



UNIVERSITY PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, November 6, 2018

ATTENDANCE

Present:

Chief John Reid, UPD

Dr. Ryan Patten, Associate Dean, BSS

Marvin Pratt, EHS

Mike Thorpe, Risk Manager

Jennifer Wilking, BSS faculty

Jen Ross, Staff Council

Tim Sistrunk, HFA

Alejandra Becerra-Silva, AS Commissioner of Community Affairs

Sergeant Bryce Davison, UPD

Mike Guzzi, FMS

MINUTES

- Follow up to last meeting:
 - How we document and share information is open to feedback from the committee.
 - Please feel free to follow up with the Chief with written comments if you have feedback.
 - Sistrunk: where will agendas be posted?
 - Reid: as of right now, the Committee is listed on the Academic Senate [site](#) but this may change. Might be a better fit to use the [UPD site](#) or [generic campus safety site](#).

 - Reid: 2 significant incidents occurred in the last 10 days.
 - Drive by shooting the Sunday of Halloween weekend. The driver of a vehicle traveling south on Warner was shouting and being confrontational toward people walking on the sidewalk. It is uncertain if it was intentional to trigger someone, or a random act of violence. The suspects are still at large. Additionally that weekend involved a lot of activity including aggravated assaults and several shootings around town
 - Tuesday morning 10/30/18 police discovered a murder occurred on campus. The situation involved two individuals not affiliated with campus who were occupying our property and who got into a disturbance. That day involved a lot of good police work from our department, “nose to the grindstone” type of work. One of our guys was able to find the suspect downtown, and he is in jail and will be charged. Physical and circumstantial evidence was gathered.
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- Reid: dichotomy between what crime I've witnessed and the reactions of community members. I've seen a number of serious incidents that involve both our students and others. Examples: students have been shot or stabbed 2-3 blocks off campus, like at 3rd and Hazel, or victimized by someone who has stolen their property at gunpoint. I've been surprised to see that the temperature/pulse/angst of the campus community has been virtually non-existent. If it didn't happen on campus, no one's responding. On the other hand, I've seen incidents *on* campus such as the murder this week that didn't involve students and it seems like the campus is still somewhat "business as usual." If a student had been killed, likely we'd still be closed. This is the perspective through my lens as Chief.

Perception of Fear on Campus

- Question to the group from Reid – what has been the reaction from campus for these recent events? How should we respond to these types of situations? What do I tell Cabinet on how to respond—do we or do we not “push the big red button,” so to speak?
- Wilking: It seems like from a student perspective there was a big difference between there being a murder versus a suicide last spring. The suicide caused much more angst because it was a student. As a staff member, I had to comfort students a lot that day and that week. Staff, faculty and administration take their cues from the students. With the murder, I didn't overreact because students didn't overreact to this incident.
- Becerra-Silva: When the suicide happened, students were highly affected. The reaction afterward was, there's no way that Butte is going to open. When this incident happened last Tuesday, it wasn't a student so it wasn't as impactful; it wasn't one of us. This happened on campus but it wasn't as visible. We saw that Kendall was closed. As students we're not relating to what happened.
- Wilking: concern over messaging. Felt a little like this person was dehumanized because she was experiencing homelessness.
- Reid: initial messaging comes from me; it gives us a time stamp and buys us time while we are gathering more information. Essentially the first message for this event indicated that police are investigating an incident at Kendall Hall and to stay away from the building. The crisis communication team comes together and in this situation that included myself, Garrett Caldwell, Ashley Gebb, Milton Lang, President Hutchinson, and Sheryl Woodward. One thing we understand is how quickly messaging has to get out; it's difficult to get it out in a timely fashion because we don't have all of the information, and we're speaking to a diverse audience. These messages are happening in a team environment. These are people with a heart for the community and who are here to do their best and write in a good way. We made some corrections along the way; we got feedback. It's difficult work.
- Guzzi: To respond to your global question about apathy and a lack of outrage for these instances. In talking to my staff, that's not always the case. Custodians are some of the first people here every day; often they are the first people to find visitors camped in the buildings and whatnot. There is a general fear among custodial staff as a result. I would love to assist Chief in clamoring to the President to get more police officers. For some, they have a feeling of helplessness since they know that only 2 or 3 officers are on duty at a given time. Like this morning when someone broke through the physical sciences building door; it's a reminder that this person may also kick my face in, too. Unfortunately we've resolved to ourselves to say that very little can be done. It's similar to being in the military, when mortar rounds came in and you just got used to it; you had a sense of despair. This situation is a tremendous problem that FMS would love to help to get more resources. It's a big problem on our

campus especially as the city pushes more into our area. Langdon is an area of concern. Now there's extra fear involved.

- Pratt: My daughter is a student here. In hearing from her I have seen how the younger generation is more accustomed to living in fear and understanding that violent things could happen anywhere. As far as events happening off campus, they don't associate that with us (Chico State)—that's Chico PD. They don't associate off campus with on-campus PD. Some students make that clear separation.
- Reid: From UPD's perspective, our first and foremost mission is to take care of our turf, and we have limited resources. I've begun to talk to staff about how we zone out our work. We have a larger responsibility to work as part of the city's solution too.
- Sistrunk: Noted the high percentage of students we recruit from southern California and the connection to their experience with urban crime. With the way the circumstances were handled, it didn't seem like students were surprised. Homelessness is certainly an ongoing concern in our community. CFA has tried to have public meetings with the town and some of the biggest meetings have been about dealing with homelessness in Chico. There are a lot of people concerned who have different ideas. We have concentrations of people and practical problems as a result. What's best practice? What do we do? Is there something we as a committee could do to facilitate these conversations, and brainstorm ideas for what to do in our town in connection to our university?

Crisis Communication

- Davison: One component we have to consider is that every time we have an instance of emergency notifications, our dispatch team is inundated with calls from parents. They want to know, what's going on in Chico? Every time we have something like this, we have those concerned calls.
- Patten: There are also trends related to what time of day an event occurs. Years ago we had reports of a man coming toward campus who may or may not have had a gun. For that, we had an inundation of calls in the school of business' office. This time with the murder I was expecting the same thing, but maybe it was because it wasn't midday. We didn't get any calls this time.
- Pratt: The Crisis Communication Committee has helped improve communication as well. We have learned a lot from sending out vague messaging.
- Reid: After speaking with Garrett Caldwell from University Communications following the homicide, we want to improve our response in these instances for putting together a call center to field calls. When something like this happens, we get calls all over campus. It would be helpful to have a call center set up for a day or two, so that the entire campus community could refer to that phone line. This way we would also get a consistent message and consistent information on resources out to the public. We can research best practices from other campuses on having a call center open for 1-3 days following an event.

Closed Campus Concept

- How does the group feel about the idea of closing campus grounds to people who aren't affiliated with campus during a certain time period each day? Idea would be to close the campus at 10pm until it opens in the morning. We would need to consider certain exceptions such as Acker Gym and Laxon Auditorium.
- Guzzi: This is a great idea. Our custodians who work until 1a.m. would appreciate that. They transit between buildings. They work at the health center near where the shooting took place. They've had break-ins. They would love something to this effect.

- Becerra-Silva: Housing has seen changes that have restricted building access over the last few years. When I was an R.A. in Whitney, anyone could come in until 8pm, and then you had to swipe. After having a problem with a homeless lady showering in Lassen, now students have to swipe in 24/7. Students complain about it but they don't understand why that was changed.
- Wilking: What problem would the closure solve? What's the motivation for closing campus?
- Reid: The goal would be to address the real problem we have with vandalism, specifically burglaries that happen routinely at night.
- Guzzi: We've replaced 13-17 windows in the physical sciences building. We'd had to fix doors and the glass storefront. We have extra cleanup required for bio waste in Langdon Hall at least weekly.
- Reid: We also have 46 bike theft reports this semester already. The murder case is a 'flashpoint,' only happens once every 30 years or so. But we have a number of daily and weekly instances of petty theft, vandalism and burglary. These often stay under the radar while UPD and FMS deal with them. In large measure, these issues are coming from the homeless population who come onto campus at night, and we are starting to see more people now as they seek shelter from the cold. Individuals get into the buildings and hide before they close. Once the doors close, they come open the door for others. Low level stuff, in and of themselves these issues are not the biggest deal; we just have to deal with them. The bigger issue for me is the fear that people are experiencing as a result of this situation. Fear from employees, both those who see it firsthand and those who hear about it. At what point do we say, what are we going to do to prevent the next shooting, murder, or other crime? What's acceptable for us? How do we balance putting enough resources in place for prevention without it being overwhelming?
- Thorpe: (in reference to the recent murder on campus) We have the responsibility to make sure this never happens again. From a liability perspective, we have to show that we're trying to do something. Closing campus at 10pm is a good idea.
- Davison: if we were to keep folks off campus during evening hours, we'd see a dramatic decrease in thefts, vandalism and quality of life issues, as well as the percentage of violent crimes. I've been on scene with quite a few stabbings with homeless individuals, some at the Children's Park that started as arguments and then moved onto campus. A campus closure wouldn't prevent all violent crimes since a lot happen during the day. It would impact mostly theft and property crimes.

Homelessness

- Reid: It might be helpful to make an effort to identify best practices for dealing with homeless persons on campus. How do we respond in a comprehensive way. That doesn't yet exist, to my knowledge.
- Thorpe: The committee could consider shifting our focus to off-campus safety. We as a committee haven't focused on that before.
- Wilking: In some ways, we are a reactive committee, like with the custodians experiencing a problem and how we react to that. Can we find a macro approach that is deliberate and calculated? What is our response to the homelessness issue? How are we finding ways to partner and build relationships with people in town to address this problem, like with the Wildcat Pantry efforts by Joe Picard. How do we take this to Cabinet? We need some guidance to shape our policy and our action.
- Reid: We need controls in place so that the police have the tools to enforce campus policies. Groups like HR, Faculty Affairs and Student Conduct enforce certain policies, but if we want a comprehensive response we need controls in place that might be uncomfortable for folks, like closing campus at 10pm so we can enforce trespassing. Currently consensual contact from officers is one way we talk to people, get to know them, and give them resources.

- Guzzi: We need a holistic solution for addressing homelessness. How can we partner with the city and tackle the issue in a different way? For the Master Plan, the President has charged us with talking to the city about places like Children’s Park, Bidwell Bowl and the parking lots near 25/35 Main. We need to figure out ways to partner with the city to do something in those areas and look at ways to make that a more accessible area and a more pleasant space. We just had a meeting with a development firm who wants to buy space behind 25/35 Main, and to develop near Annie’s Glen. It’s more impacted than our creek area. Last year we did walk through count of homeless encampments in the creek; there were 27. Chief and I took a walk. It’s a known thing that they’re down there. It’s even worse at the Lost Park area; homeless individuals have dug in steps and had curtains built.
- Reid: This issue creates polarized thought. We’re closely following the city discussions on this. I’ve talked to Chico PD Chief O’Brien and City Manager Mark Orme about this. They’re no longer enforcing their camping municipal ordinances, so that is having the effect of bringing the homeless community more out in open rather than in hiding. It’s increasing the level of concern and fear because it’s more visible. They’re not enforcing camping at locations like the “Triangle” near Mulberry.

Upcoming Events / Ongoing Initiatives:

- Moonlight safety walk on Thursday. This year is a partnership effort with AS. Used to be split, spring and fall. Combining forces.
- Front Desk Safety Training continues around campus. Make requests by contacting the Chief.
 - Reid: We’ve gotten good reviews and have made modifications with a little feedback.
 - Guzzi: FMS would like to do a training.
 - Thorpe: guest attendants at housing would be a good group to train.
- Cabinet will be doing an Active Shooter training.
- Eventually we would like to do security surveys of workgroups on campus to assess physical security, personal safety, a specialized safety plan for different buildings, and information on workplace violence restraining orders.
- Send any follow up comments on the documents reviewed during this meeting to the Chief.