

General Assembly 11/19
Day 45 of Occupation
Meeting Location: Park Blocks, Jefferson and Park

The scene: Jefferson and Park. A crowd of cold people stand around a facilitator. The facilitator has a megaphone and stands on a chair. They are discussing logistical details of gaining a temporary restraining order. This is a legal device that could protect the camp from eviction or police harassment.

CQ: Is the restraining order geographically tied, or can it apply to any place? What is the best place? (Best place couldn't answer, however the restraining order should protect wherever)

CQ: We are all from different parts of this world. Can we use simple language so everyone understands? (Yes this should always be a goal)

the facilitator opens the matter to concerns. there were no concerns. then evolution.

CQ: If any part of this restraining order turns out to be geographically tied, can we bring that back to the GA? (yes)

CQ: If this restraining order fails do we lose anything? (no)

the facilitators asks for stand-asides and concerns. then the group achieved consensus.. everyone wanted to get a Temporary Restraining Order.

facilitators asked for people with immediate concerns to announce them

IM: A woman asked for agreement that the group didn't want anyone to defend us with violence. (Everyone agreed)

IM: Zach was arrested while occupying a foreclosed home yesterday. He asks for Occupy support Monday 1:45 pm at the Justice Center, 1120 SW 3rd Avenue. Courtroom 1. This is a noble cause that deserves our support.

facilitators asked for proposal announcements. these are first airings of proposals to get a sense of community feelings and whether a proposal would pass as currently structured.

To Be Proposed: To show respect and consideration for the police, would we be willing to agree pre-emptively to not sit or permanently occupy the street. Reasoning that it is escalating and dangerous to have our actions spill onto the streets in the heat of the moment.

DR: Today was a perfect example of how people policing themselves don't need

police. Our march for single-payer health care needed no police response. We policed ourselves.

DR: We can't dictate all circumstances all the time.

CQ: How can we negotiate with City Hall from a position of strength when we have nothing to bargain with: meaning, an Occupied space.

DR: A later proposal tonight will address that.

CQ: Fact one, the police lied to us a week ago 6 am Sunday. Fact two, the police lied during other marches. Fact three, police liaisons have lied to us repeatedly. Fact four, the police have attacked peaceful individuals. Given all these facts, we should be very cautious when dealing with police.

DR: Some Star Wars quote.

CQ: Does this question reflect an ongoing negotiation with the police, or is it a precursor to that conversation. (Proposer talked with cops as a medic)

CQ: Cops prefer us getting a permit.

DR: That march when Bush was here, beginning of Iraq war, they permitted the march, then walled in the march, and pointed tanks at us. I didn't go on another march until there was an unpermitted one.

DR: Many people are scared by violence. If we can stop police violence we can make our marches more palatable. It's sensible to work with police.

facilitators reminded everyone that proposal announcements are simply so people can air concerns in furtherance of workshopping. as concerns had been aired, it was decided to move on to the next proposal.

A-Camp spoke up to remind everyone of the need for central information so A-Camp can coordinate with everyone and provide safety and other resources.

Proposal Announcement: Oakland is calling for a close to all West Coast ports. We propose an action in support of this call.

CQ: What action specifically? (I'll take it to the action committee but basically swarm)

CQ: How well have you thought this out? They can send in the armed forces to open ports. (We should have mass demonstrations throughout the city and seek the support of unions that work in the port. We wouldn't have to close them down if the workers close themselves down)

Proposal Announcement: As discussed on facebook, let's make an agreement between Occupy Portland and the city and the police. It expresses a general statement from Occupy while still allowing autonomous civil disobedience. It will ask the city to refrain from using riot gear; the use of riot gear is itself an escalation. In exchange for using riot gear we will re-affirm our desire for peace. We will follow traffic laws in most circumstances. We will give twinkles when police do not show up in riot gear. De-escalate everybody.

CQ: Can we have a clause reflecting how to treat police officers who do not follow their own procedures? The police have brutalized people. (This proposal has a positive tone. It does not reflect negative behavior. We'll have to react to negative things in the moment)

a brief discussion as to whether this was a logistical or philosophical question and whether Spokescouncil or GA should deal with it. as the proposal had both philosophical and logistical elements it was decided it must be taken before both.

CQ: Isn't an arrest inherently an act of violence? ("peaceful arrest" is defined in the proposal, come work on the proposal to really articulate this one)

facilitators reminded everyone that these were prospective proposals; this is an opportunity to learn who is proposing things you want to help work on

Proposal Announcement: Let's have a proposal against bribing police officers with overtime and extra pay. Let's have an action for higher pay for police officers. Join Tequila to plan this.

CQ: Today we proved that we can march peacefully. Police enact an archaic social contract. Its time has passed. Please be arrested peacefully.

PA: The police want us out of the park by 9 pm. Let's move from the park to the sidewalk encircling this park. We can leave our posters but will have to take our structures to a parking spot. This would preserve our momentum. Let's make a skeleton crew to move things and have everyone else march.

CQ: How will this affect the City Hall candlelit vigil? (That'd be a good place to march to).

PA: Lots of supportive police exist. They want to spend Thanksgiving with their family. This is a negotiating chip. Let's make a big media announcement that in solidarity we'll give Thanksgiving off. This will let us prepare for Black Friday.

CQ: Are we having a big Occupy Thanksgiving dinner together? (We should!)

CQ: What's the point in giving police a break when the police persecute the homeless? We should keep police tired.

DR: I talked to the police today too, and they told me they wouldn't be there if they weren't needed. They weren't there today.

DR: The police go where they're told to go. They don't have a choice in showing up or not. We shouldn't blame them for doing their jobs or following orders.

PA: The eyes of the world are looking to Portland to lead with this movement. Let's make a call for a national general strike on May Day, May 1st, 2012. This is very far away but this action will take a great deal of planning/outreach. This movement started with a flyer. A national general strike could start with a call.

CQ: What would be the statement of purpose for the general strike. (We're avoiding definition right now, just putting the idea out there)

CQ: What date? (May 1st) Shouldn't we dream big for this day (yes).

CQ: Shouldn't we consult with other Occupies around the nation? (Yes this will be an opportunity to develop national communications. Still, Portland can lead the way with imaging/messaging)

CQ: Planning for May 1st affirms our longevity.

CQ: Take it international.

the floor was opened to proposals, no proposals were raised

next, we discussed police actions over the last week

"I was planning on catching a bus to visit my girlfriend in Olympia, Washington. But my bus stop was next to the Chase Bank. I occupied the lobby. When I went to the bus stop there was no bus. There were riot cops. They walked into me and shoved me. I stood my ground. They were very angry. They were talking about what they were going to do. I chanted, 'Are we the villains? Should we be beaten?' I was still planning on catching my bus. When they moved out I walked into the street to look for my bus. A police officer grabbed my collar and threw me to the ground. I pointed at the cop and said, 'I could be anybody.' This was called harassment. They arrested me. There is video footage. Now I have a ticket for disorderly conduct. Please give me advice and support."

DR: If anyone has police complaints, there is a phone number for internal complaints. 503 823 3333. Come to SpokesCouncil to meet people involved with legal side of things.

"I was there on Thursday as a medic. I have some observations and suggestions. I witnessed an officer raising a firearm at unarmed protestors behind the Standard Insurance Center. At moments like these we need video. Because of our video this officer was identified. When Bosh had a bike thrown at him, there was no video. Video needs to be able to identify police officers. We need to watch out for protestors who are not in large groups. Stragglers are targeted. We need multiple angles. We need to manage our public relations. We need to control our media. We need to defend ourselves rationally and peacefully. Technology lets us get the truth out."

DR: Use social media to ask for video cameras with wide-angle lenses. Handicams are limited because of their narrow focal length. I saw a woman trampled but my camera missed it. It traumatized me that I missed that image.

CQ: Can we get more livestream? (we should)

CQ: Let's get a public place with big photos and a big screen to show the truth of the movement. (good idea)

DR: The phone number for internal complaints is good but also go to

Portland Online slash auditor. This is a citizen-based initiative. I filed a complaint and received a letter in response. Get the name of police officers.
www.portlandonline.com/auditor

DR: Livestream is working on getting a second camera. Look into Ustream, it's an awesome application. Use it on smart phones.

CQ: Does Blackberry have Ustream? (google)

DR: The best way to support arrestees is to keep protesting. When police have to come to new marches they can't testify for tickets, protestors get out free.

the facilitators moved on to immediate needs after discussing the indictment of Dane Reister, a Portland police officer who mistakenly loaded live ammunition into a "less-lethal" shotgun.

Immediate Need: Today has been very interesting! We occupied a new park. However our numbers are currently smaller than our previous occupations. We should see how many people are staying before we discuss what we'll be doing.

Lt. Crooker from the Portland Police entered the meeting

Lt. Crooker: The police will be enforcing the park closure at 9 pm.

DR: How will you be enforcing this plan? (We're hoping you'll leave on your own. We hope to not arrest anyone. This is an arrestable offense.)

DR: I would like to thank police for their respect.

DR: I thought we got 24 hours? (That was the other park)

CQ: Is it illegal to Occupy PSU after 9 pm? (yes)

as people disassembled the kitchen, we moved to General Announcements

GA: Please help the kitchen. Friday/Saturday after next, December 2nd/3rd, we'll have a day of morale in support of everyone injured, etc.. This will be a beautiful moment.

GA: December 1st First Thursday there will be an art share with Occupy Art. Spread the word! But if anyone tries to make money off our art we'll take the art off the walls.

GA: This coming Friday we'll be doing a candlelight vigil around Pioneer Square. All night to stand in solidarity with homeless and those on streets. Remind citizens on busiest shopping day of the year.

and with that everyone packed up to avoid arrest. reconvene tomorrow 3 pm Ankeny Plaza (west landing of Burnside Bridge)