Good morning, everybody. Welcome. As you know, I periodically arrange town hall meetings for the University. We currently do this on a quarterly basis. And then in between, as some of you know from participating, I have brown bag lunches every month for about a dozen people. You have to sign up

This is not part of one of those regular town halls or brown bags because we have a challenge to discuss. A challenge that is often discussed in those meetings but today we especially want to devote the hour we have together to safety at UMB. Look, I know the people in this room. I know most of you as I look around and I know you care deeply about our University family and our neighbors. And I’m truly grateful for your investment to the well-being of our community — our immediate community and our broader community.

We care about our campus. We care about West Baltimore. And we’re devoted to the city of Baltimore each and every day through the actions of people on this campus. Without doubt, public safety has been top of mind lately. And rightly so. Rightly so because we have had some very troubling events. Largely evening and night, on and near campus recently. Violence that is perpetrated against members of our community. It’s been upsetting. It’s been unsettling. And therefore it deserves what we do at a University – have an open conversation like the one we’re going to get into in a few minutes. I need to say something to you, I need to look straight into your face and tell you – and I hope you will receive it well – that among all the things we do here there is absolutely nothing more important to me and to the leadership of the University than the safety of our students, our staff, our faculty, our partners, our friends, our neighbors because, after all, if there’s not safety then all our good works are far more difficult to accomplish.

So we’re committed to doing whatever is necessary, whatever we are capable of doing, to ensure safety to the degree possible and in doing so being transparent in the process. With us today is Tony Williams, who needs no introduction to the campus community. He is the chief of the UMB Police Force and assistant vice president for public safety in my administration. Many of you know Chief Williams because he is exceedingly accessible. And you’ve come to rely on, as I have, his extraordinary expertise and leadership. I know you’re working hard as are your people, Tony, and on everyone’s behalf I thank you.

Chief Williams is going to share some campus crime statistics with you, recognizing that these statistics to the degree they are comforting still don’t deal with the largest issue, which we all accept. The matter of how we perceive ourselves, are we safe? So he’ll discuss a few of the recent incidents that have occurred on campus and close to it and he’ll talk, because this is what you need to hear about, some things you’ve
been seeing already. Some specific strategies that our UMB police are undertaking to improve safety. Some of these strategies clearly involve collaborations with our partners in the Baltimore Police Department. And sitting before you today are three members of the department’s leadership: Lt. Col. Melissa Hyatt, Area 1 Cmmdr. Maj. William Marcus, and Capt. Mark Howe. This was not just for today. I need to tell you that I work with these fine individuals. I work with these individuals through my co-chairmanship of the UniverCity Partnership, the task force I co-chair with the mayor to make the Westside better. They are part of that work. This is not a today how-do-you-do. In addition, some of you know that I chair the board of the Downtown Partnership, which is committed to making a better downtown, of which we’re a part. And again I work with these officers. So this is not we got acquainted today by any means and I’m grateful to them for all the work that we’ve been able to do together.

The Baltimore police and the UMB police have long enjoyed a very close and productive relationship. And by tightening these collaborations even more we hope to significantly reduce crime and restore the community’s peace of mind. As I said earlier the University leadership starting with me stands ready to support the efforts of both police departments. And I need your help in that. To facilitate frequent, open, inclusive conversations on crime like this one. Now this morning’s presentations are going to be brief so we’re sure to get in as many questions and comments of yours -- and ideas I hope -- as possible. I do want you to know, and some of you might have already noticed this, that the television and print media are here with us. They are reporting and they are filming this town hall at their request so you need to know that your questions, your comments are subject to being recorded and filmed and I want you to know that. In addition, the University is recording so that we are sure that we have your best ideas and suggestions so thank you for coming out and taking a piece of your day and showing your care for all of us collectively. You’re making us stronger because of your concern. And with that, let me ask Chief Williams to come and address you.

Chief Williams:
Good morning, everyone. You know sometimes when it’s a little difficult with issues we’re addressing there’s a tendency to be a little stressed and wonder ‘what is this guy going to talk about?’ Well, I’m going to keep it as brief as we can. We are going to talk about three basic things and one of them definitely includes you. We’re going to talk about where we are today crime-wise, we’re going to present a brief overview of where we are statistically with our crime statistics, and then we’re going to talk more about what we’re going to do about it and at the end leave some time for your questions and comments.

Before I get into it more I’d certainly like to introduce my own leadership team that is here today. You all know that as chief I am the face of the department but I can’t do anything without a great leadership team and without those men and woman I would not be standing here today. So I’d like to introduce my assistant chief Col. Milland Reed, Lt. Virginia Chapko, and Lt. John Scott. You’ve already been introduced
to our partners in the Baltimore Police Department, where I have the privilege and pleasure of being an alumni, and we’ll hear from them very shortly. So let’s jump right into it.

Here’s where we are crime-wise from January through October of this year. You’ll notice that 2011 to 2014 up through October, no murders, no rapes. As you can see, we had an increase in robberies. We’ve had nine robberies on the campus. In the grand scheme of things we might say nine may not be that many but on the other hand it’s nine too many for us. So we recognize that. We’re certainly going to talk about the two most recent events that prompted us to be here today. But you can notice as well that we have had an increase in assaults, particularly aggravated types of assault. Minor assaults are down a little bit and our biggest decrease so far this year has been in theft crime. We’re enjoying a little bit of success, overall crime is down 32 percent but what we recognize quite frankly is if you are afraid, there’s issues and we still have work to do and we want to talk about that.

Here’s an overall view throughout all the years. You’ll notice that overall we’re going to have somewhere in the robbery realm of seven and 10 robberies a year essentially on our campus. What we emphasize is certainly we know there is more we need to do about it, more we as public safety officers can do, but there’s also more you all can do to help us do something about it. I think Sir Robert Peel said it the best in 1829 when he said, “The police are the community and the community is the police.” The police are no more than a group of people who get paid to do a job that is everyone’s responsibility. So although we are grateful, and I am certainly grateful to be here today, we certainly recognize we can’t improve or make advances to include you all feeling safer about being in this community without you helping us to do that today.

Certainly we recognize that last Tuesday, one week ago today, particularly the evening, our campus community was hit very hard. Shaken, rocked if you will, hearing about these two incidents that occurred with robberies. That is a very rare occurrence for us. I can tell you I’ve been here almost five years now and never do I recall experiencing two robberies, certainly not in close proximity on the same day, or evening on our campus. So we acknowledge this is an unusual event and there is certainly every reason for us to be concerned about it. And I thank you all for coming out today because your appearance today recognizes that not only are you concerned but you are going to be a part of the solution process moving forward.

So here, what are we doing about it? We put a new patrol strategy in place that includes both our sworn police officers and our non-sworn security. We’ve also improved our walking and riding van police escort program and we’ve made some modifications to our crime alert process. While I’m talking just briefly our security personnel have really been outstanding. They stepped up to the plate. They are truly some of our unsung heroes, some of them are here in the back and I’d like to recognize them. These men and women have come up to the plate. You should have noticed they are standing out on some of our heavily trafficked areas on the campus
in the evening, they stay at their post, they don’t complain, they are there for many hours looking around for measures to keep us safe. So I want to acknowledge them today and say keep up the good work.

This is where we are. Here’s what you can see. There are more police officers on duty as Dr. Perman astutely mentioned we are experiencing some increases in crime during evening hours on our campus. So to deal with that we have more police on the corners outside on patrol for the hours from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. Now, what you’ll see is some increased walking around by the police officers. The officers will be highly visible. They’re wearing reflective vests, they also have amber yellow flashing lights on the top of the police cars. Methods like this will help you see them from a greater distance and not only you all but also those contemplating doing things we don’t want them to do. So we want people to see us. We want even the criminals to know that we’re out.

As you know we also do what we call corner assignments at UMB. Every day, twice a day, police officers are out in our major intersections helping direct traffic, helping people cross the street. But they’re also visible in the high-traffic areas of our campus. We’ve increased those hours so you can see those officers out early. The whole game plan is simple: When we talk about this internally it’s a basic thing. We say, hey fall comes around the same time every year. It gets dark the same time every year. So why do we have to wait to be told or ask what you’re doing about it? So we want to be more pro-active recognizing that and we’ve deployed resources out during those times before it gets fully dark. Also there are supervisors on duty doing those peak times. All of us work in some kind of organization and we know that someone has to keep people accountable. So we’ve tasked our supervisors, both our sworn officers and our non-sworn security, to do that for us, which is going to help us. We have great people but all of us know we need people in key places to make sure we’re doing what we’re supposed to be doing. Part of your job, quite frankly, is to help make sure I’m doing, we’re doing, what we’re supposed to be doing. So you’ll see supervisors there on duty as well in the evenings and on weekends.

Also as mentioned before, our Baltimore Police Department partners are here. They are going to talk very briefly about what they’re doing to help us out and as Dr. Perman mentioned I really want to make sure you understand that this isn’t something we hurried up and put into place. We’re not doing a dog and pony show. It’s a wonderful thing to be part of this great University and organization but it’s also great to have those partnerships that go back to the place where I used to be and being able to call on our partners to help us out. They’ve stepped up to the plate. But there are some things that have been in place that you wouldn’t see necessarily that have been going on for a while now. For example, our officers attend role call with each other, we go to information and intelligence sharing meetings to keep informed on a regular basis. We also work some initiatives together. If you go to Lexington Market you’ll see city police, our department, and Maryland Transit Administration officers working together as part of our move to make Lexington
Market safer. So with that in mind I’d like to introduce Lt. Col. Melissa Hyatt and I believe Maj. Richard Marcus will have a few words. Thank you.

Lt. Col. Hyatt:
Good morning. I’d like to begin by thanking Dr. Perman and the University for giving us the opportunity to come and speak. And to reiterate the chief’s words, we have had a fantastic working relationship with UMB for many years and we look forward to continuing that. I also want to introduce beside Col. Mark Howe, Lt. Mark Walrath, who is our investigative supervisor for the Central District and of course this area falls within Baltimore City’s Central District. While it’s a privilege to speak in front of you today of course we are disturbed that it is due to safety concerns that you have in our patrol area. We take pride in the crime reductions we have seen in the downtown and Westside this year. I reported these decreases yesterday at an executive meeting regarding the downtown area. And just for awareness, I will repeat some of them today.

Violent crime in the downtown area has been reduced 14 percent in the year to date compared to the same time period last year. And property crime has been reduced 22 percent during that same time period. Our most noticeable decreases are a 16 percent reduction in street robberies and a 19 percent reduction in larceny/auto. But of course we’re not here today to celebrate crime reduction.

Knowing that we had less incidents of violent crime this year -- 33 less and 195 less incidents of property crime -- although it’s impressive, it simply isn’t enough. If you have been the victim of a violent crime or a property crime or you know someone who has you know every single case impacts people. Certainly the University and those in this room have been impacted very directly over the last few weeks by incidents of violent crime. We are outraged with you that these acts would occur. We pledge to continue to put forward our best resources working in conjunction with UMB to put forth the best efforts we can in the downtown and Westside area. Our purpose is to increase communication and coordination between the Baltimore Police Department’s Central District and UMB to ensure that we all are providing the most efficient and effective police services. Those agencies definitely recognize that we can always make improvements but it’s the advances we feel we are making together as partners that will benefit us the most -- both those in this room and beyond.

We know the times of day that concern you the most. Certainly it’s in the morning when you travel in to work, at lunchtime, and in the evening when you are leaving to go home. We are listening and consequently we are adjusting Baltimore City’s deployment to provide more concentrated attention at these critical times. Although we strive to continue to reduce crime in the downtown area and Westside, we know that the most impressive reductions are meaningless if you don’t feel safer in the area. Therefore our task and challenge as a team is truly to improve the perception of safety in both the downtown area and the Westside for those who work, live, and come to visit. You will see improved policing efforts moving forward. We will
continue to work together with our UMB partners in matters that will be seen and unseen by the public. We will continue to work with our other law enforcement partners who were previously mentioned along with other public and private partners who assist us every day in our efforts. As I turn this over to Maj. Marcus I leave you with the most personal piece, which I speak on behalf of everyone from the Baltimore Police Department who is here today. Each time someone tells us that they don’t feel safe in the downtown area or on the Westside, it concerns us. It angers us because this is our patrol area. And we take it very personally. I commit to you that we will continue to work even harder to make this area the safest it has ever been. We are committed to this relentless effort and we certainly welcome your feedback along the way. And, of course, we will be more than honored to continue to work with our partners. Thank you.

Maj. Marcus:
Good morning, everyone. My name is Maj. William Marcus. I’m responsible for the Central District. So you know, Col. Hyatt is my immediate boss and is responsible for at least one other district that contains a lot of ingress and egress in the Southern District. I know some of you live in Ridgely’s Delight and she is responsible for that full area. My little piece is the Central District. I was very curious and not to be overbearing with the stats, but I was very curious as to how we stand up against prior years. I won’t belabor the point but I will simply tell you I compared 2014 to 2011 and there was a 16 percent decrease in violent crime. I’m talking about crime specific to this area, not the entire downtown area, but your campus and the area adjacent to your campus. 2014 to 2012, a 19.6 decrease in violent crime. 2014 to 2013, a 26.8 decrease in violent crime. So you can see we are trending in the right direction. But as Col. Hyatt said and as Chief Williams said, if you are that victim, that one victim of violent crime, these stats don’t mean anything. That’s the reality of the situation.

To that end, we and Chief Williams, Col. Hyatt, myself and Capt. Howe have jointly agreed to a five-point deployment plan with the University of Maryland, Baltimore. In addition to those five points, which I believe the chief spoke of earlier, we are also doing several things unilaterally, which will shore up the safety on the perimeter of the campus. A lot of that has to do with routes of ingress and egress during the lunchtime period, coming to work, going home from work. Those are the areas we are targeting alongside your campus.

In addition to that, the Southern District and the Western District will also be taking up the same postures as the Central District. They will be deploying more resources on the routes of ingress and egress across Martin Luther King Blvd. in the Western District. There’s a huge transportation piece from the main campus to that area. Western District will hold that down. Same way that I Just mentioned Ridgely’s Delight. Southern District will hold that down. This is an effort not just with the Central District and the University of Maryland, but the Central District with the Southern District, the Western District, and the University of Maryland.
Lastly, let me just say and Chief Williams touched on this as well, we need your help. If you see something out there that just doesn’t look right to you, we need you to contact either the University of Maryland or the Baltimore Police Department Central District because when you contact us that adds an element of reasonable suspicion and enhances our ability to approach that person and talk to them, conduct an interview. Your call might be the critical piece that was missing, that is preventing us from legally approaching that person. So if you see something, no matter how slight it may be, please call your folks or our folks -- it’s all one and the same at this point. It’s a critical part. I can’t stress that enough. I don’t care how innocuous it looks, make the call, please. In terms of going forward from here, I think that even though we have shown a 20 percent decrease in crime and the University of Maryland also has shown a decrease in crime, I think you will be pleasantly surprised. Believe me I took this job and I work this job with a chip on my shoulder. Chief Williams is the same way. We live and breathe law enforcement, particularly as it pertains to downtown Baltimore and in this case the University of Maryland. So please help us help you by taking the steps we talked about and going forward I think you will be the beneficiary of a very fruitful relationship. Thank you.

Chief Williams:
Thank you all. I just want to talk a little more specifically about what we’re going to do. We alluded to it earlier. We have security officers who will be out on patrol. You’ll see them out in those high traffic areas from 5 to 10 p.m. every evening. Those major corridors, Greene Street, Baltimore and Greene, the Pratt Street corridor. Again, high visibility. They’ll have the reflective vests on as well. And you might see some security on Segways if the weather permits and they are available. Everything is about you have to see the police and know they are there. We know from experience and you’ve also told us from a survey we did a few years ago that you all feel better when you see us. So we want you to see us.

The police escort program is really working to make some strides to improve, both walking and riding escorts. Let me just say something very quickly. I heard what you say. For example, when you say “Hey the Chief’s out front saying utilize our escort program, it’s available 24 hours a day seven days a week, we’ll walk with you, we’ll give you a ride” and then sometimes some of our people come and they make you feel like they really don’t want to do it. I see a few heads nodding. Believe me, I’m observant and I listen. Here’s the deal. We’re addressing that. Because above all else, we have to be a good customer service agency for you all.

I can’t be out front and say “utilize this service” and then have the people who are doing the service make you feel like you are inconveniencing them by requesting that service. So here’s what we’ve done. Couple things. First and foremost we’ve assigned a couple of great customer-service type police to do the van service from now on. Actually we already put that into place. But you’ll see the van service hours extended. We didn’t use to start the van service until 5 or 6 p.m.; we’ve kicked that back to 3 p.m. You’ll have van service up until 1 a.m.
We’ve also added an additional van so that from the hours of 5 p.m. to 1 a.m. there will be two vans out there for you. It is our department’s goal that if anybody doesn’t feel comfortable walking this campus when it’s dark, get a ride. We’re going to eliminate every excuse for people to be walking around at night in areas they’re not comfortable in. So I urge you please utilize the van service. So we have great people. I used to tell Dr. Perman and Pete Gilbert ‘hey I can make them drive the van but I can’t make them smile.’ Now we have some people who like to smile and they’ll probably talk you to death while they’re doing it. The whole idea is we want to provide superior customer service to you. We recognize that. We also have someone assigned who will be receiving your call and coordinating the requests for the van service. So when you call for that van service you get a good, courteous person on the other end of that phone who will give you an ETA and really try to coordinate those services as best we can.

Also, we’ve listened to you again. Some of you said hey you might go a block or so off campus well, I live two blocks off campus and the police they let me out in a bad area and make me walk a long way. I see some heads nodding. This is good stuff. So what we’ve done is extend our boundaries for the riding escort. What you see are two outlined areas. Outlined in black is the campus boundary. What you see around it in red are the areas the van service will now take you to. Roughly speaking we will take you maybe three blocks north south east and west of the campus boundaries so we want to capture a greater area and cut down on those occasions where people have to walk far to get home with the van service in areas they’re not comfortable in. We really want you to know what is available. This has already been implemented. It is available tonight. Please use it.

We are also going to do some customer service feedback. So if you get a call from me or one of our people asking you hey did you utilize our van service? How was your ride? Please be honest and let us know. If you feel there is something we need to improve please let us know. We’re also working to continually improve. I have a meeting set up with Transportation Services so we want to see if there is a better way to give you services. We have a great shuttle program that hopefully you use to get back and forth to the University from several areas in the city. The next step is to improve the service we provide to you, in terms of through our campus. Consider our van service as part of a stopgap measure. Get you something you need and get you around campus.

If you need a ride from one building to another, if you need a ride from your building to the parking garage that’s what the van service is for. We still have the walking escort service available to you as well. You can get that any time of the day. We’ve appointed people to specifically walk with you so when you make that call, there will be people waiting to walk with you. The whole idea is to give you good customer service and to do it very rapidly. We’ll have this map on our website so if you want to see it after this presentation feel free to do that.
Also we’ve had some problems with our alerts process. When we send out alerts at times some of you have given us very negative feedback about it. Everything from having the wrong date in the message to using police jargon, such as No. 1 male. I got a lot of response after we sent out the alert after the first robbery that occurred last Tuesday asking what in the world is a No. 1 male? Here’s the situation. We need to make it clear and I certainly was reminded of that when we send out messages that are maybe not clear. Maybe they do not articulate the message and it does detract from our confidence so we want to make sure we are sending you information that is timely but also is a good message. No longer is it acceptable for the police to simply say ‘hey look, we just want to get you the information you need.’ And it might not always be a great message. The reality is sometimes the people who write a lot as part of their job don’t always write the best.

But we recognize you need good timely information that is accurate but it also has to flow and read a certain way commensurate with the quality of this University. So toward that end, the Office of Communications and Public Affairs will be helping us by taking on that responsibility to get those messages out. So we have a protocol in place where in the end you can expect to receive timely messages that will be clean for you. I want you to know that we recognize that issue, it’s been dealt with because again we want to do everything in a quality way.

And with that, Dr. Perman, I think we’d like to take some questions now.

Dr. Perman:
I’m going to take the prerogative of raising one issue if I may since the professionals are here to engender a bit of a discussion about the cell phones. I know many of you tolerated me several years ago in 2012 when we noted that eight of the nine robberies that occurred on campus that calendar year the target was the cell phone. Look, you’re all adults. Certainly our students remind me of that all the time. I have to be careful of not being Poppa. They have enough Poppas in their life. But you know I usually stand in front of the students and I say what would you think of me if I walked around like this [holding his wallet in his hand]. Now, there’s not a lot of money in here but you wouldn’t think much of me. It’s the same thing with a cell phone in my hand.

Look, I would be the first as a lay person to say I can’t make anybody stop using their cell phone. But I can tell you that we’re going to encourage it. We’ve got some cards that people like me walk around with that says ‘don’t walk and talk or text.’ So far, people have received the message well. I’m sure we’ll get some pushback from time to time. But I do want to call your attention to a general issue in law enforcement, which is our world of cell phones. Any comments from the professionals here?

Chief Williams:
Dr. Perman is right on point. One of the real simple things we all can do to help decrease our opportunities of victimization is simply not to pull out that cell phone.
Not to be distracted as you talk or text while you walk around this campus. That’s become a fact. The reality is that is not a problem germane to this University community. This is a nationwide issue. It’s being looked at from a technological perspective but this also is one of the basic areas where every one of us as human beings can help impact. If you can simply wait until you get into your building to make that call or to send that text message, you dramatically decrease the probability of you being victimized. The robberies that involve cell phone thefts they aren’t walking up to people just to take the cell phone if they’re not talking on it. What happens in just about every instance someone is distracted, not aware of their surroundings because they’re totally engrossed in talking or texting on the phone. Someone literally tries to take the phone out of their hands while they’re using it. If you keep that phone put away in your pocket or out of sight, you dramatically decrease the opportunity of being victimized. Do you have something, Lieutenant?

Lt. Mark Walrath:
I’m Lt. Mark Walrath. Just to piggyback on what is being said, the cell phone issue that is going on is not indigenous to Baltimore, this is a national trend that is occurring right now. Every city in America is experiencing this. The phrase that is used by individuals in this type of robbery is Apple-picking because it started with the Apple iPhone. They are absolutely correct. You are standing there on your phone, you’re listening to your music, you’re texting, you’re not paying attention. One of the things the easiest way that doesn’t have anything to do with the average civilian out there we qualify the crime as a larceny or a theft, but they can have the phone out of your hand and be gone in literally a split second and you don’t realize what happened except someone just took your phone. You’re not going to chase them down and get it back. They know the neighborhood and they know where they’re going.

But they’re committing these crimes in various ways. One is just that: snatch and grab. They’re going to snatch your phone and then they’ll be gone. Another way they’re going to do it is ask to borrow your phone. You hand them the phone, you’re not going to get it back. You try to confront them to get it back and then an assault takes place over a robbery. The third way they’ll get it is they’ll come up in a group of two or three, maybe as many as five, and they’ll kind of surround you and say, hey, I want your phone. And what are you going to do? There’s five of them. You’re going to give them your phone.

And then of course lastly is the straight up robbery where they walk up and punch you in the side of the head and while you’re dazed and disoriented, they take your phone and run off. And I like I said that’s not indigenous to here. It’s happening everywhere. The key thing is to be aware of your surroundings. Like has been said, don’t walk around texting, don’t look down at your phone and not know what is happening around you. Your head needs to be up, you need to know who is beside you and in back of you, you need to have your route of travel already planned out, and you need to have an alternate route of travel so if this route of travel doesn’t look comfortable to you for some reason you can make a right and go around the
block instead of passing people you don’t want to walk past. The big thing also is the earbuds in the ears. The criminals target their victims. If the phone is in your pocket or in your coat they don’t know whether you have a phone and they’re not likely to come up and ask you. But if they see you listening to your earbuds while you’re walking, they know you have a phone on you. So that’s when they’re going to come up and try to take your phone off you. Just be aware of that. Doing just that is going to reduce the chances of your becoming a victim dramatically.

Dr. Perman: OK, the floor is open, please.

Question:
Some of us work on the weekends. Are any of these services available on weekends and what are the times?

Answer:
Chief Williams: These services will be available on the weekends. The police, quite frankly, we work 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We have escort and van services available also on the weekends. If you dial 6-6882 from any phone on campus or from a non-campus phone 410-706-6882, and we’ll be happy to provide a police escort.

Dr. Perman: By the way we will make sure this information gets to you in various ways. I will be putting out a letter in the next 24 hours summarizing a great deal of the detail that we discussed today.

Question:
I appreciate you coming here today Chief and I respect the difficult job that all your officers have to do and appreciate that we can now call out if there’s a problem and something will be done about it. My concern is with the data. The way you’re talking about the data and I’ve heard about a percent decrease in crime several times and the table you showed is supportive of that. What I’m looking at is In the Clery Act, I’m seeing that over three years robberies and aggravated assault are increasing. I’m looking at the University of Baltimore and we have twice as many robberies and 10 times as many aggravated assaults. Johns Hopkins’ medical campus also is lower. So if you’re going to make statements about a percentage of decrease in crime please give us more data to look at so it supports your assertion so I know what’s in the Clery Act isn’t the whole picture. So if there is data to support decreases, we should know about them. Like you have on your website since February that’s a decrease, but I never knew about the number of thefts at all because that isn’t publicly available information. So when we’re talking about the percentage of decrease I think you need to be specific about what data you’re talking about and make everyone aware of it.

Answer:
Chief Williams: Thank you. Just in response to that, we actually are making better progress in making sure you are fully informed. We want to be transparent.
talk about crime I talk specifically about this year to date compared to the same period last year. The Clery Act, which has been out since Oct. 1, that annual report comes out Oct. 1 of every year. It always has three years of crime in it but it’s also a year behind the current year. So the report that came out on Oct. 1 of 2014 actually has crime from 2013, 2012, and 2011. It’s always a year behind. Also we noted in that report that the data in that report are not just the stats of the University of Maryland, Baltimore police but also the same statistics from the Baltimore Police Department. We can’t talk about what occurs on other campuses but what we do is make sure we report our crime accurately and timely. The other thing that we’ve done and I failed to mention is that we’ve implemented an electronic 60-day crime log that’s on our police website www.umaryland.edu/police/. You go there and you see 60 days of current activity anytime you like. It has specific times, dates, and locations of incidents so you have access to see literally everything that goes on on campus. The Clery Act doesn’t require that we report certain types of crime. So you don’t see thefts for example in the Clery report. We don’t hide that data, we share it, we share all the crime as we did today. We’re making an effort to make sure you have access to all the crime data you need and more. The city of Baltimore also has crime data on its website. The major mentioned we sit primarily on 121 Post in the Central District. You can go to the city website and literally punch up 121 Post for the Central District and see all the crime you want.

Question:
So while I appreciate this is a convenient time to have a meeting for staff and media, I’m a first-year law student and every single one of my peers has class at 11 a.m. on Tuesday and obviously none of the evening students can be here because they all have their jobs. Especially because the first-year law students are the newest to the Baltimore on-campus community and the evening students are only at the University under the cover of darkness, are we going to have a forum for them to voice their questions and receive information pertinent to them?

Answer:
Dr. Perman: You make a good point and I’ll commit to that. So we will arrange a forum like this.

Chief Williams: Let me also say this discussion will also be available in a format to view it afterward. Also, members of my department will come to speak to any group that would like us to speak. We do that regularly. We always hit first-year law students at orientation when they come in. But certainly throughout the year we’re always happy to do more interaction. We’ve also talked with the Student Bar Association and the Student Government Association. Not only give you information but give you some emergency preparedness as well. We’d be glad to do that.

Question:
Hello. I have two questions. One related to the walking around and texting and using cell phones I was wondering through the University or police or both is there some type of program or initiative to give that message on a more consistent basis? I've
seen the fliers and they should be more specific. It seems to me a lot of things we do day to day without thinking. I mean walking around the campus I've seen people leave the ATM machines and be outside with money in their hand or reaching for their bag or even reading while crossing the streets. I thought maybe those specific items you didn't even think about it when you're doing it if there is some way that message is consistently given sort of like when you're on a cruise line and you hear about the events, like, all day, and then you still forget them. So if we'd get that flier we might think about it that day and a couple days go by and nothing bad happens and you tend to forget. So I was wondering those specific things, like getting out of your car and leaving things on your seats, whether those kind of issues just as reminders.

My second question is has there been any look at or concern if there is a stigma attached to actually asking for an escort especially maybe toward the males on campus as opposed to the female members of our campus. Thinking well, that's not the manly thing to do. It's dark but I can't be scared. Maybe some outreach that it's OK to ask for help or to get that ride when that might be the difference between you being assaulted or being safe.

Answer:
Dr. Perman: Very thoughtful questions.

Chief Williams: For the first question, we certainly recognize we can help by getting that information out more regularly. We used to put safety tips on all kinds of materials, usually seasonal stuff. In a seasonal message coming out the end of this month we'll give tips how to shop and move around safely during the holiday season but we certainly take your point to re-emphasize that message.

In terms of the escort program, it is definitely open to everyone, male and female. We also open it up not just for the University, but to our partners at the University of Maryland Medical Center. So please and maybe you all can help pass this message on, there is no stigma attached to anyone utilizing our escort program. In fact, I am personally asking you to use it. Because there is no need for anybody to be walking around at night at all now so we're really pushing this out. In fact, what we've done now if is we see people walking around at night we ask them if they've considered utilizing our van service. So please help me get that message out.

Question:
I want to thank you for increasing the escort service and the opportunities for shuttles, I applaud you for that. I have a couple of comments and suggestions. The first one has to do with the corner assignments. You say they are going to be until 6 o'clock. I know it requires extra staffing but you might want to think about extending it until 7 because a lot of people do work until after 6 and many students are here then. Just something to think about. The other thing is what are we doing to alert these individuals who are coming in to commit crimes on campus that this campus is safe and there are increased patrols? Maybe there is signage that we
could put on the perimeter of the campus to alert criminals that hey, we do have cameras, we do have police here. Maybe alerting them that this is a crime-free zone so sometimes the message we send to criminals will have some positive impact. Maybe some signage, maybe some bulletin boards. Whatever that alerts them that we are very aware of what is going on and we do have police patrols. And the last comment has to do with I know some cities around the country have used having the police lights on at all times. I know you have spoken about the amber lights but maybe having the regular police lights on as the cars go around that can deter crime. Just some ideas.

Answer:
Chief Williams:
Thank you. In fact, much of what you mentioned we are doing. You mentioned the amber lights we also will use the strobe lights, we certainly utilize those. Our job quite frankly right now and I don’t want to talk a lot about it is we want to do more aggressive policing. We want the criminals to get the message that it’s not comfortable for them here. We can put signs up but what really gets it done is the criminals have to see it. That’s why we have our partners here so we’re all speaking the same thing. I’m in my 29th year of policing and I speak crime, I live crime. I know how to fight crime. It’s just getting everybody on the same page and making sure that we get a message out to criminals. Quite frankly you can help send that message throughout the community. Here’s our reality. We’re a small group of people, we have an awesome responsibility and we take pride in our jobs. But the reality is every member of the community can play a part by sending a message out that we’re not going to be easy prey for criminals. Some of that are some of the things we’ve already talked about. Put that cell phone away. Be alert. Be aware of your surroundings. Walk in groups. They all help send that message. If you see something say something. That lets people know hey if I’m thinking about doing something here somebody might call on me. So all these things individually might seem like small things but if we all do them together and we do them all the time, not just in response to something occurring. Believe me we’ll get a strong message out to criminals – don’t go on that campus. If we do something they probably are going to get us.

Question:
Have you ever considered letting the shuttle take you to the parking garages? We are on Paca Street and the majority of our employees park in Saratoga Garage. They get off 5 to 5:30 and it’s always dark. Second part of the question: We are considered a little bit off campus because we are at Paca-Pratt but we are UMB employees. A lot of our employees also park at Baltimore Grand. We hardly ever see police when we’re walking on Lombard and Pratt Street. There is generally a person who directs traffic. I think it would make more sense to have security people direct the traffic and have the police officers standing on the corner being more visible. Because you guys know how to react more to an incident than a security guard. We have people at Paca-Pratt and we don’t see UMB police. They also have a clinic on Eutaw Street and our employees get out of there late at night. By the time they see their last
patients and finish their notes. They have to come back to our building and they’re cutting through places to make it the shortest trip they can. It definitely isn’t safe and we’ve had a lot of employees come to us about that they don’t feel safe. We feel bad. We think the parking needs to be improved so people can park closer to their building. Now we have people who are 10 blocks away.

Answer:
Chief Williams:
The location that you mention on Eutaw Street to be candid is outside our jurisdiction. We can’t patrol on Eutaw Street. But for the Paca-Pratt location as a University employee our escort services, both walking and riding, are available to you. Please call us and ask to do that. In terms of directing the traffic, we’re actually doing a combination of high visibility that includes both police and security but you have to be trained to direct traffic and have authority to do that. So our security guards are not in a position to direct traffic. So we don’t utilize them in that capacity. But what I would like to do, I will ask Lt. John Scott to stand. Please stand up, Lieutenant. This young lady. Please raise your hand, ma’am I’d like Lt. Scott to talk with you after this meeting so we can talk more specifically about how can we provide some support to you and your building.

Dr. Perman: I promised a lot of people that we would end promptly so I’m going to keep that promise. I know there are many hands up. This is not a one-time engagement. For those of you who can stay and who have comments or questions, please approach us. And you know I am available through email and the Chief also is available so I appreciate everyone’s attendance here. I especially thank you for your frank comments and questions, which are always informative and this is the continuation of a dialogue not the end of it. Thank you very much.