Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) – Meeting Minutes
September 10, 2021
12:00-1:30pm
Held via zoom and 316 Day Boardroom

Members: Davis-Frost (institutional), Haenlin-Mott (institutional), Hodges (student), Krishnan (student), Lewis (faculty), Mackowski (faculty), Ononye (student)

Absent: Byrne (faculty), Mullen (student)

Co-Chairs: DeStefano, Lombardi
Staff: Burgess, Honan, Matta, Radloff

START: 12:04pm

I. Introductions:

PSAC Co-Chair, Joanne DeStefano, welcomed the returning committee members to the first PSAC meeting of the academic year. She also welcomed Vice President for Student and Campus Life, Ryan Lombardi, as the new Co-Chair for the committee and new student representative, Joseph Mullen. The committee currently has two university appointments open and is waiting on faculty candidate recommendations from the Dean of Faculty. DeStefano thanked past members, Uche Chukwukere, Nate Rogers, and Joseph Margulies for their contributions and work last year and acknowledged the upcoming graduation of Conor Hodges and Joanie Mackowski’s sabbatical. Possible recommendations for university appointments were provided by the committee.

Co-Chair DeStefano provided a brief summary of initial reactions to the PSAC report submitted last June stating that very little feedback was received. Feedback included push back on adding more police and suggestions of a possible “triage system” rather than re-learning new numbers to call for specific issues. The committee will be hosting two feedback sessions at the end of the month. These sessions will be held on September 28 and 29 at the Memorial Room with zoom options available. Conor Hodges, Joanie Mackowski, and Liz Davis-Frost, have all volunteered to be on the panel. University Assemblies office will be assisting with these sessions.

Next, DeStefano shared that the next meeting will focus on consultant work plans and the creation of the working committee. Only one consultant firm responded to the RFP sent over the summer. Chief David Honan recommended a group from Albany as a possible firm. Co-Chair DeStefano clarified that we provided the report and recommendations, and while the committee needs to be able to articulate what it
wants their work to look like, it is the hope that the consultants’ experiences should be able to steer the committee in a clearer path. Peggy Matta will continue conversations with this group and will discuss more at the next meeting. In the meantime, Matta will send the RFP and the response from the firm to all committee members.

II. Review of Last Year: What Went Well and What Can Be Improved

The committee did a review of last year's committee and the work it did to create the report.

On what went well and what we can improve on:

- Despite all of the chaos and communication missteps, the report turned out well made and was really meaningful.
- Communication became pressed as the report due date came closer.
- Think about what can move us forward. The committee became extremely passionate about all issues to the point where it hindered progress. The committee should prioritize what is most important. Communication structures such as community agreements may be helpful.
- Liz Davis-Frost recommended the idea of having different facilitators for meetings, not just Co-Chairs. This can also be used as a teaching moment and can help leadership skills with the idea that allocating responsibilities of leading the group discussions could be helpful.
- Anuli Ononye suggested structuring work groups and collaborating with each other to bridge gaps between students, faculty, and staff within the committee.
- To what extent does PSAC want to discuss what is happening outside our university boundaries?

III. Plans for the Upcoming Year

Co-Chair DeStefano has created and shared calendar topics for the upcoming year with two goals in mind:

- Develop the detailed recommendations for the Cornell public safety model; and
- Transition PSAC into an oversight group, as originally intended.

With these two goals in mind, each agenda item will include oversight responsibilities. Statutory obligations and review of accreditation reports will become key topics. The committee discussed the need to expand its vision and responsibilities and while it must address legislation requirements, it has more capacity than not to do more work. As stated in one of the goals, PSAC can form implementation groups that look at the
future work while PSAC remains in a governance role looking at the present. Issues of expanding the PSAC work include the ability to get student participation.

Committee members offered that the most important priorities for this year are to look at its organization and portfolio responsibilities and setting PSAC up for success in the future as students graduate and faculty leave. By creating a more sustainable process to keep things moving, issues of expanding the PSAC work due to maintenance of student participation should decrease.

The committee recommended creating subcommittees chaired by a member of PSAC and inviting university members to participate. Possible subcommittee recommendations were:

- Community engagement (Davis-Frost, Lewis, Deputy Chief Anthony Bellamy)
  - Focus on feedback forums and community response to PSAC work. What can we do to continue these conversations?
- Community education program
- Public Safety Relationship with outside communities
- Sexual assault, stalking, Title IX, etc.
- RFP Working Group

IV. Next Steps

The committee would like to continue to think about and discuss what is the long-term goal beyond what it wants to accomplish this year? It was recommended that a five-year plan be created to address the capacity and continuity issues that PSAC faces.

The committee also requested an update on Recommendation One and the statement from the President. Co-Chairs DeStefano and Lombardi stated that while the President’s statement was sent out in August, it would be helpful if the message was conveyed again in the upcoming messages about the feedback sessions.

Committee members are encouraged to submit possible agenda items throughout the year.

Meeting adjourned at 1:27 PM
Notes by: Samantha Radloff