

Meeting 11/08/11 4:30PM

Jim Dobson - Sgt. (dob)
Jennifer Yocom
Commander Bob Day (Day)

Alaina Melville
Jim Oliver (jim)
Ilona Trogub

How to effectively deal with serious crimes in camp

Jennifer - Alaina, have you connected with Jones?

Alaina - we don't have a member on peace and safety named Jones and we don't have anyone on peace and safety able to give us any information on the incident.

Jim - we've checked in with members of peace and safety, they don't know who it was that responded to the situation last night

Dob - on 6th, 2 calls to 911 of female and partner being threatened by group. First call came in at 10:17PM, a group of people surrounding lady and friends, threatening to fight with them. 1 had a knife. the call went away, no report was taken. our new system stinks to figure out what happened to call. it's cleared. one male states he's with security, on the same team, goes back to tent. his name is David Walker
The next call is 10:59pm. states she's being threatened. group is threatening to burn down her tent. a male has a knife. we respond and looks like we have a hard time finding her and i don't know where we end with that. no report is taken. no knife scene, from the call it appears to be no knife. occupy peace squad handling, thats how it was left

nov 7 8:52am am lady who is same name as caller from previous event, says she was living there and occupy people took her tent, phone, lantern, when she left for a short time. she was staying in a tent with her boyfriend. she said she called the police twice before that night. they didn't leave and things calmed down over night. she went for coffee and when she came back everything was gone.

police say they talked to "Jones" a OP rep. stated that this lady and her boyfriend had several people that night at her tent several people walked by noticing 2 14-yr olds in tent. Jones states there's drug use going on in the tent, someone hears a man proposition girls for sex, offer 100 for sex. lablanc calls police. girls leave prior to police arriving and were not identified.

Alaina: was interaction with Jones on Monday morning?

Dobson: yes

Alaina: in the tent where the girls were, is that the same tent as the woman who made the phone calls?

Dob: yes

Dob: her tent was removed by "OP"

Alaina: can you say who heard the proposition reported?

Dob: this was third hand, Jones was saying this was said - reported to the police

Jim: There's no evidence of crimes here

Dob: there's no report, only 911 phone calls

Alaina: was the knife ever seen?

Dob: in second incident there was a knife mentioned but no knife scene. In the first incident it appears there was a knife scene.

Dob: from dispatch, stating they're talking to the male, second person on security does mention they had a knife at some point

Jen: the reason I wanted to bring this up is that one of the challenges we're having, we know, we've heard from many sources that security staff is trying to be peacekeepers within the camp. what gives us the most pause about that situation is at what point is peace and safety team is going to escalate to calling the police. if we go at face value for this situation, someone is going to get kicked out of camp, and peace and safety takes initiative like that, are there situations happening in camp when peace and safety don't call the police.

-----Commander Day enters the room-----

(P and S - Occupy Portland Peace and Safety Team)
(POC - Point of Contact for Committee)

Alaina: we're working on engaging PS team into liaison team, so everyone's on same page, knows what roles are expected

Jen: How are folks trained?

Al: nonviolent de-escalation

Jim: police will be called in when there's direct harm to individual

there's a code of conduct that we abide by. it's peace and safety's job to implement it without force. regardless of code, peace and safety team calls when there's a threat of direct harm.

Day: if there's a situation that doesn't endanger an individual's life, they don't call

Jim: if there's a direct threat, safety has been instructed to call police

Alaina: members of P and S are empowered to reach out to police, use their own judgement

Day: Is P and S on all the time?

Jim: 24/7

Day: who's on?

Alaina: it varies. we're in the process of getting a hardcopy schedule to have that info.

Jen: it'd be helpful if peace and safety were identified to cops.

Jim: if at any time you want to talk to P and S, go to tent and talk to dispatch

Dob: if it's inconvenient to go to tent, is there a way to know who they are?

Jim: they have armbands, walkie talkies, but not always

Jen: is there a number to call?

Jim: there's a POC number at info

Alaina: what we can do is get together to get our schedule, our POC and we can provide that list to you, and you can compile that list for us

Day: we have 24 hr, 7day a week front desk 823-0097. we can't give you a schedule. it's the same challenge you're going to have.

Alaina: if there's a particular officer that calls and identifies as POC, is it necessary at dispatch?

Day: that person can put you directly in touch with whoever is in charge.

Ilona: would it help to have a cell phone at the safety tent?

Alaina/Jim: that would be helpful.

Day: the info desk line has not been working. With many of the security teams we work with, they provide us with one of their radios.

Jen: what would be some of the concerns about having a radio given to police?

Jim/Alaina: we're not in a position to answer that. it's a decision that safety team would make internally.

Alaina: it seems like getting a phone and using it as POC would be most useful.

Day: yeah, then you can hand it off for the next person. give us the number.

Alaina: that eliminates the need for figuring out schedules.

Jen: do you feel like situations where people get "kicked off the island" - do you know circumstances that P and S have done that?

Jim: if certain individuals identify that behavior, it's probably happening. if it's not a life-threatening behavior, I'd say please stop and if they don't stop I'd ask them to leave.

Jen: I'd like to point out that one challenge with that, if they leave at that moment, if you haven't gotten a park exclusion where police can force them to leave, it's a challenge to keep them out.

Jim: for example, if someone is an alcoholic, someone rude and obnoxious, not violent, people can tell that person to leave, but it's not a matter for the police

Day: how do you determine who is or who isn't on a committee. who determines peace and safety?

Jim: there's POC for p and s and with enough training, they feel these people out, if they're stable, nonviolent, they're welcome on the team.

Dobson: how do you identify predators? to weed those people out of being on the committee?

Ilona: these new p and s members are never walking around alone, they're always with a vetted p and s person.

Jen: what's the timeline for setting the phone up?

Alaina: communicating this need will be a priority on our end and we'll try to make it happen in the next 24 hrs.

Jen: lets aim for the next 24 hrs. Are you on the email list now? On the police email list?

Alaina: i haven't received anything.

Jen: this is a report about the bike thefts.

Day: there's been several bikes stolen from bike shops and recovered at OP. we've had several unconfirmed reports
---mayor sam says hi, leave again---

Day: outdoor store was broken into, very similar method, several thousand dollars worth of knives were taken.

Jim: is there video of these incidents?

Dobson: it's up to the establishment whether they have that video or not.

Day: we're just acknowledging that three were found in the park. one of them ran away.
it's just an info piece for part of the concern we have .

Alaina: Clarifying question: these camp locations, where bikes are taken and parted out?

Day: we're constantly getting info about guns. someone with a zebra style backpack and bandana. there's an overwhelming amount of info being taken.
Tad reported that as many as 5 people have guns.
It's kind of the perfect storm with us trying to absorb this info and react.

Jen: and you said knives stolen from the outdoor store. I just want us to, if there's things to reinforce to the P and S team, it's increasingly difficult to sort what's real. i'm deeply concerned with people not wanting the police involved. in the GA, the discussion to create a "cop free zone". it puts us in a box if there's not a good working relationship. there's criminal activity that has to be enforced. i know that your people have good intentions. it's not negotiable if human life is at stake.

Alaina: as far as establishing communication, how should we go about getting on the same page, do it by phone? set up a followup meeting?
Day: call front desk, email Jennifer, and we'll sit down and get it. we can come over to you and sit down in the park. we're not going anywhere.

-----police leave-----

Jen: i know we're dealing with things that neither side can substantiate. we want to reinforce that if that situation with the 14yr olds were happening, even if they're successful at kicking people out, we're hoping that's something you can call about so we can deal with criminal activity.

Jim: we believe if any situation is having human life at stake, sexual violence is putting human life at stake

Jen heads up: i have a sense that patience on city council is deteriorating. i've heard fritz who her background is nurse is very concerned about public health and safety issues. i've heard from other people that it's clear there's concern. i believe there are letters going out from salesman to parks stating that building inspectors went through, made documentation of violations for building code, send it to parks to deal with violations, then parks will send a letter to you guys.

Jim: do you know what channel that letter will go to?

Jen: if i got it, i'd forward it to you.

Alaina: it could get sent directly to the liaison team.

Jen: devon peck - we know that fritz's office got a call, he says he's on solutions committee, he saying OP wants to give presentation. only city gives presentations.

Jen: i want to say "hey, we have this liaison team, if you want formal conversation with the city, please talk to them, but not the space for making a proposal. If OP has a proposal, i'll direct him to go through you guys (jim and adrienne). i want to make sure you are on the police info alerts.

Jim: patience on city council is wearing thin. fritz is concerned about public health.

Jen: its my opinion, the letters coming out, it's a sense that people are considering the mayors letter
you are earnestly trying to get ahead of issues, it's hard
i'm feeling like we need to get to some solutions pretty quickly. we don't want to have issues. people are really concerned about them.
parks department is owners of the land.

Alaina: there is a genuine, earnest attempt to work on these issues.

Jen: there's no masters degree for social unrest, you guys included, we're all learning how to communicate. how to deal with issues that are
i've heard some statements "having the encampment is just putting in people's faces things that already exist" (homelessness, hunger) i hear the passion, i understand the symbology from an activist standpoint, i heard from dennis and working on homeless issues, is that two things
1- its a lot more complex than that
2- understanding that it's a mistake to assume that this camp is not encouraging
i don't want the issue of homelessness to be confused with the criminal activity that's going on. the reality is that there is (not a concentration of crime) it's a spike.
i don't want these issues to be confused. i hear this from the paper "we're putting out these issues that people would ignore"
i think that's uninformed. this city knows the issue of homelessness, there are resources for people in the camp. we're making sure we're opening even more winter shelters. I don't know how to convey that to the larger group.
i'm concerned that that meta message that i saw in the paper, its being put out there and it's not being addressed.

Jim: i think when people talk about these issues being ignored. they're talking about these issues being ignored the local business establishments, mainstream media,

Jen: do you think that the camp has any responsibility for that?

Jim: i don't think the original goal was to be a service center. i think volunteers

Jen: do you think organizers are responsible for creating a dangerous environment at camp?

Alaina: this is an open space, people can go there anytime they choose. anyone can approach the media. anyone can claim to speak on behalf of OP. individuals are dedicated to creating a positive space to fulfill original intention of camp. others are there for other reasons.

Jen: if agencies are telling us and you that this is making your job harder, how do you respond?

Jim: lets work together to make it easier.

Alaina: lets explore how to make it a non-issue.

Jim: the city has paid staff and volunteers to provide people with adequate shelter and food. we have volunteers that are trying to do the same thing.

Jen: these people who have spent decades solving this problem, their expert opinion is that they cannot achieve goals while camp exists. Encampments like this do not lead pathways to success. I'm trying to get a level of understanding from your folks. We're hearing that they can't do their job in camp.

Alaina: i appreciate their advice, nothing i'm saying undermines their voice, a lot of the situations, relationships we're discussing, this is new territory for portland and the people.

Jen: we had a similar situation in front of city hall several years ago. they came to us and said "help us with our protest". 2006. advocacy for homeless rights.

Alaina: our camp is unique, in its entirety, although homeless advocacy is an important issue at camp, its not the only issue.

Jen: they figured out "we're going to lose ourselves, our message, because groups are coming in that don't have control of that." they couldn't do what those people were asking.

Alaina: i hope your experience doesn't effect the open communication between groups.

Jim: i think it's my understanding that r2d2 are vets and they learned from that experience, and now are doing pretty well.

Jen: i'd also say it's a much smaller camp. the more humans you get together in one space, the more propensity for conflict. yes, they regulate who's in, who's out. specific behaviors are regulated because they're on private property.

you guys don't have that same situation. send me an email, send me a text when you get the burner phone. i'll make sure that some more services flyers are distributed there tomorrow
--Notes were taken to the best of the notetaker's ability, paraphrasing may have occurred in instances where rapid conversation was happening--