

University of Rochester  
Public Safety Review Board  
Minutes of Meeting  
October 2, 2018

**Present:** Francis Price  
Rick Crummins  
Holly Crawford  
Tony Kinslow  
Elizabeth Palermo  
Kathy Parrinello  
Eldred Chimowitz  
Beatriz Gil Gonzales

**Absent:** Christopher Acquina

**Guests:** Mark Fischer  
Richard Feldman

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1. Administrative Items

The Board approved the minutes of the March 15, 2018 meeting with one edit by Beth Palermo and welcoming the new Student Association President, Beatriz Gil Gonzalez.

2. DPS Update

a). *Firearm Unholstering Updates.* Mr. Fischer described the two incidents of firearm unholsterings since the last meeting.

One involved two individuals seen on camera coming onto campus via the footbridge by Plymouth Ave. clearly passing handguns to each other. Ultimately, it was determined that they were BB guns that had been altered to remove the red tip that identifies them as BB guns.

The second report involved an attempt to arrest a person in connection with a sexual assault at the Eastman School of Music. The lieutenant on duty drew his firearm while clearing the fifth floor restroom where a witness reported the suspect had fled. The suspect was not found in the restroom, but ultimately was located and arrested.

Both situations were reviewed by DPS and deemed appropriate and consistent with training.

b). *Additional Armed Officers to Cover Existing Medical Center Posts.*

An additional five armed officers (out of nine requested by DPS) have been added to existing medical center posts. This does not represent an increase in armed locations but more appropriate staffing levels, to avoid excessively long shifts, ease officer burnout and provide opportunities for officers to engage in foot patrol. Plans are to add the additional four officers to these posts from an officer class that will begin in January.

c). *Armed Posts on River Campus and Eastman.* Discussion continued about a proposal to add armed patrols on the River Campus and at the Eastman School (the discussion at the May 15 meeting having been suspended to allow the student member of the PSRB to be present).

Mr. Fischer reiterated his point from the May 15 meeting, that in the event of an active shooter on campus, response would be an armed officer from a medical center post, an armed supervisor, and/or an armed member of DPS senior staff. The average amount of time for this response is estimated at six minutes. Mr. Fischer estimates that a mobile armed patrol on campus could respond within one minute. He proposes adding an armed patrol to Riverview/Brooks crossing as well.

Mr. Fischer reported that Eastman relies on the RPD to provide assistance in the case of an armed individual. The RPD has little familiarity with the facility, personnel and student culture and relies upon DPS to gain access to the buildings. An unarmed DPS officer assisting RPD in this way is at risk from an armed assailant. The response time from the RPD to Eastman is estimated to be approximately 13 minutes and for the reasons above, Mr. Fischer feels the response would be less effective.

Mr. Fischer emphasized that shorter response times are critical to saving life, and the importance of responders knowing the culture, faculty, students and community, which he deems critical to not losing control of the situation. During an exercise, FBI agents became lost in the tunnels on campus.

Additional points in Mr. Fischer's presentation included:

- Officers assigned to the armed posts in the medical center generally have more training than non-armed officers on campus;
- Armed supervisors on campus are not attending student group and community meetings due to policies, negatively impacting relationships and effectiveness.
- Of the 60 AAU campuses, all have armed security staff, except for Columbia and NYU which are in urban NYC and covered by the NYPD.

Mr. Fischer stated that in two years of experience there has been mostly positive feedback from students. Parents ask why there are not armed officer on campus and express concern.

Ms. Gonzales advocated for giving students a clear explanation of the issues and information. She is concerned that some students may have formed negative opinions

based on insufficient information. She said as well that it is important to present information to students before a decision is made on the arming proposal.

Ms. Gonzales reported that some students are concerned about armed officer presence at parties. Mr. Fischer gave assurances that officers assigned to cover parties would not be armed (unless there were an armed response to an incident at a party).

Mr. Chimowitz reported that the Faculty Senate Executive Committee had expressed concern about whether armed officers would be present when controversial speakers appear on campus. Mr. Fischer said that whether armed officers would be present would depend on the nature of the group and whether there was a history of violence by the group or at its events. Armed presence would likely be unusual, and RPD would also be close by.

### 3. Next Steps.

The Board recommended that DPS attend events with student leaders to provide information about the proposal, the rationale, and the experience to date of armed officers at the University. In particular it was recommended that meetings include the SA Senate and other student groups, with the idea that those individuals will relay the information to their clubs and organizations. All agreed that large town hall-type gatherings are seldom productive or informative.

Mr. Chimowitz agreed to bring the issue up with the Faculty Senate.

Also in mid-November, the Committee will hear from faculty members Joshua Dublin and Kristin Doughty about the Social Life of Guns Symposium.