dang, Stephen Post, Ben Walberg, Yolanda Zepeda, Rachel Bowen, Qiana Smith, Holly Davis, Kelly Smith, Simone Drake, Paul Bellair, Njeri Kagotho, Monica Moll, Kimberly Spears-McNatt, Tracy Hahn, Adam Featherling, Doug McGrew, Mike Mandelkorn, Satoru Persons, Margaret Bussard, Bob Armstrong, Claudia Bonham. (Unable to log in: Jeff McKee.)

### **PSAC CHAT NOTES 9.8.2020**

From Stephen Post to Everyone: 01:10 PM

I like the idea of flushing those things out in a preamble. I understand the implications of including that now.

From Kimberly Spears-McNatt to Everyone: 01:18 PM

Clery Act Handbook: <https://clerycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/handbook-2.pdf>. Please take time to read when you have a free moment.

The Annual Security Report will be released October 1, 2020.

From Rachel Bowen to Everyone: 01:36 PM

Another possibility might be to term the crime "an anti-white hate crime" or an "anti-Asian hate crime," and so on.

From Ben Walberg to Everyone: 01:42 PM

From just my own student perspective, I cannot really think of a situation in any crime where an arrest is made and I would want a name included in an email from OSU (if I wanted more I could look it up). All I really would want to know is that an arrest was made for the prior public safety notice. Maybe include whether they were an OSU student or not, but never a name.

From Rachel Bowen to Everyone: 01:43 PM

I agree with Ben -- it might be useful to know whether the persons arrested are students or not, but I never need names.

From Ben Walberg to Everyone: 01:48 PM

In regards to people assuming things may be for another reason, I think it comes back to transparency from a departmental view. Maybe create a basic webpage that lays out the policies and procedures for these public safety notices that is linked to in each email. This can link to the departments decisions they make and the general Clery reporting requirements so people can find these easier. For instance, Monica laid out a pretty well thought out reason to include/not include race of suspects in some emails. I should be able to find that reasoning on the website if that is how things will be done.

From Holly Davis to Everyone: 01:50 PM

<https://dps.osu.edu/clery-act>

A big part of the issue is folks don't always read before jumping to conclusions.

From drake.194 to Everyone: 01:51 PM

I think this profiling issue is one that perhaps this committee could push with other offices on campus. Consider this: the Black student population at OSU is barely 6% and the Black faculty population is barely 3%. And Black staff are disproportionately in low-wage positions. How do these statistics inform the way that Black students and Black faculty are viewed in relationship to profiling? We have a systemic issue at OSU that goes back since the founding of this institution. These reports can certainly use some critical reflection on protocol, but that will not make any discernible changes in the experiences of Black students, faculty, or staff—all of whom can be profiled by these reports.

From Rachel Bowen to Everyone: 01:52 PM

I agree, Dr. Drake. This issue requires much more attention -- and likely in more public discussion as well.

From Ben Walberg to Everyone: 01:52 PM

I agree Holly, is there any way we could include that specific link on future public safety notices? I see there is already a link section, but not that link

From Rachel Bowen to Everyone: 01:53 PM

I have to jump on another meeting, but I do want to reiterate the need to both avoid profiling while also avoid inciting panic for every group that might fear being targeted.

From Aryn Hubbard to Everyone: 01:53 PM

Can you speak more on what you mean @Holly Davis

From drake.194 to Everyone: 01:57 PM

I feel like the University did an easy pass in this situation of racial unrest and injustice. They have diminished it to a public safety issue when the tentacles are so great in number and so far-reaching. Many universities are taking a much more intentionally wholistic approach to making better institutions. Maybe I am becoming a "broken record."

From Aryn Hubbard to Everyone: 01:58 PM

Can you speak more on what you mean @Holly Davis

From Holly Davis to Everyone: 01:59 PM

I think a big question is that you can put the general information about Clery Act out there - but how do you engage folks to better understand the why behind these decisions/situations?

From Ben Walberg to Everyone: 02:02 PM

I have another meeting I have to get to. Thank you everyone for your perspectives!

From Stephen Post to Everyone: 02:03 PM

I Have another meeting as well, but agree with Dr. Drakes comments. Thank you all!

From Aryn Hubbard to Everyone: 02:05 PM

I think the issue is less with the classification as a hate crime because now that the information has been put out we understand the classification. The larger issue in my eye is the release of vague descriptions and the lack of consistency with the notice

From Njeri Kagotho (she/her) to Everyone: 02:05 PM

Dir. Moll, would your office be open to hosting a town hall where our students can express their frustration with how this particular situation has unfolded and strategize on a way forward. The more transparent the dept is, the more trust you can (re)build with your constituents

From drake.194 to Everyone: 02:05 PM

Many times I do not see reported racial descriptors for perpetrators. It makes me conclude that the perpetrators in these cases are white (and normalizing whiteness). That could be incorrect on my part, but they certainly seem to be identified when they are Black.

From Aryn Hubbard to Everyone: 02:08 PM

Can you include a date for that summer 2018 notice

From Kimberly Spears-McNatt to Everyone: 02:09 PM

<https://dps.osu.edu/news/2018/06/28/police-make-arrest-kidnapping-and-rape-investigation>

From drake.194 to Everyone: 02:09 PM

I think it needs to be consistent.

From Lulu Montes to Everyone: 02:10 PM

I agree with considering a town hall because students have demands and the same questions here about the safety notice. I also believe that we should have our minutes online along and consideration with updating students on such information of these meetings.

From Aryn Hubbard to Everyone: 02:12 PM

I'm also in favor of that

Additionally students are outside Bricker hall right now speaking on their grievances

It would be great for those in public safety to go visit and talk with them if you have the chance

From Yolanda Zepeda to Everyone: 02:12 PM

I appreciate the challenges around these issues, and I am grateful for the sincerity of this discussion.

From bellair.1 to Everyone: 02:13 PM

Everyone, this was an excellent discussion but I need to get off for another meeting. Looking forward to continuing the discussion!

From Njeri Kagotho (she/her) to Everyone: 02:14 PM

I may take your office up on the offer for a conversation at C of Social Work

From Kelly Smith (she/her/hers) to Everyone: 02:15 PM

Thank you! I very much appreciated this discussion!

From Holly Davis to Everyone: 02:15 PM

thanks!!!