

Rancho Santiago Community College District
2323 North Broadway, Room #114
Santa Ana, California

BOARD SAFETY & SECURITY COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, October 15, 2014

MINUTES

1.0 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m. by Ms. Claudia Alvarez. Other members present: Mr. John Hanna and Mr. Phillip Yarbrough. Students Ms. Laurel LaBounty (Santiago Canyon College [SCC]) and Mr. Kyle Murphy (Santa Ana College [SAC]) attended the meeting as a substitute for student trustee/committee member Ms. Alana Voehchting.

Staff present: Mr. John Didion, Mr. Peter Hardash, Mr. Steve Kawa, Dr. Raúl Rodríguez, Mr. Alistair Winter, and Ms. Anita Lucarelli as record keeper.

Other students present: Mr. Jason Wayne (SCC) and Ms. Snow Samão (SCC).

Guests present: Mr. John Follo. Former Chief of Police Paul Walters arrived at the time noted.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag

The pledge of allegiance was led by Ms. Samão.

1.3 Public Comment

There were no public comments.

2.0 GENERAL

It was moved by Mr. Yarbrough and seconded by Mr. Hanna to suspend the rules and consider Item 2.2 (Active Shooter Exercise-Outcomes/Recommendations) at this time since former Chief Walters was not present. The motion carried with the following vote: Aye – Ms. Alvarez, Mr. Hanna, and Mr. Yarbrough.

2.2 Review of Active Shooter Exercise-Outcomes/Recommendations

Mr. Follo explained the activities involved in the active shooter exercise with the Santa Ana Police Department (SAPD) conducted on August 15, 2014, at Santa Ana College.

2.0 GENERAL – (cont.)

2.2 Review of Active Shooter Exercise-Outcomes/Recommendations – (cont.)

Mr. Follo indicated that the task force did not recommend that all public safety officers should be armed, only those that had received police training/experience (training required under section 832[a] of the California Penal Code for "limited function peace officers" per regulation 1005[a][7] & [8] of the Commission on Peace Officer's Standards and Training). Mr. Winter stated that armed public safety officers will be subjected to strict selection procedures (back-ground checks, decision-making, psychological tests, etc.) and be required to stay current in police training.

Former Chief Waters arrived at this time.

It was explained that the purpose of having armed public safety officers is to stop the armed perpetrator as soon as possible since the estimated time it takes police to arrive is approximately 10 minutes. Former Chief Walters stated that the sooner you engage the perpetrator with an armed public safety officer, the sooner you stop the death of victims. Mr. Yarbrough stated that the safety of RSCCD students depends on the reduction of response time.

Former Chief Waters indicated that officer training includes interacting with the fire department since the fire department has to be able to treat the injured victims at the scene.

Mr. Murphy received clarification on the supervision of the armed public safety officers (supervisors at each campus and a District Safety & Security Supervisor at the district office who oversees the campus supervisors), armed public safety officers receiving training on how to respond to those who are mentally ill (SAC and SCC public safety officers have received training), and the use of lethal/non-lethal weapons (public safety officers will have both). Former Chief Walters indicated an officer is trained to use the lowest level of force first. Mr. Winter indicated that Biola University has a strict use of force whereupon a firearm is only drawn in a life-threatening emergency. Mr. Follo indicated lethal force should be an officer's last resort and it's the perpetrator that determines what an officer uses since some people don't react to the lowest level of force (taser).

Ms. LaBounty received clarification on how often officers are required to update their officer training (every 3 months), the number of armed officers per shift (a minimum of 2 armed officers per day and swing shift [graveyard shift is not included since there are no students on campus at this time]), and the possibility of having cameras on officers' shirts (administration isn't opposed to it, but it's not planned at this time). Mr. Follo commended staff on the camera surveillance on campus.

Ms. Alvarez received clarification on what occurs when the event is over (training includes the "Run, Hide, Flight" procedure and a comprehensive emergency plan that includes the roles and responsibilities in returning the campus to normalcy which includes psycho-

2.0 GENERAL – (cont.)

2.2 Review of Active Shooter Exercise-Outcomes/Recommendations – (cont.)

logical services, facilities, working with police, etc.). Mr. Winter indicated the emergency plan includes prevention, response, and returning to normalcy.

Referring to the taskforce’s recommendation to improve emergency communication with students, faculty, and staff; Ms. Alvarez asked if there is an option to “opt in” rather than “opt out” of emergency communications. Mr. Winter indicated that each person’s contact information is entered into the system, the emergency data is updated every night in the district’s Datatel program, and a person is able to text “stop” to opt out of receiving emergency communications via text messaging. Mr. Winter asked the students to encourage other students to update their mobile/home phone numbers and emails in order to accurately receive emergency communications. In addition to texts, phone calls, and emails, Mr. Winter stated that verbal communications also occur on campus during an emergency exercise/event.

Mr. Hanna received clarification that the California State (Cal State) and University of California (UC) systems have their own police department on campus. The committee discussed accidental discharge of firearms on campus and although no one at the meeting had heard of an accidental discharge of firearms (or injury/death from one) on a California university campus, the committee understands any time firearms are used; there is a risk of accidental discharge.

Mr. Murphy received clarification of the duties of an armed public safety officer on campus when there isn’t an emergency situation (the same duties they now have including: enforcing parking, unlocking doors, assisting in a medical emergency).

Mr. Kawa indicated that he never thought Santiago Canyon College would need an armed public safety officer, but he also understands it only takes one incident to realize it would be a mistake not to have one. He expressed concern over the changing of officers’ shifts which could affect the officers’ knowledge of the campus. Mr. Didion explained that the officers’ contract includes an annual seniority-based shift bidding system.

Mr. Hanna received clarification that employees at community colleges and the Cal State and UC systems are not referred to as armed guards, but rather campus safety officers or police officers (if they are sworn police officers).

2.1 Review of RSCCD Safety and Security and P. Walters’ Recommendations/Discussion

Discussion for Item 2.1 was also discussed during Item 2.2.

Former Chief Walters explained that the recommendations made by the Public Safety Task Force reflect the most important safety concerns with a minimum expense for safety requirements due to the district’s budget concerns. If money were no object, he would

2.0 GENERAL – (cont.)

2.1 Review of RSCCD Safety and Security and P. Walters' Recommendations/Discussion – (cont.)

have recommended a police department, police officers, training, etc. but because the expense was considered, he recommended the current public safety officers and two armed officers. He stated that the needs and risks at each campus are different, yet the recommendations are the same for both colleges.

Mr. Winter indicated he assisted Mr. Follo in implementing the taskforce's recommendations at Santa Ana College. Since Mr. Follo has left the college, the district accepted applications for the position of District Safety & Security Supervisor but none of the candidates met the requirements. He stated that current staff is maintaining the progress that was made during Mr. Follo's employment at the college.

Regarding the taskforce's recommendation #5 (Formalize training in Community Policing for Safety and Security Department), Mr. Winter indicated that staff is working with the Santa Ana Police Department and plans to meet with the Orange Police Department (OPD) at the end of the month. It is hopeful OPD will hold an active shooter exercise at Santiago Canyon College in the future. Mr. Winter stated that the department is awaiting direction on the taskforce's recommendations #3 (Recruit additional officers to provide graveyard coverage at SCC and create supervisory positions to support Lieutenants in their roles and recruit accordingly) and #4 (Recruit a part-time Environmental Safety and Emergency Services position).

Ms. Alvarez asked if the district is able to gain access to SAPD and OPD police radio during emergency situations. Mr. Winter indicated since the district isn't a certified police department, it is unable to access police radio channels. Former Chief Walters indicated the county is able to grant access but will not do so without the police chief's authorization.

2.3 Review of Safety Equipment

Mr. Winter indicated the district has been supportive of updates to safety equipment, including call boxes, researching expenses, etc.

Mr. Hanna indicated he had a public safety officer complain to him years ago about SCC's communication equipment. Mr. Hardash explained that years ago there wasn't any radio communication between SAC and SCC campus but that problem had been rectified and the campuses communicate effectively with others.

2.4 Review of Infrastructure Safety Concerns

This item was not reviewed at this time.

2.0 GENERAL – (cont.)

2.5 Discussion of Budget for Necessary Public Safety Expenses

Mr. Hardash indicated the taskforce recommendations include employing six additional officers and a dispatcher at SCC. (The six employees would include 3 sergeants [SAC, SCC, and CEC] and cost approximately \$1 million to \$1.1 million). Mr. Hardash explained the need for an Environment Safety and Emergency Services position. Ms. Alvarez asked for actual numbers rather than an estimate. Mr. Hardash indicated the implementation would be gradually accomplished.

Although there was a lot of focus on arming public safety officers, Mr. Hanna explained that the main emphasis of the taskforce's recommendations focuses on public safety and it concerns him that SCC does not have a safety officer on campus at night since there are night classes and community groups on campus at that time, especially since SCC is close to the toll roads, which would provide an easy get-away route. Mr. Hanna informed those in attendance of the restrictions (budgetary concerns) community colleges have in the expense of the new officers' positions falling on the wrong side of the 50% law. He indicated that one can't put a price on the lives of students, staff, or community members. He shared that the universities don't have that same restrictions associated with the 50% law.

Former Chief Walters indicated that there may be federal grants to fund officers on campus. Mr. Hardash indicated there are national grants available through the Homeland Security Office.

Mr. Yarbrough left the meeting at this time.

Ms. Alvarez mentioned the U.S. Department of Justice \$2.3 million dollar grant (referred to in the RSCCD's Public Safety Task Force's report) was used to establish the National Center at the University of Vermont to foster collaboration among campus public safety directors.

The committee discussed the possibility, if interest is shown, of current public safety officers at the district receiving training to become qualified to carry firearms, and the difficulty in filling the District Safety & Security Supervisor position (August 2014) since the salary is less than what is offered at other community colleges for a fully certified position. Mr. Didion indicated that this position was approximately \$20,000 under current market standards compared to other community college positions offered for fully certified positions.

Mr. Didion indicated that staff is awaiting direction from the Board Safety and Security Committee for implementation of the taskforce's recommendations.

2.0 GENERAL – (cont.)

2.5 Discussion of Budget for Necessary Public Safety Expenses – (cont.)

Instead of having every officer armed, Mr. Hanna asked what the cost would be to have sufficient officers who are trained and would provide adequate coverage in case of illness, vacation, or an emergency. Mr. Didion indicated the district could provide estimates of different scenarios for the committee.

2.6 Review of Short Term Goals

Mr. Winter indicated the short term goals include hiring six officers: one lieutenant and an armed officer to work the dayshift and one sergeant and armed officer to work the swing shift at SAC, SCC, and CEC.

Ms. Alvarez asked for recommendations on phasing the additional expense of hiring six officers into the budget or an alternative recommendation.

Mr. Hanna indicated that the district needs to do whatever it takes to assure students, staff, and the community that they are safe. He spoke favorably of the ongoing training required of the officers and asked that the officers reflect the diversity of RSCCD students.

Ms. Alvarez commended the chancellor for organizing the Public Safety Task Force and putting the recommendations into place.

Mr. Hanna asked that further recommendations, budgetary concerns, etc. related to the task force recommendations be reviewed by the Board Safety & Security Committee at a future meeting.

2.7 Report from Chancellor on Public Safety Task Force

Dr. Rodríguez reported that the district has made great strides in improving the Safety and Security Department in the past four years which includes installing video cameras. He indicated that a long-term goal might be to have a certified department one day.

Dr. Rodríguez commended the taskforce on a job well done in providing its report and recommendations, and indicated that the Board Safety and Security Committee now has the responsibility of implementing the taskforce's recommendations. He expressed concern regarding the costs of the recommendations but hopes it will help with the expenses by implementing the recommendations over a period of time. He plans to ask staff to research categorical funds that may be available to assist in implementing the taskforce recommendations.

It is hopeful that the district will be able to provide cost effective ways to implement the taskforce's recommendations at the next Board Safety and Security Committee meeting.

3.0 ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Alvarez declared this meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Minutes Approved: March 26, 2015