EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Bender, Dawes, Hanrahan, Lee, Leiter, Purcell, Reisbig, Rudy, Vakilzadian, Woodman

Absent: Fech, Konecky, Steffen

Date: Tuesday, August 30, 2016

Location: 203 Alexander Building

Note: These are not verbatim minutes. They are a summary of the discussions at the Executive Committee meeting as corrected by those participating.

1.0 Call to Order
Woodman called the meeting to order at 2:33 p.m.

2.0 Chief Owen Yardley
2.1 Future of Blue Emergency Phones on Campus
Chief Yardley noted that the blue emergency phones on campus have been managed by Information Technologies & Services (ITS) since 1993, although the phones have never been a line item in their budget. There was the idea to transition the management of the phones to the UNL Police because the phones are for life threatening situations. He reported that a review of the phone system was recently conducted to see if the phones are readily available, if they were used in the manner they were designed for, and whether it is still viable to have them.

Chief Yardley stated that there are phones on each floor of the parking garages and outdoor phones. He reported that a review of the 55 outdoor phones over a three year period showed that 35 of the phones were not used. Those phones that were used were utilized on average about six times a year. He noted that 15 of the phones were used to speak to an operator, usually by someone trying to determine their location on campus. He stated that 36 of the outdoor phones will need to be replaced at a cost of $15,000 each and eight other phones would need to be refurbished. He noted that annual maintenance of the phones is $1200 and the replacement of the phones would be approximately $500,000. He reported that a 15 year projected cost to continue with all of the phones would cost $1.7 million.

Chief Yardley stated that of the 52 garage phones, 32 have never been used, and 11 of those used were activated with no caller (someone walked by and pushed the button). The phones that were used had an average of four calls.

Lee asked if the University Police have ever received a true emergency call, such as aggravated assault, on any of the phones. Chief Yardley stated that the phones have never been used for such emergencies. He noted that use of the phones was reviewed by time of day and where it occurs. He pointed out that during the school year the phones
have been used mostly between 11:00 p.m. and 3:00 a.m., typically by people who are
lost on campus or need a ride to detox. He noted that non-University people use the
phones sometimes. Those phones that were used during the day time were mostly false
alarms, although some had been used to report accidents.

Chief Yardley reported that students will come to the University Police to get information
on the phones for a paper they are working on for a class. He stated that 100% of those
students have said that they don’t think about the phones or believe they would stay in the
open to use them if they felt threatened in any way.

Lee asked if there is any indication that the phones help to deter incidents from occurring.
Chief Yardley stated that there is no research to suggest this, but his hunch is that they do
not. He stated that there was a suggestion brought up on campus about taking the blue
lights out and putting up dummy security cameras, but this could be a liability if an
incident should occur. Woodman questioned whether parents would be disturbed if the
phones were not in place. Chief Yardley pointed out that several surveys were conducted
at different schools that showed that 98% of students had cell phones and that number has
gone up. He noted that he has presented the information to ASUN, UNOPA, UAAD, and
the Chancellor’s Commission on the Status of Women and they suggested that if phones
were to be phased out, an emergency phone be kept outside each Union and he agreed
that would be done. Chief Yardley stated that the UNL Alert system helps provide
security to campus through timely alerts and warnings. He stated that there are a number
of phone apps that are available that can be used which would contact someone if a
person’s phone should be dropped. The app would immediately call 911 or a friend,
whoever the person indicates. ASUN suggested that the UNL Police be called, but Chief
Yardley pointed out that they could not address emergencies if the student was out of
town and suggested that the app should be programmed to contact the local police. He
noted that ASUN ran a pilot study on an app, but out of about 36 students only about half
set it up. He was aware of only one that activated it. He pointed out that at the end of the
study ASUN opted not to go through with getting the app. Lee asked if all students have
UNL Alert. Chief Yardley stated that all student and employee email addresses are in
UNL Alert and everyone receives an email message that they are on UNL Alert saying all
they have to do is add their cell phone number to receive UNL Alerts by text as well. No
downloading is required. He stated that all faculty, students, and staff should have it.

Purcell asked if the UNL Police receive 911 phone calls. Chief Yardley stated that 911
calls go through the local 911 dispatch center and UNL is part of the system so if
something occurs on campus they will be immediately notified.

Rudy noted that 14 phones were activated six times and asked if there was any
geographic pattern to the calls. Chief Yardley stated that they have this information and
it shows that most of the calls were from the core of the campus with some by the
stadium and some by residence halls. Typically these were activated during the summer
when the various summer camps were on campus.
Woodman pointed out that it might be good to retain some phones in symbolic places. He stated that he would worry if he was a parent and didn’t see any emergency phones. Chief Yardley noted that most parents realize that the cell phone is the best device in emergency situations and the kids always have the phones with them.

Lee stated that he served on the Parking Advisory Committee and graduate students from East Campus who worked in the labs at night were concerned about safety because the parking is in some desolate areas. Chief Yardley noted that East Campus is very different from City Campus. He pointed out that students can do a video escort on City Campus, but there are not as many security cameras on East Campus and the foliage makes this more difficult. He reported that there will be more security cameras when the residence halls are completed on East Campus. He noted that students can also do an audio escort where the Police are in contact with them via their phone. Lee asked if students are aware of these services. Chief Yardley stated that it is publicized to the students and safety planning is conducted for any student who is being stalked.

Woodman asked how often calls are made to the UNL Police about assaults occurring. Chief Yardley stated that there may be 3 – 5 assaults a year and these must be reported through the Clery Act. He stated that some of the assaults are alcohol induced, but none of the assaults are really aggressive and he does not remember any stranger sexual assaults. He pointed out that we do not have that level of crime on campus and there are a lot of safety programs in place. He noted that anyone who is threatening or has caused damage can be banned from campus. He stated that in comparing GIS maps of the city and the campuses it can be seen that there is about a 1,000 foot buffer in the difference of crimes that occur on and off campus. He noted that most crimes on campus occur downtown.

Dawes asked how the audio escort works. Chief Yardley stated that a student would call the dispatcher and request an audio escort. Dawes noted that there are mobile apps that a person can indicate when they are leaving and then check in when they get to their destination. Chief Yardley stated that there has to be 50 or more of these kinds of apps and some students have them. He stated that during ASUN’s app pilot it was determined that these apps were changing and new ones added continually and advocated that it would be best for students to pick which app works best for them.

Woodman asked if any universities are getting rid of the emergency blue phones. Chief Yardley stated that Cal Davis and another university have done it, but it is too early to tell if there is any difference in the crime rate. Rudy asked if there has been any consideration to increasing signage on campus so people can get directions. Chief Yardley stated that there has been a lot of discussion about wayfaring, but he has not heard what is happening with it.

Hanrahan asked if there are plans to replace the emergency phones with something else like an app that is tied to GPS that could be linked to the UNL Police. Chief Yardley pointed out that most students do not live on campus and if they had an emergency they would need to contact a local 911 center.
Woodman noted that there used to be inside building emergency phones and wondered if the removal of the emergency phones pertain to the indoor ones as well. Chief Yardley stated that there are still some phones in the buildings, mostly in labs and those will remain. He pointed out that the outside phones are state funded and phones in the parking garages are paid through Parking Services. Dawes asked if the plan is to keep a few outside phones in certain areas. Chief Yardley stated that there would be one outside each of the Campus Unions with consideration of adding security cameras to them. Woodman suggested that there be one outside the stadium. Chief Yardley stated that anytime there are large crowds the phones get activated for no reason and the Campus Police do check out any phone that is activated.

Dawes noted that there is a satellite office of the Campus Police in the North Love Library Commons. Chief Yardley stated that there is a community service person stationed in the library at night.

Woodman asked if there is a timeline for removing the phones. Chief Yardley stated that if approved, the phones would be phased out as they become inoperable or in need of repair, but advised most are at or nearing their life expectancy. He reported that if a student does not have a phone for emergency purposes one could be available through an arrangement with Telecommunications. These phones would be emergency phones only, and would not have a data plan and could only call 911. Woodman stated that the Executive Committee will discuss the idea to remove the emergency phones and will get back to Chief Yardley on the Executive Committee’s decision.

3.0 Announcements
3.1 Update on Searches
Woodman reported the search committees for VC of IANR and the Executive VC and Provost met for airport interviews and each committee identified four possible candidates to bring to campus for further interviews. He noted that the goal is to have on-campus interviews during September 15 – October 15.

3.2 Communications with other Faculty Senate Presidents
Woodman stated that he has been in touch with the other campus Senate Presidents and they are working on identifying issues to discuss with President Bounds when they meet with him in September.

4.0 Approval of August 30, 2016 Minutes
Lee moved for approval of the revised minutes. Motion seconded by Vakilzadian and approved by the Executive Committee.

5.0 Unfinished Business
5.1 Possible Issues to Discuss with President Bounds for a Future Meeting
The Executive Committee identified the following agenda items for President Bounds:
- Having Senate Presidents as members of the Board of Regents Committees
The Committee discussed inviting Regent Schroeder to speak at an upcoming Senate meeting about issues for the University and the roles of education.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Resolution to Honor Former Vice Chancellor Paul
The Executive Committee discussed presenting a resolution to the Faculty Senate honoring former Vice Chancellor Paul for his commitment, dedication, and work for the University. Bender moved that the Executive Committee present a resolution to the Senate thanking Professor Paul for his efforts on campus. Lee seconded the motion. The motion was approved. Woodman stated that he would draft a resolution and send it to the Committee for revisions.

6.2 The University of Chicago’s Letter to Freshmen Students
Woodman noted that the Dean of Students at the University of Chicago sent a letter to incoming students telling them that they should not expect to have trigger warnings provided in classes on controversial issues and there are no safe places in terms of expression. He reported that the Daily Nebraskan just interviewed him about the letter. Reisbig pointed out that faculty members should still be able to provide trigger warnings to their students if they feel that the subject matter could be difficult for some people.

Lee stated that he thought the letter was very patronizing and the classroom in some sense should be a safe place. Leiter asked safe in what sense? Lee stated that a classroom should be free from things such as racial animosity and misogyny. Woodman pointed out that the letter states that there is an expectation that students will demonstrate civil behavior. Leiter stated that if concepts are going to be censured than faculty members should give up teaching. He pointed out that the letter is saying that students are grownups and they should not expect to be coddled, and should expect to be challenged. Woodman stated that it boils down to civility and respect, but this should not lead to self-censorship and faculty taking the safe route. He noted that certain classes will have certain contexts that some students might not agree with.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:34 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, September 6, 2016 immediately following the Faculty Senate meeting. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Allison Reisbig, Secretary.