

DPS

continued from page 1

the decision to commission officers. "It's shocking to me that we wouldn't be contacted over a decision of this magnitude," Watts said. Berkman said the move could be the first step down a "slippery slope" that could lead to DPS officers carrying firearms.

Fitzpatrick said he did not believe the process warranted any input from students or other campus members, because it did not involve any new laws.

"I think it was viewed as an administrative decision," he said. "It wasn't a new situation."

Campus security forces are able to commission their officers under a state statute enacted in 1987. Oregon law, however, still prohibits campus security officers from carrying firearms.

Fitzpatrick said DPS will be hosting several public meetings to ensure that students have the right perceptions about the changes, but "not to seek their approval."

DPS will also establish an 11-member Public Safety Advisory Group that will handle any issues that arise with commissioned officers.

To become commissioned, Fitzpatrick said officers must submit applications to him and then undergo an extensive training and evaluation procedure. Three sergeants, Lt. Joan Saylor and Associate Director Tom Hicks will be the first DPS personnel to go through the commissioning procedure.

Part of the process will include classes in the legality of probable cause arrest and searching suspects so that officers will be well aware of their legal limits, Fitzpatrick said.

DPS officers that already patrol student housing have displayed interest in being commissioned, Fitz-

patrick said, but he did not know if these officers will make it through the evaluation process.

Through her position in the Office of Student Advocacy, Berkman said she is acquainted with the campus and said she does not believe there is enough of a threat for DPS to commission its officers.

"I wonder about the need of the change," she said. "I don't think there's a justification for it."

With a Eugene Police Station a block away from campus, Berkman also felt there was little need for a larger police force. She said it was not in the best interests of the students to be putting DPS resources into creating an agency focused on persecution and investigation.

Her main point of contention, however, was that there was little opportunity for campus members to discuss the change.

"If there was more of a consensus I'd feel more comfortable," she said.

Watts also said there should have been more discussion prior to the announcement by DPS, but said while he didn't believe it was necessary for the department to commission its officers, he would defer to its judgment in matters of campus security.

When the University does have commissioned officers it will join Oregon State University, Western Oregon University, Southern Oregon University and Portland State University in having commissioned officers on campus.

Scott Young, president of the Associated Students of Southern Oregon University, said that although he could understand why the issue would be controversial in Eugene, his campus in Ashland has had no difficulties with expanded power for security officers.

"I've never seen any problems with it," he said.

EWEB

continued from page 1

man said. Immerman also suggested that the increase should be 18 percent, with the extra three percent dedicated to conservation.

The board recognized issues addressed by the public, and agreed that it should also be concerned about the increase's effect on lower-income energy users.

"This increase will mostly affect people who we think we have been protecting," Bartel said.

One of the plans that received a positive response from board members was a block proposal that would provide inverted rate options. The plan would reward residential energy users for keeping their usage below an as-yet-to-be-

determined level. Usage over this level would result in a higher price per kilowatt hour.

"Some residential consumers are overly zealous with consumption, sometimes using more than a small business," said EWEB Commissioner Sandra Bishop. "We should be charging them more."

The board will be making a final decision at a hearing scheduled for Feb. 6. Bartel said the key features that the board is now concerned with are getting the public to conserve its energy and invest in renewable energy sources, finding a way to assist lower-income families during the increase, and informing high consumers they will pay more if they don't limit their usage.

EWEB employees were asked to further refine the inverted block proposal and make sure 15 percent is the final number to be used for rate hikes.

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