

**UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST  
OFFICE OF THE FACULTY SENATE  
From the 693<sup>RD</sup> Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate held on March 25, 2010**

**PRESENTATION BY JOHNNY WHITEHEAD, CHIEF OF POLICE**

**“UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST POLICE DEPARTMENT”**

A PDF version of his PowerPoint presentation is available at:  
[www.umass.edu/senate/fs/minutes/2009-2010/Whitehead\\_Powerpoint\\_03\\_25\\_10.pdf](http://www.umass.edu/senate/fs/minutes/2009-2010/Whitehead_Powerpoint_03_25_10.pdf)

Chief Johnny Whitehead explained that this is his first Faculty Senate meeting. He has been to meetings before but usually it is because there is some controversial issue on campus or a controversial person is receiving an honorary degree. He said he is glad to be here as a guest and appreciates the opportunity to talk about the Department.

Chief Whitehead explained that he has been at UMass Amherst for three years. He served two years as Deputy Chief of Police for Operations and has been Chief for about a year. He moved here from Maryland in 2007. He spent most of his law enforcement career with the Baltimore City and Baltimore County Police Departments and also worked in Maryland State Government for awhile. He started looking for an opportunity nationally and saw that UMass was recruiting a Deputy Police Chief. Chief Whitehead said he had been to Boston several times but never had been to western Massachusetts. When he came up to western Massachusetts for the first time and saw how beautiful the area was and learned about the Department, he became even more interested in the position. He was appointed Deputy Police Chief when Barbara O'Connor left to secure a position with the University of Illinois and Joyce Hatch gave him the nod for the Chief position about a year ago.

Chief Whitehead is amazed at how little people know about the Police Department. He was talking to a student and the student said that the only thing he knew about the Department was that we do car stops. The Department does 6-7,000 car stops a year so chances are you may get pulled over by our officers. He said that they put a lot of emphasis on traffic safety. It is not that we do not have anything else to do. Traffic safety is important to us.

Chief Whitehead explained that they are a full-service Police Department. They have 62 sworn officers who are all Municipal Academy trained. That means they go through the same six-month training academy that officers in the towns and municipalities go through. They also receive in-service training each year. The state requires 37-40 hours of in-service training annually for municipal officers. Our officers receive 80 hours of training every year. They qualify twice a year for firearms qualifications. We receive updates in criminal constitutional law. We do annual diversity training which varies from year to year. One year we may talk about racial profiling issues and the next year we may talk about transgender issues or gay and lesbian issues. At least once a year, we deal with a transgender issue, for example, here on campus.

Officers have the authority to enforce the laws of the Commonwealth on campus and we also have mutual aid agreements with the towns of Amherst, Belchertown and Hadley. This means our officers have the authority to enforce the laws of those towns and their officers have authority on campus. Rarely do they come on campus unless we are having a major event. If the Red Sox are in the playoffs and we are anticipating some celebratory disturbances, then we will have some help from usually the Amherst Police Department and maybe the State Police. It is not unusual for the Department's officers to go into the towns and handle calls for service, particularly to Hadley. Hadley has a small department and a growing community. We will probably handle 40-50 calls for service a year to the Town of Hadley and we also respond to calls in Amherst or back them up if they have a disturbance in town.

We are a certified law enforcement agency. We are certified by the Massachusetts Commission of Accreditation. Certification is the first milestone towards accreditation. We expect to be accredited

by September of this year. Accreditation means we meet some 400+ national standards set up by the National Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies.

In addition to our police officers positions, we always have between 25-30 police cadets. These are students that attend college here at UMass and other colleges and universities. We provide them with training, uniforms and pay them a salary. They are required to carry at least a 2.5 grade point average. They are deployed in the residential dormitories, mostly in uniform and they are the eyes and ears of the Department. Some of the cadets work in the Police Station doing administrative work and helping watch arrestees that might be in the Station.

The Department is also responsible for the 250+ student security personnel that work in the 45 residential dormitories. The students work in the evenings signing in students and watch for those who have been restricted from the dormitories. We are a 24-hour operation. You have probably seen our officers on bicycles, motorcycles and horses. The Department does not have the luxury of having specialized units just for motorcycles or bicycles but our patrol officers can use these instead of taking a patrol car out. We also have the canine officers as well.

We have a full-service detective bureau which is headed by a Lieutenant. We have four Investigative Detectives assigned to that unit. Some of them perform drug investigations and the others will do general investigative work.

There is a community outreach unit that was created several years ago. That unit focuses on really difficult issues that might come up that the general patrol officer may not be able to resolve on a call. The Department puts a lot of emphasis on crime prevention. They will do security surveys of properties and give you advice on how to secure your property. They do a lot of dormitory talks discussing everything from alcohol abuse to acceptable fan behavior during celebrations. Residential hall security is headed up by James Mead. He is not only responsible for the 250+ student security personnel but also manages our 600+ security camera system across campus.

The Department handles about 30,000 calls a year. The campus is pretty large, but we can get anywhere on campus in less than 3 minutes. We always have at least a sergeant and 4 officers working at any given time. On weekends during busy times of the year, we will have far more than that. It is not unusual, especially during the next couple of months, to have a lieutenant, 2 sergeants and 8-10 police officers working; some may even be in plain clothes. We really gear up, when we have to, for those busy weekends.

Chief Whitehead explained that the Department enjoys a very good relationship with other police departments in the area. He explained that, in addition to the towns, the campus also gets support from the State Police when they need it. They work very closely, especially with the Dean of Students Office here on campus. Sometimes the Dean of Students Office has a bigger hammer than the Department does when it comes to accountability and student behavior so they work closely with their office, Health Services and other offices across campus.

Chief Whitehead explained that he will not get into a big mission and vision value statement, but their mission is to provide a safer environment to live, learn and grow. To them, that involves more than just responding to calls for service. They support cultural events at the Fine Arts Center, athletic events including tailgating at football games, or a 10-2 dance at the cage where we might have 1,000 students from across the region that will come to the campus for a dance. These events create a challenge for the Department but they understand that these events are a part of campus life and they do not expect the students to spend four years in a dormitory room and just study. Students should have an opportunity for cultural and social growth and the Department tries to support that everywhere they can.

You may know about the pedestrian safety initiatives that are taking place. The Department actually has a Pedestrian Safety Committee which Chief Whitehead chairs. There are representatives on that Committee from Facilities, the Physical Plant and other offices across campus. He said that there

was an article in the Daily Collegian this week about the Department's initiatives and he is hoping some other newspapers will publish a story about their initiatives.

The campus experiences between 4-8 pedestrian accidents a year. Most of the accidents are minor. Some of the accidents are from people walking in crosswalks, some are people on bicycles, and some are people on skateboards. We have been focusing a lot on pedestrian safety, doing a lot of enforcement and education. They are also looking at the problem from an engineering standpoint. The Committee has developed a scope of work and is exploring hiring an engineering firm to take a comprehensive look at the campus and look at the crosswalk designs. Some people are suggesting that we adopt crosswalk designs like they have at Amherst College or Mount Holyoke. They are taking a look at that idea and at the speed limits on campus and whether or not they are appropriate. There are some locations where we are examining if red lights or signals should be installed. The Department is also working with the news bureau to develop a public service announcement.

Some of you may have seen the 'Are You Ready To Stop?' advertisements the Department developed working with Creative Services and students. The advertisement features a picture of a driver texting in a car with a student in the background crossing the street with headphones on which is something we see a lot across campus. The idea is that both the driver and pedestrian are distracted and the hope is to encourage people to pay attention. 99% of the time, if a pedestrian is struck, it is the driver's fault but that is no consolation to the pedestrian if they end up in the hospital. The Department is asking for the pedestrians to take more responsibility for their safety and to pay closer attention to what is going on around them. Just because the car has stopped in lane 1 does not mean the car in lane 2 will stop.

The Department is rolling out 'Active Threats Training' across campus to offices and students. Police officers receive active shooter training. They train every year using buildings on campus during the summer to practice. In the past, when you had an active shooter, the first responders would try to contain the situation until a special SWAT team arrived. They have learned from the tragedies at Virginia Tech and other incidents around the country that, while you are waiting for the tactical or SWAT team to respond, people are dying or being injured. The National Tactical Officers Association has created training for first responders to respond to an active shooter. All of our officers, including Chief Whitehead, have been through the training and are at the point where the first three or four officers that respond are trained to go in as a team. The Department has given officers the equipment to safely carry out these tasks.

The Department trains all the time because, when they respond to an emergency, stress kicks in and they revert to their training automatically. They feel the same applies to the public so they have developed an 'Active Threats Program' for the campus. The Program has been going for over a year now. If it is something you are interested in, you can go to the Department's web site to find out more information. There are two programs. One is geared towards students and consists of a 20-minute video presentation and then a discussion about what to do if there is an active threat. What do you do if you think you hear a gun shot but it could be a car backfiring? You should go with your instinct and investigate and then call the Department. If you have a way out of the building, leave the building and alert other people on your way out. When you get out, call 911 and give them a description of what is happening. The training talks about how to secret yourself in the building if you cannot get out, things that you can do to survive. If anyone is interested in that training individually, you can go through the Employment Training Services Office or we have officers that would be willing to come to your office as a group and give a presentation.

'Like it, Lock it, Keep it' is a crime prevention slogan. It is amazing how many laptop computers are stolen because of an unlocked dormitory room. We just had one a few days ago where the student went to the shower and just that quickly someone walked in and stole his laptop computer and his wallet. The Department was fortunate enough to identify a suspect and make an arrest in two hours and recover the equipment because someone saw the person with another individual and gave them a very good description of the suspect. The Department was able to locate them and, using their surveillance system, was able to make an arrest very quickly. It is amazing at the Recreation Center

how many people will leave valuable items in an unlocked locker in the locker room or some of the other gyms. The Department goes through those areas and goes over crime prevention. The Department has brochures and posters that they have put up in the Recreation Center. The poster has a picture of a locker without a lock on it and its message is that 'this doesn't work without the lock.'

The Department also operates a 'Citizens Police Academy.' A lot of Departments around the country have developed these citizens police academies. The campus started its Academy for the first time last semester and has one class underway this semester. The idea is to invite members of the campus community into the Department to learn about the Department, what they do and why they do what they do. The Academy explains to people why they ask you to do certain things on a car stop, for example; what you can expect if we respond to a call. There are a lot of questions about search and seizure, what can and cannot be done. Our officers developed the curriculum and again our second class is underway. Some of the enrollees are faculty members, some are students, and some are staff members of the campus. The Department has also opened it up to members of the Town of Amherst or Hadley. They also talk about OUI arrests, investigations, how they perform field sobriety tests and those types of things.

You probably remember the student strike of 2007 when students and others had a series of meetings with Chancellor Cole. One of the things that students requested was a Civilian Review Board to oversee the Police Department. This is something similar to what you see in large cities across the country where you have a Civilian Review Board that has investigative and subpoena powers. This was all surrounding the issue of the perception that our officers were routinely patrolling the dormitories. We do not routinely patrol the dormitories. We do have officers stop in all the residential properties at the cluster office and perform what we call a 'cluster check.' We basically go in the lobby-area of the building and check in with the staff on duty to just say hello, ask if anything is going on and leave. We do not routinely patrol the floors of the dormitories; in fact, we will not even go to the floors of a dormitory unless we are responding to a call for service or if we are performing an investigation. Chief Whitehead explained that they do not go into dormitory rooms without a search and seizure warrant, unless there is some exception to the search and seizure warrant. The Fourth Amendment applies to the campus, just like the rest of the country.

Chancellor Cole and the Committee working on these issues decided to take a Committee that was called the 'Chancellor's Safety Committee', reconstitute it and create the Community Police Advisory Board. That Board is made up of members of the Student Government Association, members of the GSS, and three Faculty members. Two members have recently been appointed, Erika Hamilton from Microbiology and Roland Chilton, a retired professor from the Sociology Department. Chief Whitehead is very pleased that the Faculty Senate has appointed some representatives. He feels there is a lot of potential here. He said that every opportunity he has to get feedback about the Department and receive advice is important. The Board's charge is to make recommendations to the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance on how to improve police and community relationships and hear recommendations that the Board might make and changes in police policies and procedures. They met this morning; this was the third meeting since the Board has been created. They try to meet at least once per semester and will meet more often if necessary.

Chief Whitehead said he is a little hesitant on bringing this slide up because he knows there is such a demand for space on campus but they are very happy that there is a new Police Station under construction. They are currently occupying 12,000 square feet of space in Dickinson Hall. They have far outgrown that space and they cannot even house arrestees there. If the Department makes an arrest and they are not immediately released, they send the arrestee to the Amherst Police Department and they are housed there. With this new Station, the Department will be in a position where they can hold arrestees and be responsible for the care and treatment of our arrestees from beginning to end. This building will allow them to do that.

The building is 27,000 square feet and has all of the modern features that you will find in a police department. It has a sally port where you drive into a secured area to unload prisoners or arrestees,

**for example. Construction of the building is on schedule and it is scheduled to be completed by December of this year. The Department should be moved in by February 2011. It is a LEED Certified building which means it has many green features. Chief Whitehead said that it is the first time in his law enforcement career that he has used terms like ‘rapidly-renewable energy’ and ‘ground-source heat.’**