

the ANNEX

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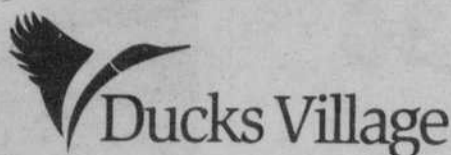
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Committee links DPS, community

The Public Safety Advisory Group, which includes six student-group members, acts as a liaison to DPS

By Jared Paben
News Reporter

Tom Hicks, interim director of the Department of Public Safety, said he feels strongly about maintaining open lines of communication between his department and the campus community. So when a group called the Public Safety Advisory Group was formed this year to suit that very purpose, he was overjoyed.

The group comprises 11 voting members from campus, and 11 to 12 ex officio members, whose role is strictly to inform the voting members about issues. Hicks said the group would refrain from discussing specific incidents involving DPS, and would only vote on what recommendations to give.

"I see two primary purposes (for the group)," he said. "The first is to give the campus community a voice in public safety issues, and the second is to hopefully improve or enhance communication between the Department of Public Safety and the rest of the campus."

"(The committee focuses) more with an understanding of looking at our policies and procedures that we use, and whether there is any advice that the committee would have on

changing those policies."

ASUO Legislative Associate Gabe Kjos, a voting member of the group, agreed with Hicks.

"The main focus is to provide ideas on policies that need attention or improvement and relate to public safety on campus," Kjos said.

Jackie Reed, a University graduate and former member of the Greek Life Office, has worked for DPS for the past four years. She said she was asked to serve as a voting member through the summer because she knows the ins and outs of the department.

Reed said that because DPS has the potential to get a bad reputation, it's important to have a group that allows for public feedback.

"It has a lot of potential for what it can be," she said. "It's kind of a vision right now. It can go wherever the board wants it to go."

Both Hicks and Reed agreed that one of the strengths of the group is its large student representation. Six of the eleven voting members are from student groups, and three of those are from ASUO.

The group last met Sept. 19 to discuss both its own mission and the recently expanded DPS powers to write municipal citations.

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faith reporter
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