UODPS Meeting #7: 4-12-2011

Last time we looked at goals and the different kinds of models. Over the last two weeks, we were to look at goals we set out, and think about them critically. Think about these goals, change, re-word, delete? Is this what we need to look at in an ideal situation? “Continually improve” and “best practices” could be one goal instead of two.

Where is the funding coming from? What is the budget for oversight system? There’s’ no budget yet because there is no system; we’ll make our report, and assuming legislation passes, at some point prior to the implementation of a UOPD, the Executive Leadership team would come up with a complaint model and then go with a budget request. Finding the funding under UODPS is unlikely, but they will then ask for augment to come from somewhere. Is there a goal for being fiscally responsible? There should be. Other schools have varied types of systems- the robust, Cadillac version, all the way to the scaled down, bare bones system. We’re not recommending one system over the other, but we should be mindful of the level of cost each model. Effective use of resources for the need should be a goal.

The commission model is distinctly separate from review board and appeals board because the commission itself is more engaged in campus life, more of what we’re looking for in building trust with the constituents and to respond to this unique community. Review board and appeals board stronger with complaints and people’s rights.

Imagining review board in management, administration, risk mgmt—would a board be involved in administrative matters that don’t have as much to do with UODPS and the rest of campus? That goal is more about what the board has to be cognizant of in its dealings with complaints: legal labor, and Risk Management constraints. Those issues are how you structure, but not necessarily how you operate in the larger context. We might use these few bullet points as the overarching goal of “continually improving and using best practices while being mindful of legal labor, etc.”

Are these the criteria that distinguish the models the best? In a police commission model, there is the opportunity to be at the ground level of how you set up policies and procedures, but it is time intensive, staff intensive, and you have to train people to understand policies. It is a fantastic opportunity though. Where does that trust building need to happen, at ground level or on an incident based level? Student government is concerned about being the receiver of police services without the ability to address and inform the policies they would be the receiver of.

A commission does reflect the diversity, values, uniqueness of this place, but it wouldn’t be very nimble in the wake of an incident. The commission model would maximize student involvement. But if there is an incident on campus, the commission wouldn’t jump into the fray like a review board could. Thought we were moving away from review board as being too expensive.
We could be developing so many institutions at the same time: UODPS and commission and review board all at the same time? If you don’t have the right folks with the right kind of commitment, it will not work. Right people at the right time make all the difference.

If the legislation does not pass, there will not be an oversight committee? If it doesn’t pass, we will still use this information to inform their thinking about oversight for current set up.

Charge of this group is to make a report of different models. In these goals—the last piece is advisory, all others are action goals, but advisory seems different.

Review and recommend to UODPS. This is not a governance body, but can make some recommendations. It is not structured as a hiring authority. That degree of nimbleness to respond to an incident is where both of these models are going to fail. Provide some sense of flexibility and nimbleness if something important happens; there would not be nimbleness to deal with that quickly at the time. Timeliness is very important; none of these structures has that in it so far. Something has to be built in to these models to deal with incidents quickly and effectively. Can a commission do that? Maybe a subcommittee of the commission would work? You wouldn’t want that committee to issue policy statements while UODPS is doing its work. Day to day complaints should be responded to quickly. I think what happens in Australia, to have someone who is assigned to incident and involved in investigation, they are also part of review board, and make recommendations. Working with them might bring down the temperature a bit.

In the aftermath of large events, held public forums for people to air their concerns and ask questions. How do those things get responded to while UODPS responds to rest of day to day on campus? The commission model gives us the front end to inquire about policies, but also large enough to deal with big incidents.

Who do we imagine being the players? You have to have a staff person who has bilingualism between how UODPS operates and what the community’s needs are. It would be comprised of faculty, staff, and students. If you look at diversity of the current UODPS advisory council, there are students, faculty, staff and community members. This council is probably too large, but without having students, faculty and staff it won’t be representative of campus.

The weakness of the police commission at city level is that the staff person is not high enough of a position to drive those particular issues. Do have an opportunity to have a lot of buy-in at that. There aren’t a lot of complaints right now, but that certainly could be a subset or subcommittee, within confidentiality, to have a commission person in on investigation as it goes along. They would give status updates to the rest of the commission. But those are normally paid positions, doubt volunteers would be in on investigations.

The piece we don’t have here is the appeals board. Important to have a public way to say we’ve resolved the issue. We don’t have a process to announce that a group has heard these complaints and resolved
the issue. It just goes back internally to UODPS. But we haven’t had a lot of complaints, so an appeals board may not necessary.

Some of commission’s potential responsibilities are currently taken care of by upper administration. Admittedly it’s not as transparent as it could be, but there is that opportunity. These models we’re discussing put what’s happening in a more formal way and public way.

The community has a good relationship with UODPS, and has for a long time. There is a concern that if we develop something looking into the future it could be out of fear. If we bring that energy into the mix, it can be negative. If it’s not broken, why fix it?

Is it even potentially possible to contract with the auditors review board at the city, since there are so few complaints each year? It may not be an apples to apples comparison, but you would get quality control. Would that satisfy community trust and reliability questions?

By not using an internal auditor, you could build in nimbleness by using another agency. Perhaps just in the interim. Hearing that we’re coalescing around a commission with an appeals function, given the context we’re in of not many complaints.

The appeals board gives citizens chance to confront issue. Not much controversy at city because of quality assurance, because they’re so rare, but it’s also a curse, because there may not be a well organized way to respond to something. For example, the Neo-Nazis; there was confusion at first, but you figured it out as it kept happening. How you handle things is important to figure out ahead of time because you may not have a lot of practice before something huge happens.

There are many major events on campus, Autzen Stadium, Elton John, free speech issues, construction sites. We put together committees for much less visible things than how we police ourselves; we give them a lot of responsibility, so how do we stay engaged in life of law enforcement? We have the chance to create a policing body that helps community. Believe in common unity, Community.