

PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE NOTES

February 8, 2023

9:30 AM via Microsoft Teams

Director Monica Moll opened the meeting by reviewing on and off campus crime statistics. Off campus crime is still trending down overall in the major crime categories, and has been down since several security enhancements were implemented in the University District beginning around September of 2021. The on-campus crime categories that are still higher than the OSU Police Division would like to see are theft of motor vehicle parts and burglary/breaking & entering incidents. Chief Kimberly Spears-McNatt said catalytic converter thefts and thefts of materials from construction sites are the kinds of crimes occurring most frequently in those two categories. Deputy Chief Dennis Jeffrey will be reviewing location information for recent catalytic converter theft reports to determine if they have been concentrated in any one area to see if we can deploy resources in way that will deter thefts or catch the suspects. Lieutenant Bruce Allen met with the project managers for construction projects recently to discuss ways to strengthen security at construction sites.

Director Moll explained that the Columbus Coalition for the Homeless coordinated with city officials to open warming centers this winter in the city for the unhoused population. One of those centers is in the University District in a large church at 82 E 16th Ave. The university was not involved in this initiative, but we did start receiving many complaints in January from parents of students who live off-campus in the University District. Many felt it was an unsafe situation, and indicated the unhoused individuals who were attracted to the area due to the warming center were also coming up onto the porches of student residences and creating disturbances in the general area. The university passed all of this feedback on to those managing the center, and the center hired security and made some other safety improvements. The warming center was originally scheduled to stay open until mid-March, but the city has recently informed the university that the center's last day of operation will be Monday, February 20. The church is supposed to be under contract to a new owner, and so it is unlikely a warming center will be located there next year.

The next topic discussed was the murder of Tyre Nichols by Memphis police officers. After a general discussion about the incident, Director Moll said the police officer selection process is one very important factor in efforts to end abuses of power in policing. She said OSUPD's selection process takes at least 8 months to complete from time of application until an offer of employment is made. She said it consists of a physical fitness test, a written test, a cursory criminal history and driving record check, a panel interview, an interview with Director Moll and the Chief, a thorough background investigation, a lie detector test, a psychological evaluation, and a medical evaluation. She briefly explained what each step entails. Committee members indicated they would like to hear more about the components of the psychological evaluation. Director Moll said OSUPD uses a company called PRADCO to conduct these evaluations. She said she would invite representatives from PRADCO to the April PSAC meeting so they can give an overview of the process to the committee and can answer questions.

Chief Spears-McNatt mentioned other avenues for catching problems early and making sure police officers adhered to the agency's core values. She said OSUPD has a policy pertaining to an officer's duty to intervene if they witness another officer abusing their authority by violating law or using excessive force. Additionally, the Chief said OSUPD has an early intervention system that requires supervisors to

take a closer look at the behavior of officers when certain triggering events occur within a specified time period, like citizen complaints, uses of force, or disciplinary actions. She also mentioned the use of body cameras by her uniformed officers and the supervision of their duties by shift Lieutenants as other means for ensuring proper behavior and addressing problems.

Director Moll said every division in the Department of Public Safety (DPS) is hiring right now. She said the Police Division is currently in the background investigation stage for a number of applicants, and they have about five more police officers to hire to reach their authorized strength of 70 sworn police officers (which includes all supervisors and command staff). There are also openings for security officers, alarm/video monitors and dispatchers.

Lieutenant Joanna Shaul gave an update on the DEI training module being developed for DPS employees for 2023. She first reminded the committee that the training course in 2022 was focused on the hard history of policing, implicit bias, community relations, and having difficult discussions about race. She said that all new employees will continue to attend that 8-hour course. She said DPS is currently working with Dr. Simone Drake (a PSAC member) to develop the next step in this training initiative. It will be broken up into shorter sessions rather than one 8-hour day. She said a working group is meeting throughout February to develop the training curriculum. Like last year's training course, this will be a train-the-trainer effort, so the material will be taught by DPS employees to other DPS employees. She said she would have more information about the content of the training at April's PSAC meeting.

Lt. Shaul also gave an update on the Police Division's pursuit of advanced accreditation. OSUPD currently holds the basic level of accreditation. She said about a dozen Police Division policies have been updated, with a few more to go. Once the policy revisions are complete, OSUPD will ask outside agencies who are also accredited to review the policies to make sure they meet the accreditation requirements. After that, Police Division personnel will start collecting proofs of compliance for each advanced accreditation standard to prepare for an assessment by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). Lt. Shaul said things are moving in the right direction to ultimately achieve advanced accreditation.

Lt. Allen gave an overview of recent community engagement activities conducted by the Police Division. He also noted the spring semester class of the Community Police Academy was about to start.

Director Satoru Persons gave a short presentation on the license plate reader (LPR) cameras that were deployed last year on and around campus. There are currently 63 LPR cameras that are part of this university initiative. There are 23 located on campus on university property, and 40 are located off campus in the University District. Director Persons explained that these are stationary devices that are motion-activated. They are typically mounted on street poles, streetlights, or other fixed structures. The cameras capture images of vehicles and license plates and provide public safety personnel with information on vehicles, location, date, and time. The system is tied to a national database that checks criminal records, missing persons reports, and arrest warrants. Director Persons went over statistics on the numbers of recovered stolen vehicles, arrests, police reports, etc. that were associated with the use of the LPR cameras by OSUPD (he did not have information or statistics on arrests, recovered vehicles, etc. related to CPD's use of this same set of cameras).

A committee member asked whether the group had discussed in a prior meeting alternative resources (other than police) for responding to non-emergency situations. Director Moll indicated we did discuss

this topic at the November 2022 PSAC meeting, and she reviewed the information that is also contained in the meeting notes from that prior meeting.

A committee member affiliated with USG shared that USG is working on a project focusing on doing a needs assessment of emergency and evacuation plans for people with disabilities. Part of that project may include purchasing devices that will help with that effort in the event of an emergency. Director Moll said Robert Armstrong, Director of Emergency Management & Fire Prevention, would be the best point of contact in DPS to assist with that project.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, April 12 at 9:30 via Microsoft Teams. A representative from PRADCO will be joining us to give an overview of the psychological assessment in the police officer selection process for OSUPD.

Attendees: Amy Young, Paul Bellair, Christopher Taylor, Njeri Kagotho, Amy Hurley, Andre Brown, Abigail Berk, Simone Drake, Courtney Brewer, Monica Moll, Margaret Phillips, Kimberly Spears-McNatt, Dennis Jeffrey, Eric Whiteside, Doug McGrew, Satoru Persons, Adam Featherling, Joanna Shaul, Bruce Allen, Dan Hedman

PSAC Chat Notes 02.08.23

[9:53 AM] Berk, Abigail L.

Thank you for the explanation. Are you able to discuss the psychological component more such as how you're evaluating things like service orientation and judgement?

[9:57 AM] Berk, Abigail L.

Yes please! That would be great.

[10:22 AM] Drake, Simone

Thanks for the updates. I need to sign off and head to campus.

[10:40 AM] Chris Taylor (Guest)

Thank you for all the informative and thoughtful responses!