

UO CAMPUS COPS LACK OVERSIGHT

Civilian oversight of the police tends to be reactive not proactive, says Mark Gissiner, Eugene’s civilian police auditor. Yet a recent \$755,000 jury verdict in the “Bowl of Dicks” retaliation case against the University of Oregon’s police department has not prompted change in the UO’s police oversight.

The Eugene Police Department’s complaints process, while “not perfect,” has emerged nationwide as a “leading model,” Gissiner, says. EPD’s process involves the Civilian Review Board (CRB) that examines policy and gives input into the police investigation process as well as an outside auditor who conducts the investigations. The CRB and police auditor report to the Eugene City Council, not EPD and are funded separately.

Under the UO model, there is a Complaint Resolution Committee (CRC) made up of students, administrators, UO employees and four “at-large” members. There is no independent auditor. The committee “provides recommendations to the vice president for finance and administration to help ensure that complaints regarding the conduct of sworn members of the UOPD and UOPD policies are resolved in a fair, thorough, reasonable and expeditious manner.”

Jamie Moffitt, who is the UO vice president for finance and administration and chief financial officer, says via email that the UO committee’s responsibilities and other aspects of the process “were developed after more than a year of research into various models of oversight used by municipalities and universities by a working group made up of students, faculty, staff and a local government/community liaison, with input from the Eugene police auditor.”

Gissiner says althought he was consulted “to some degree,” his was merely an advisory role and “not at all part of the decision-making structure.”

Marty Wilde, a UO grad and attorney, who has written to UO President Michael Schill about his concerns regarding police oversight at the university, has concerns over how that oversight is configured. He says, “Having

the same person who pays for excessive force claims judge whether excessive force occurred is a fundamental conflict of interest.”

Wilde adds, “Public input into police policy builds a bridge between the community and their police,” and says, “I hope the university will adopt a police commission model like the city’s.”

In the recent retaliation case, a federal jury found in September that UO Police Chief Carolyn McDermed and Lt. Brandon Lebrecht retaliated against UOPD officer James Cleavenger for whistleblowing, and another officer, Sgt. Scott Cameron, retaliated against him for previously speaking up about the use of Tasers on campus.

The three-quarters of a million dollars the UO paid out was for economic and punitive damages.

Cleavenger had filed a 2013 lawsuit that exposed the UOPD for spending work time creating list of people who should eat a “bowl of dicks,” made up of people and things that annoyed the department, from local civil rights attorney Lauren Regan to Mayor Kitty Piercy to Ems game security officers as well as celebrities and local landmarks.

Chris Wig, a UO grad, says the jury verdict should be a wakeup call for the UO to change its process and adds that “worse than not changing” its process, the UO has not apologized to

the students and community members that were on the “Bowl of Dicks” list. He calls this “indicative of an arrogance and that we don’t need to be accountable.”

Wig says his criticism of the UOPD’s process comes not from his position on Eugene’s CRB but as a private citizen and a candidate for a seat on the Eugene City Council.

Associated Students of the UO President Helena Schlegel says she only recently found out about UOPD’s complaint resolution process “and was immediately concerned.” She says, “I do not see how the current process is effective, and the ASUO is providing input to UOPD and the UO administration to work

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‘Public input into police policy builds a bridge between the community and their police. I hope the university will adopt a police commission model like the city’s.’ — MARTY WILDE

ACTIVIST ! LERT

• Activist and sociologist **Gwyn Kirk**, Ph.D., will speak at 7 pm Thursday, Oct. 22, at First United Methodist Church, 1376 Olive Street. Kirk is a widely published writer and founding member of Women for Genuine Security. Her presentation will include discussion of her visit to North Korea on a peace mission. Sponsored by Oregon WAND.

• Lehigh University scholar **James Braxton Peterson**, Ph.D. will speak on the Black Lives Matter movement at 7:30 pm Thursday, Oct. 22, at the Erb Memorial Union Ballroom on the UO campus. Peterson is director of Africana Studies at Lehigh and blogs for *The Huffington Post* on pop culture, youth and politics.

• **“Digital Disruption of Media:** Learning to Embrace the Change” will be the topic at City Club of Eugene at noon Friday, Oct. 23, at the Downtown Athletic club, 999 Willamette Street. Speakers will be John Stark of KLCC, Associate Editor Camilla Mortensen of *Eugene Weekly* and Mark Blaine of the UO School of Journalism and Communication. \$5 for non-members. The program the following week, Oct. 30, will be on the future of the Elliott State Forest. See cityclubofeugene.org to get on the club’s email list.

• A fundraiser for County Commissioner **Pete Sorenson** in support of his re-election bid is planned from 7 to 8:30 pm Friday, Oct. 23, at a private residence near 13th and Lincoln. Call Steve Coatsworth at 606-8829 to RSVP. Sorenson is also taking a hike around Mount Pisgah Saturday morning, Oct. 24, with the Sierra Club and others. Meet at South Eugene High School parking lot at 10:30 am.

• The city’s **Willamette to Willamette** (W2W) project seeks to make a better connection between Eugene’s downtown and the Willamette River along a “great street” of 8th Avenue. “By integrating public art and local history, 8th Avenue can become an inviting, beautiful and walkable promenade to the river,” according to the city. A survey is now on the project’s website, Eugene-or.gov/w2w, and staff members will be on hand to talk about the options from 10 am to 2 pm Oct. 24 at Saturday Market. The survey will close Nov. 16 and results will be posted in early December.

• A fundraiser chili dinner for **Community Supported Shelters** will be from 6 to 7:30 pm Sunday, Oct. 25, at St. Mary’s Episcopal Church, 1300 Pearl Street. Doors open at 5:30 pm, presentation about CSS programs at 6:45 pm.

• **Advocates for the homeless** are planning another demonstration at 6 pm Monday, Oct. 26, outside Harris Hall before the Eugene City Council meeting. Some information can be found on the OURS homeless camp’s public Facebook page.

• Eugene **Mayor Kitty Piercy** will be available to meet between 5 and 6 pm Tuesday, Oct. 27, at Albertson’s at 4740 Royal Ave. The Mayor’s One-on-One meetings are usually held on the fourth Tuesday at different locations around town. Call 682-8340 for more information.



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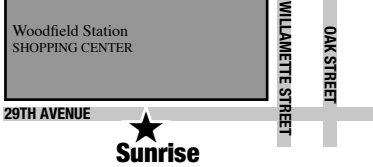


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