

Citizen committee reviews police actions

BY AUBREY KING
STAFF WRITER

A police force protects. The Crown Victoria sedans, sirens and uniforms are meant to symbolize safety and order.

Unfortunately, long-standing racial tension surrounding the Greensboro Police Department has pushed a group of citizens to create their own police review board.

This is happening at the same time as the police department seeks to revitalize its own system.

Trust in those who protect is essential for a content populace, but not everyone in Greensboro feels they can trust the police force.

"I don't trust them at all," said Early College junior Yasmine Byungura. "I think they are really biased, and there are certain things I do not feel they take seriously enough."

This lack of trust has been an ongoing problem.

"(You'll) be driving along and see a cop car stopped, and it turns into a kind of joke that (either) a woman or a black man (will) be inside," said Jerry Phifer, longtime Greensboro resident.

Feelings like this have only been amplified by the retirement of former Police Chief Ken Miller, whose departure after four years of service led many to believe something had gone awry behind the scenes of the police force.

A history of racial profiling and a suspicious retirement did nothing to bolster trust in the Greensboro Police Department, but many residents are not aware of the extreme cases of police brutality.

According to beforeitsnews.com, Greensboro resident Tawana Sampson was brought in for a hit-and-run and then brutally beaten in a police department elevator in March 2012.

Later released, Sampson suffered a severe brain injury as a result of the attack and was forced to seek medical attention.

The police were unable to link her to the crime.

In response to the lack of trust and the presence of violence, an interim civilian police review committee has emerged in an attempt to bolster confidence in the police force.

Barbara Lawrence, associate professor of justice and policy studies, chairs the committee.

"I have big hopes that the leadership of Greensboro will continue to try to be progressive," said Lawrence in an interview with The News & Record.

City leadership has not acted kindly toward the new board. Instead, they have staunchly defended the city-run alternative, the Complaint Review Committee.

The CRC, according to the city's website, steps in only after the Professional Standards Division of the Police Department investigates a complaint and reaches a verdict on its own.

Once the board takes on a case, a majority vote must be reached in order to reconsider a verdict before they can begin talking to the Chief of Police. From there, an agreement must be reached between the Chief of Police and the board.

If an agreement cannot be reached, the city manager is brought in to make a final decision.

Though many citizens may feel more comfortable with a civilian-run board, the police department and the city stand by the CRC.

"The Greensboro Police Department believes the city currently has sufficient and effective systems of police oversight," said Greensboro Police Department Public Information Officer Susan Danielsen in a text message response to a phone query. "It remains our position that any finding rendered by an organization that does not have access to facts is flawed and, therefore, meritless."

Mayor Nancy Vaughan elaborated on the sentiment in a phone interview with The Guilfordian.

"I don't think such a board is possible quite frankly," said Vaughan. "There are certain things the city can do with personnel records, (but) we can't give them to an independent group."

Only time will tell if either one of these systems, the civilian review board or a refined CRC, will help rebuild trust in the Greensboro Police Department.

Fire in Mary Hobbs draws attention across campus

BY AUBREY KING & MATTHEW JONES
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A fire truck parked in front of Mary Hobbs on the quad and smoke billowing from the building's roof turned a few heads on campus last Thursday morning.

According to Greensboro fire chief Greg Grayson in an interview with the News & Record, the two-alarm fire started due to a problem related to the renovation of the historic residence hall.

Construction worker Carlos Odom told the News & Record that he and his fellow workers realized a fire had broken out during a break around 10:15 am. The workers stopped to investigate a smoky smell that had lingered all morning and found a blaze burning in the attic.

"We went up to try to see what it was, and a big plume of smoke came out," said Odom.

The workers then called 911. Emergency personnel arrived soon after.

Along with the firetrucks, a Fox 8 News van, an ambulance, and even a mobile command center made the Hendricks Parking Lot look like a fairground.

For the next couple of hours, the Fire Department and Public Safety personnel surrounded the building like a group of fire ants.

"Our crews made an offensive attack into the attic area looking for the fire," said Grayson. "Once they got into the attic, they determined the fire was not in the attic: it was on the second floor."

Immediately after the fire was under control, the investigation of the fire and cleanup began.

Many people on campus were relieved that the building did not suffer more damage than it did, given its long and interesting history.

Mary Hobbs Hall, built in 1907 at a cost of \$18,323.26, replaced a handful of wooden cottages that female Guilford students had previously lived in. It was intended to be a cooperative living community for women that would encourage them to receive an education in modern homemaking. In 1933, the college renamed the building after Mary Mendenhall Hobbs, an advocate for its construction

and mission.

However, rumors of mischievous spirits have long haunted the dorm.

"On one occasion, students I know were exploring the attic of Hobbs," said Campus Ministry Coordinator and Director of the Friends Center Max Carter in an email interview. "They noted that as soon as they climbed into the attic, their cell phones shut down. They left in a hurry, quite spooked, and their phones came back on."

Some people familiar with the stories have speculated that the ghosts may have had something to do with Thursday's blaze.

"The ghosts are angry," said senior A.C. Canup, who lived in Hobbs her sophomore year. "Mary Hobbs is an all female dorm so she's probably like, what the f--- are all these males doing here?"

One legend claims that a fire started in the attic by mischievous boys killed Hobbs's daughter and that she continues to haunt the building to this day.

However, that story is mostly false, according to histories of the college available in Hege Library. Although two fires have occurred in the building, one in 1911 and a more serious arson in 1976, Mary Hobbs never had a child killed in either incident.

"The ghost stories about Hobbs have been around for a long time, and some associate them with an earlier fire in 1976 that burned the third floor," said Carter. "However, no one was lost in that fire, although it did reduce the building to a two story structure."

Additionally, Carter says that it is unlikely that these particular ghosts would have had anything to do with a fire.

"As I've heard the stories, the ghost in Hobbs is pretty benign," Carter added. "It moves furniture, locks doors from the inside, opens drawers and otherwise just plays around with folks."

Whether it was a construction accident or paranormal happening, Thursday's fire in Mary Hobbs created quite a stir around campus. No casualties and relatively minor property damage mean students and staff will mostly remember the incident as an interesting and surprising change of pace.



QEP committee works towards developing the ideal plan

BY HENRY SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Did you know that there is a committee, consisting of students, faculty and staff, that spend two years developing a plan to make your life better?

The time has come. Guilford College is part of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Every 10 years, the schools overseen by SACS are due for reaffirmation of accreditation. A vital part of a school's application for continued accreditation is the Quality Enhancement Plan. The development process of a new QEP has begun.

The QEP is the component of the accreditation process that reflects and affirms the commitment of SACS to the enhancement of quality and the proposition that student learning is at the heart of the mission of higher education.

Faculty and staff have been invited to submit possible ideas for what the new QEP will be.

On Sept. 17, a forum was held in which community members met to discuss the 29 ideas that have been submitted.

Professor of Physics Steven Shapiro leads the QEP committee, which has begun developing a plan. Shapiro gave insight on the general criteria regarding what lies ahead for the QEP committee.

"This will be a plan that's doable," said Shapiro. "It will lead to enhanced student learning and line up with the mission of the college. It will be assessable and sustainable."

Reaffirmation takes a long time and is a difficult process.

"The idea is that SACS cares that you are taking steps to improve," said Shapiro. "They care that the educational experience is always being improved."

Shapiro is not the only one who expresses passion for the development of a new QEP.

"It is important to me because it could be an opportunity to coordinate and strengthen the

educational experiences of our students," said Professor of Political Science and QEP committee member George Guo.

One of the most important aspects of the plan is that it needs to have data to assess it. In other words, the improvement must be measurable.

The committee has decided that the QEP will be something that is beneficial to not only students and faculty, but also expand to include Greensboro. Guilford College prides itself as being active in the greater community in terms of internships and community service.

"Whatever plan we come up with, we need to make sure we have been in contact with all of these constituencies," said Shapiro.

There are six categories of proposed topics in which the QEP might qualify. These categories are literacy, learning/teaching modalities, thinking and communication skills, principled

problem solving, wellness and entrepreneurship.

The categories were developed around the 29 proposed ideas that were submitted. Such ideas include implementing universal design for learning, developing information literacy as a state of mind and creating real world work opportunities for students.

Associate Professor of Business Betty Kane expressed her support for combining the QEP plan with the coming revision of the academic curriculum.

"I'm sort of a big dreamer, a big picture kind of person," said Kane. "So I was thinking, what better way to bring unity to our community around this vision of what a practical liberal arts curriculum looks like."

Junior Will Whealdon expressed his anticipation for the new QEP.

"I'm excited to see which of the proposed ideas gets picked and what kind of tangible affect we are going to see," said Whealdon.

What the school is going through at this juncture is unique

in that it occurs once every 10 years. According to Shapiro, disaccreditation, while a possibility, is highly unlikely. Last time, with a QEP focused on writing through the disciplines, Guilford distinguished itself with high marks, and reaccreditation.

This process moves forward with continued feedback and more community discussion. A proposal for consideration should be ready by December 2014. It should take a year to then flesh out the idea and make it presentable to the faculty, who, it is hoped, will then approve it by May 2016.

If you have ideas or suggestions for the new Quality Enhancement Program visit: library.guilford.edu (Search 'QEP')