Faculty & Staff Town Hall Minutes  
Thursday, December 5, 2013  
Virginia Hall Anderson Turner Auditorium  
4:00pm

Panel Members/Administrators Attendance: Dr. Weldon Hill, Dr. Michael Shackleford, Cortez Dial, Chief Michael Wallace, President Keith Miller, Dr. Robyn McDougal

Town Hall Attendees: Faculty and staff as listed on the attached attendance sign in sheet.

Meeting brought to order with greeting and a brief explanation of the meeting purpose from Dr. Michael Shackleford, Vice President for Student Affairs. The purpose of this town hall was to share how we (a campus community) felt about the recent that have taken place on our campus. We (the panel members) will be taking suggestions to get our campus back in order. Share your feelings and emotions. We hope that we can all begin to heal and that we will all feel better after today’s gathering as a family.

Introductions of the panel members/administrators listed above.

- President Keith T. Miller

President Keith T. Miller opened with discussion of his recent meetings and interactions with students at the following event; Holiday tree lighting ceremony and a prayer vigil and expressed his assessment of this meet’s necessity. “It’s high time we have this meeting.” President Miller reference Dr. Shackleford’s statement of our (VSU) family coming together and talking though things. President Miller also views this town hall as a get together; family getting together to discuss issues and concerns as we strive to move forward and to offer the best education and opportunity to our VSU students. Thank you to Dr. McDougal, thank you so much for coming we will make sure the time is used wisely.

Introductions: Dr. Michael Shackleford, Vice President for Student Affairs introduced a special guest, Dr. Robyn McDougal

- Dr. Robyn McDougal
I am very excited to be a part of this event. As many have concerns just as many have suggestions and ideas. The VSU Administration values your opinions and ideas. This is an opportunity for us to come together, grow and heal so that we all feel safe and comfortable on this campus.

- Chief Michael Wallace

Chief Wallace shared the following updates:

**Present Law Enforcement and Security Efforts at VSU**

Augmentation of VSU police patrols with additional law enforcement officers after dark. Augmentation allows for roving foot patrols, Resident hall patrols, and quicker response to calls for service.

The University Threat Assessment Team, composed of professionals from the counseling center, mental health, academics, law enforcement, human resources, etc. review reports of unacceptable behavior reported by faculty staff, or students. Team makes recommendations for corrective action.

Dedicated Security Officers for campus vehicle access gates during hours of darkness on main campus and University Apartments at Ettrick.

Campus Police Academy, a once a week for 6 week program, in which faculty, staff and student volunteers get and inside view of the police department. The object is to increase awareness and understanding of how the police department operates.

Student Town Hall Meetings are held monthly with the Vice President of Student Affairs and his staff to discuss issues and concerns. Faculty /Staff Town Hall meetings have begun also.

Crime Prevention seminars, training session, etc. are conducted on a regular basis by the Police Crime Prevention Officer in all Resident Halls.

Armed Guards control vehicle access to University Apartments at Ettrick during hours of darkness.

VSU police are augmented by other local law enforcement officers during athletic and special events. They provide security; traffic, parking and crowd control.
RAVE ALERT, a mass notification system is used to alert all faculty, staff and students of any approaching danger. Messages are disseminated simultaneously via text messages, email and voice messaging. This service is provided free of charge.

RAVE GUARDIAN is an emergency duress system that can be activated from registered cell phones. When activated, a signal is sent, instantly to the police department so that help can be dispatched.

The University Emergency Operations Plan has been updated to include actions for campus first response to man-made and natural disasters. Table top exercises are scheduled throughout the year to review and validate the plan.

The Police Chief meets regularly with Student Government Association leadership to discuss matters of concern and exchange information.

Crime statics for the past three years has been published in the Police Department Annual Security Report. These statics list major crimes that have been reported on or adjacent to campus involving students.

Meetings are held on a regular basis with Chesterfield County officials to discuss safety and security concerns off campus as well as other items of common interests.

Video surveillance cameras have been placed throughout the campus as an additional security measure for security and law enforcement. Cameras are monitored continuously in the police department.

**Future Action Plan**

Add a Violence Prevention Specialist in the University Counseling Center. This position will be responsible for services designed to prevent dating violence, domestic violence, etc.

Engage an external consultant to evaluate all policies and procedures related to university safety and security.

Provide faculty/staff development programming that includes violence prevention/response training. The objective is to provide methods to deal with classroom and workplace violence.
Conduct more town meetings, forums, focus groups, bag lunch sessions, residence hall meetings, and police presence with emphasis on safety and security.

Add an additional security officer at University Apartments at Ettrick (UAE).

Add dedicated roving security officers in Residence Halls.

**Question & Answer Session:**

**Staff Question:** concerning foot traffic on campus. Has been escorted to car in the past and would like to thank the police department. Departments have had golf carts stolen, no non students crowding basketball courts; what can we do to address infractions on foot traffic?

Chief Wallace responded to the above question as follows: The golf carts are a continued thorn. Most cases pranks are conducted by students. Chief Wallace reminded university faculty and staff to secure all golf carts and stated in University policies and mentioned that in most instances the golf carts are not properly secured. In most instances the police department has been able to recover stolen golf carts, some have been recovered as far away as Matoaca.

Engaging in non-violent activity is good. We continue to monitor VSU one cards to verify that students use the basketball facilities. Our Student Government Association is helping to get message out to student. We also turn off the lights at night to discourage night use of the courts.

**Staff Comment:** I am a native of Petersburg and a VSU employee. I challenge each of you to speak positively. When you hear negativity, counter it with positivity. We have many positive things to be proud. Perception is reality. Speak up for our university. Don’t stand in silence.

**Staff Question:** What will we be instituting at University Apartments at Ettrick (UAE), to controls car traffic? Suggest pedestrian gate be operated by VSU one card.

Chief Wallace responded to the above question as follows: A security guard will be at the gate beginning 12/5/13. A roving guard will be circulating and patrolling all building in UAE.

**Staff Question:** I’m concerned about the media coverage during the robbery. It was embarrassing and was insinuated that no one wanted to own up to the
investigation and that there was “bickering” among fellow police departments. When jurisdiction lines are crossed who owns the investigation?

Chief Wallace responded to the above question as follows: What you hear is not necessarily true. We have a good relationship with all police departments. There are clear lines of jurisdiction. Our jurisdiction is exclusive to our campus. University Apartments at Ettrick share jurisdiction (concurrent). The departments that handles the matter is determined by the first responders, first responders will take the lead and/or provided resources. For example, we have no forensic lab to process certain evidence therefore Chesterfield took the lead b/c they had the resources to do so. The Village of Ettrick is located in Chesterfield. If the nearest officer is delayed, VSU is asked to handle until they arrive.

**Staff Recommendation:** We do have a violence prevention team and threat assessment team however we need improvement in ensuring both are functioning and meeting regularly. I am concerned because the current mechanism isn’t working or functioning properly.

Chief Wallace responded to the above question as follows: We make sure that the website is up to date. Training and awareness are separate from case management. We are slightly behind with education and awareness however we will kick into high gear. A specialist will be assisting both teams.

**Staff Comment:** We need more support of our students. This school is dear to me and at time I get teary when reflecting on recent events. We need to show students that we care by supporting events, attending plays, and individual programs. We would like to see more faculty and staff come to more athletic events. Students need to know we care about what they are doing outside of the classroom. I am pleading with you. That’s a part of love and family.

Chief Wallace responded to the above comment as follows: In addition, students act differently when we are there, to the good. Come to more activities. College life extends far beyond the classroom.

**Staff Question:** What is University Relations doing to put out something positive? Where are they? We (the faculty and staff) aren’t the communicators to the world. We need image restoration and repair to combat negativity.

President Keith Miller responded to the above questions as follows: We’re going to get out there. We’ve got several things developing with our public relations team to get good information out there. For example our upcoming National Volunteer Day.
Previous comment was right on point. Being involved with students, meeting with them, making rounds on campus is essential. Students have said they need us. They need advice and mentoring and need to be able to talk to us and bounce things off of us. Many of our students are still finding themselves. We need to be there.

**Staff Question:** The community is taking the recent events very seriously, what are we doing? Is there a press release planned to get to media?

President Keith Miller responded to the above questions as follows: Information pertaining to institutional advancement will be feed to the media outlets.

In closing, Thank you all. Get engaged in positive stories. We are the follow up story.

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by April Bennett