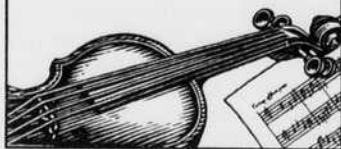



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Measure would create review board

By Peter Breden
Oregon Daily Emerald

Citizens will soon decide whether to authorize the Eugene City Council to staff a citizen review board for police misconduct.

The Ballot Measure 20-99, which would establish the board, will come up for a vote during the Nov. 3 election.

If passed, the amendment will allow the City Council to appoint seven people to the citizen review board. Currently police misconduct complaints are reviewed by the Eugene Police Department after being filed at the City of Eugene Human Rights Commission or the police department.

The new system would add more accessible filing places, said Ron Chase, treasurer for Community and Police Partnership Political Action Committee, CAPP-PAC.

"There will be another half-dozen places around town," Chase said. "A lot of people are intimidated by the current process."

The board's auditor would monitor complaints and follow the progress of the city's internal investigations of complaints.

Currently, an internal affairs officer handles all investigations.

The new board could commission a professional investigation of complaints with \$20,000 of its projected \$155,000 yearly budget.

The money for operations will come from the city's general fund. No additional taxes would be as-

Measure 20-99

WHAT: Ballot Measure 20-99, an amendment that would allow City Council to appoint community members to a seven person police review board. The board would monitor complaints against police officers and would review investigations, hiring a full-time auditor.

HOW MUCH: About \$155,000 for a full-time auditor, half-time clerk and supporting paperwork. Money would come from the general fund.

WHEN: Measure 20-99 comes to vote on Nov. 3.

SOURCE: University Accounting

essed, although the specific line-item has not yet been budgeted.

If passed, the board will not interfere with police policy, said Jan Power, public information spokesperson for the police department.

"Passage of the bill will not impact the way officers do work," Power said.

But the Citizen Review Board will have the ability to make recommendations to the City Manager about how complaints of misconduct should be resolved.

The process toward Measure 20-99 has been long one, said Polly Nelson, education director of the Oregon American Civil Liberties Union.

"Some people in this town have

been working on and off on this issue for 10 years," Nelson said. "The concern that rose out of June 1 brought it to a head."

On June 1, 1997, police and protesters clashed downtown over the removal of some trees.

The following July, the City Council formed a 20-person task force to develop a system with citizen input. In February 1998, the External Review Advisory Committee voted unanimously the city should adopt a Citizen Review Board plan.

External review systems similar to Eugene's are used by Portland and in San Francisco. The review systems encouraged a more open dialogue between police and the community.

"When San Francisco put in their review board, complaints nearly doubled," Chase said.

City Councilman Bobby Lee said he encourages students to vote for measure 20-99.

"I think students should support it," Lee said. If the measure passes, he added, "there'll be a process for students to take their complaints to a neutral party."

Aaron Durand, a freshman from Portland, thought the board was a good idea but could be abused by some students.

"People will be more willing to go out and have fun," Durand said. "That might be it's downfall, though. They'd probably throw bigger parties and when the cops come, they'd just file complaints."

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