

Transcript of the Emory University Senate meeting with Emory University President Greg Fenves on May 1, 2024, 9-10am

This meeting was moderated by the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 combined Executive Committee of the Emory University Senate.

George Shepherd: This meeting is for members of the Senate only and no guests. And so please turn on your camera and put your name and title in your image. I would like also to thank President Fenves and Provost Bellamkonda, and other administrators for being here. Thank you very much. I hope that we can have a full and frank discussion of the events in the last week so that we can all understand more fully what happened, and how the decisions were made. And if there are any lessons for the future. We started our discussion yesterday with the senate executive committee. And we are delighted that we can continue our discussion today with the full Senate. We have only an hour here together. Well, it's really 56 minutes, because we need to deal with a quick motion right at the end, so we have decided not to devote time to introductions. So, the Executive Committee has drafted a bunch of questions. And we've divided them up among the committee to ask. And we have only about three or four minutes per questioner. So, just like yesterday, I've been authorized to be the friendly emcee to remind people when time is up, and I apologize in advance if I'm too harsh. After about 35 or 40 minutes of this questioning, we will have an open session for 20 minutes or so where anyone can ask questions. And if you want to talk, please raise your electronic hand and I will recognize you. And after that we need to deal with a quick motion and vote. But first, I've asked the administration to spend a few minutes five or so minutes to provide some opening remarks.

Greg Fenves: As they all right, good morning, had a little zoom problem today. So, thank you, George, and good morning to the University Senate and guests. I know this is an unprecedented a tough time at Emory. And I know our community is hurting. And in the days since last Thursday's protests and over the weekend and throughout the beginning of this week. I've heard that from across the campus and many voices. And as George said at this meeting of the University Senate, I want to hear from you, answer your questions, and begin to talk about next steps so that our community can begin to heal. So, before we get to questions, George gave me a few minutes and I'm going to use those few minutes to provide some context.

To go back, we could go to Monday. Actually, let me back up even before that, this academic year, there have been many peaceful protests, vigils and gatherings at the Emory campus, here and in Oxford. I believe and understand there have been more than 70 events that have engaged our open expression observers. This has been an important value at Emory open expression.

The open expression policy works very well. And we could see that through the academic year. None of these protests through the academic year have included encampments, semi-permanent fixtures on our campus grounds. And my position has always been that encampments aren't allowed on our campus. Why is that? They can be incredibly disruptive to the core functions of the university or education and teaching missions and research. They can affect the campus climate in adverse ways. And they affect the experience of others who live and learn and work here. Our open expression policy provides very broad opportunity to speak dissent and protest. But like any open expression policy, there are limitations and I believe a reasonable limitation is to not allow encampment. There are many other places and means to protest under our policy. And from what I've seen at other universities, encampments will grow over time. But they need to end at some point. And the longer an encampment is in place, the harder it is to remove. There are examples of universities moving to clear encampments and universities that allowed

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them to stay and grow. And the impact on most campuses that have allowed them to remain has been enormous. Now I want to do want to get to a week ago Monday, early morning, Monday last week, there were numerous buildings on the quad that were vandalized.

EPD investigators responded quickly. And based on the information from their investigation at that time. They were determined to be in a heightened state of readiness with information that they obtained from that investigation. And for example, several buildings on the quad became keycard access only. And security had been increased over the week. And that's how the week began and leading up to the events of last Thursday. So, George, I wanted to just lay out that context. Glad to go over the timeline now or to address it in questions that come up.

George Shepherd: Why don't we just address it in questions that come up? I think there are a bunch of questions about that. So why don't we just proceed with the questions? And there's a list of things that I'll just monitor here. So, the first would be Nitika?

Nitika Gupta: Hi, everyone. And thank you, everybody, for being here. As you know, my questions, I'm really a stickler for process. And I've asked this question yesterday as well. But we do need to ask it again, for a wider audience. If you can walk us through on how information reaches you. How do you gather information? Who are the people who supply you with the information, your information team, based on which you make decisions? And the second part is when you make decisions, who all do you include in your decision making? Not information, not informing, but in your decision-making process? Thank you.

Greg Fenves: Yeah, so it depends on the situation and an assessment in the case of Thursday morning. Again, it's worthwhile to go through the timeline, but I'll try to answer your question directly. It was, it became clear from information from EPD, who were on the quad early in the morning, that an encampment was being set up. So, I immediately got in touch with Vice President Cheryl Elliot, as EPD was responding to the situation. And in general, in its if it's related to a safety matter, I rely on EPD going through Vice President Cheryl Elliot. So the chain of command in decisions like that are through the EPD chief. And that day, the EPD chief was out sick. And so, it was the deputy chief through Vice President Elliot to me. And so that was based on the assessment I was getting from our police department.

George Shepherd: Thank you. Thanks very much. The next is the question from Jodie and this might be a good opportunity, I'm looking to go through a little bit of the timeline too. But, Jodie, thank you.

Jodie Guest: Thank you, President Fenves. As I asked you these questions yesterday, and you were very illustrative with your timeline with these questions. So, I asked you to consider doing that again today. Why were outside forces called and who made that decision?

Greg Fenves: So, I will take a take the time or the opportunity for the question, Jodie, to talk about the timeline on the morning of the 25th. So early that morning, a few dozen protesters arrived on the campus. And when, as I mentioned earlier, EPD had been on a higher state of readiness. And there were officers on the quad, early that morning. And when these when these individuals arrived, they ignored questions

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from the EPD and pushed past them and began to set up tents and other equipment on the Quad and this was early morning, we're going to pin down the exact timeframe, but it was some it was between seven and 7:30 or 7:40. The encampment was set up pretty rapidly in the quad, it was in an area that had been taped off in front of the commencement stage, because preparations were underway for the ceremony, to prepare for the ceremony. So just in the beginning, going past this tape area in a commencement preparation zone was a disruptive action to the operations of the university. EPD observed and others who were watching the quad observed the individuals had brought their own media that had been set up around the quad. It appeared, and this is part of the fact finding we will go through, they appeared to have advisors or monitors. And the assessment at that time again, coming through EPD is that this was pre-planned and well organized. In addition, it was important to note that there were social media posts in various social media channels calling for others to come to the quad at Emory. Again, as we go through our review with EPD we're asking participants are they part of the Emory community, and that's part of our policy to ask, individuals are expected to identify themselves, but they did not identify themselves. So, because of these factors EPD made the assessment that these individuals were not Emory community members. And as I wrote earlier in the week, based on what we know now, it's clear that this assessment was not fully accurate about who was there. But that was the observations and the information we had at the time about the planning of the organization. Being in an area that was taped off for commencement, and refusal to indicate whether you belong to or were part of the Emory community or not, was part of the overall assessment at that time.

Jodie Guest: Thank you.

Greg Fenves: So that's, that's where we were. And it was also in the context of the vandalism and the risk that the encampments would grow, that this could turn into an ongoing disruption in the heart of the campus. So, I made the decision to not allow the encampment. So that was my decision. Then once I directed Vice President Elliot to that, that becomes an EPD. The decisions then become law enforcement, decisions about how to do that.

Jodie Guest: Thank you. When outside forces are called on to campus, can you walk us through who does EPD call? And did they call both APD and the Georgia State Patrol or just APD? How did Georgia State Patrol get involved? And then can you walk us through who remains commander and makes decisions about force on campus?

Greg Fenves: So EPD works with the Atlanta Police Department, we are in the city of Atlanta, that's our local police agency. They have established protocols about how to request for APD, to request assistance of APD. They've been used in the past. And so, the chief requested assistance from APD to be prepared to remove the encampments if that became necessary. Again, that was a law enforcement decision, but it's within the normal protocols. The Georgia State Patrol were there. Emory PD did not call for the Georgia State Patrol. And we do have to, we are part of our fact finding is, is what? What was the reason for the Georgia State Patrol to be there? So that is a question that remains. When APD appears on campus at our request, they set up a, there's a term they use, joint incident command, that APD and

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Emory EPD and APD communicate, again to the goal of removing the encampments. And then they make decisions between themselves about actions to do that.

George Shepherd: Thank you, Shervon.

Shervon Lewis: Thank you. Good morning, everyone. My question is, and you kind of alluded to it a little bit already, how were individuals determined as Emory or not? And were the police told to treat them differently?

Greg Fenves: So, police treat everybody the same whether they're Emory community or a non-Emory community. Under our policies, if, if a police officer asks, ask you, are you associated with Emory, a faculty member, staff, student, a guest at somebody's invitation, the expectation is that you will provide an answer. So, the information we have is the EPD approached individuals that were in the encampment and did not get responses of any type.

Shervon Lewis: Okay, thank you. And my second question is, when was the administration notified of the arrests made? And what information did you get?

Greg Fenves: Of the arrest? So, Vice President Elliot throughout the morning [pause] Well, so let me, so I'm going to give a vague answer because I don't know exactly the timing of that. Because, again, this is a level of information I'm not familiar with, but as arrests were being made by law enforcement, EPD was getting some information, but it was a pretty, pretty involved process. It took several hours. So, I remember several hours before we understood the number of individuals arrested. And what the charges were.

George Shepherd: Neeti, is Neeti on the call yet?

Neeti Patel: I'm here.

George Shepherd: Great. All right.

Neeti Patel: So, my question was, was the University Senate Committee on open expression involved in the chain of events that occurred Thursday morning.

Greg Fenves: So, what happened Thursday is I did call the President of the University Senate, we had a brief call, where I explained what was happening on the quad. And, and my direction that we were going to remove the encampment. And I did ask Dean Gelaye to contact the chair of the open expression committee. I can't remember if they talked yet, we'll have to go back and figure that out. But there certainly was either a text message or a voicemail to inform him. But I don't know if there was a response, but it was for information. Because at that point.

Neeti Patel: Okay. So, you didn't wait to hear the response?

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Greg Fenves: So, no, I did not. I had already made the decision that this needs to be removed. And, and the reason is I have to do this is important. They can grow with time. And it becomes harder to remove a larger encampment. And we could already see over the time that EPD had called APD, the number of Emory community members that were joining, and I was very concerned about the safety of everybody, and this growing over time and making it an even more difficult situation.

George Shepherd: Dawn.

Neeti Patel: I'm sorry. I had two more questions on here.

George Shepherd: Um, let's see. I don't know if we have time. We have time for about one very short question.

Neeti Patel: Okay. Well, let me just clarify that. So, you, you did not wait to hear back for open expression before making the decision to disperse the encampment?

Greg Fenves: I did not because I did not know how long it was going to take.

George Shepherd: Dawn.

Dawn Francis-Chewning: Yes. Again, these questions were asked yesterday. First question, who decided to move all the demonstrators to a small area within the quad before the Georgia State Patrol arrived?

Greg Fenves: So, I can't answer that question. Because I wasn't on the ground. And so, we will, that's a question we'll need to look at. I wasn't aware of that happening. And that's part of the fact finding that we want to conduct.

Dawn Francis-Chewning: Okay, who made the final decision to disperse the demonstration.

Greg Fenves: That was a law enforcement decision. And it was part, and let me back up. So, it would have been a law enforcement decision based on what they were seeing there. But let me also add, after the encampment was removed there, there was a large demonstration on the quad. So, it was continuing. In fact, it continued throughout the day and the evening.

Dawn Francis-Chewning: Okay, what was the impetus for bringing in Georgia State Patrol a second time that evening.

Greg Fenves: So again, we need to look at that in more detail. The protest did go on continuously that day as I mentioned, and a portion of it did move to the Candler School of Theology. We again need to go back and collect the information. But a portion of that protest did become violent. And there was a real

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danger that the protesters would have gone into Candler School of Theology. The doors had been locked. There were individuals that were having a vigil very, very peacefully within Candler. And I was, I was, there was a concern, and I wasn't on the ground there, that this violent protest could get even more dangerous.

George Shepherd: Tolu

Neeti Patel: I don't think she's here, but I can read off her questions.

George Shepherd: Um, why don't you just read out one of her questions?

Neeti Patel: Yeah. It's about communication strategy. And so, what was the impetus for telling people to avoid the quad early Thursday morning, and why did it state that we had limited involvement in the demonstrations?

Greg Fenves: So, those were two communications, Neeti. So, it is a standard practice by EPD. And our emergency response was that if there is police activity, we send out a notice to the entire community. So that went out once. It may have gone out twice. And that's standard practice. Anytime that that may occur, I think the communication you're referring to. I wanted to This is a balance between getting communication out efficiently because people want to know what's happening, and having the goal of trying to be 100% accurate. And, and so at the time, I felt it was imperative to send out a communication, I think that went out at about 11am. And by that time, there was still activity happening on the quad. As I mentioned earlier, we're still getting information. And when I hit send on the message at 11am, it was based on the information we had at the time, the decision was made to remove the encampment. We now know that that was not fully accurate. And I apologize for that mischaracterization. But I wanted to get that information out. The fact is it was still an encampment. It was growing, it looked like it was growing and had continued to grow over about two hours. And it was becoming severely disruptive. So, I wanted to get the information out, the information we had at the time, out as soon as possible.

George Shepherd: Mustapha.

Mustapha Oloko-Oba: Alright, thank you. So, I had this question yesterday, but for the benefit of others who are just coming in today, will there be any consequences for Student Conduct for the students who were arrested during the protest? And if there will be any consequences, what sort of consequences are likely?

Greg Fenves: So, this will be a student affairs decision. It will be handled by the Student Conduct Office as all student conduct issues are, and it will be based on each situation. So, I can't say, I can't say at this point because Student Conduct, they'll have to have to look at each situation.

Mustapha Oloko-Oba: And how is Emory ensuring the safety of facility management employees who have been tasked with removing graffiti and other protest items on site at any hour of the day?

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Greg Fenves: Well, I'm concerned about safety for all members of the Emory community. Our facilities management staff are doing very hard work. They're doing a lot of extra work beyond their normal duties. Monday morning, that Monday morning, I mentioned after the vandalism, there were crews out from facilities management, cleaning and starting to remove the vandalism because we want to remove it as quickly as possible because of the messages that were in there. And because it, it defaces our buildings. And again, this was a time students were walking to class and we didn't want them to see the graffiti that's not allowed. And so, I've talked with a couple of our facilities management, facilities service staff, thank them for their work. They're the ones that had to clean up after the events of Thursday there. We've had lots of protests since then, over the weekend and early in the weekend. Each day they go in and clean it up. We are concerned about their safety. And that's part of the reason we do have a heightened, heightened EPD presence so that everybody's safe, including the workers who are out there to keep the campus in the condition we like it.

Mustapha Oloko-Oba: Okay, so just a follow up to that. While you mentioned vandalization, do we know the identity of those responsible for the vandalization on the plant buildings?

Greg Fenves: To my knowledge, no. EPD has started an investigation. As I mentioned earlier, what they found through their initial investigation led to heightened alert in the week. But these investigations take time. And our police department is working overtime to keep the campus safe. So that does have a priority over these investigations.

George Shepherd: Thank you. I'm just before April goes, I just had a question. Is there any thought that our EPD has an insufficient number of personnel because every time we bring in outside people, we don't have as much control over their conduct?

Greg Fenves: We will certainly be looking at that. What is the right size for the police department at Emory is a really important question. It had been the right size. Until recently, Emory has been a safe campus. And we're all grateful for that so that we can do our teaching and our research and learning and live on campus. And it had been the right size. This is a different time now. And we are going to look at what is the right size for EPD. But whatever that right size is, there are going to be times where we need assistance from our local law enforcement agency, APD. For potential situations like this, a very large encampment, for example, we won't have a police department that is of a sufficient size with a number of officers available on duty. And we rely on our local law enforcement agency. I don't want to concern anybody, but you know, incidents with firearms can occur on a university campus. We get bomb scares; we don't have that capability here. So, we do have to rely on other law enforcement agencies.

George Shepherd: April.

April Edward: Morning. How does the rhetoric of trespassing for non-Emory affiliated people go along with our strategic plan pillar of Emory in Atlanta?

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Greg Fenves: Well, let me talk about Emory in Atlanta. It is such a tremendous part of Emory. Atlanta is such a tremendous part of Emory and Emory wants to be an important part of Atlanta. Every day, we have hundreds, if not thousands, of visitors, many from Atlanta, on the campus. We are an open campus, and we need to be an open campus. That's part of the university's role as being an important institution in the city. We have people coming to lectures, coming to classes, to cultural events and to the museums. And that's the way it should be. We want to be welcoming to all members of Atlanta and far beyond. And it works beautifully. And that's the way it should work in a university. But when there is a situation where there's a safety concern, and the situation last Thursday with a well-planned, well-planned encampment, there is a safety concern. And then I believe we, I and the university have a responsibility to determine who is there. And I don't think that's an unreasonable expectation. And if somebody is not supposed to be there, because they're not Emory, not part of the Emory community, we do need, we do need to know that. And if they're not supposed to be there, or the Emory community is not supposed to be there due to a safety situation, then, then that is a trespass because they're not supposed to be there.

George Shepherd: Noelle.

Noelle McAfee: Thank you. Well, thank you very much for coming back. So, the question I asked yesterday, I want to just say that quickly, to what you said and reframe the question. But the question was, what would you do differently if you had the same kind of information about the facts on the ground, and for the most part, you said you would do the same thing. So, I'll put it a little differently. In one sense, would you be willing to acknowledge the shortcomings in the decision-making process? But actually, I want to put it in a broader sense that is fundamental. It seems like the fundamental decision was that the first priority, an overarching priority, whatever the consequences, was to dismantle the encampment. The other universities around the country have not made that decision, that decision to dismantle the Encampment, turn it over to EPD, which then turned it over to APD, that which somehow brought in the Georgia State Patrol, lead to fines, mayhem. I was arrested. I haven't been able to sleep at night. And I was let go first. This is this. The consequences have been enormous for our campus. So, the overarching decision to just dismantle the encampments, no matter what. It's not something that had to happen. This commitment to law and order and safety has the consequence of clamping down on spaces for free discussion. And when it, when people feel like they don't really have a space to camp out, then they resort to less than palatable means. And so, my own work in political philosophy is thinking about public spaces for public discussion. I'm involved in this because that's what I care about. Universities should model that. I'm going to close with this little anecdote and ask you what you think. A friend of mine was the president of the University of Alabama, at the very end of the 1960s. One day, he came back from an out-of-town trip to find students and camped in his office, they were sitting there, were occupying his office. And he called in the head of the Student Government Association to come over and then he sat down. So, my recommendation to those who are thinking about dismantling is that they actually, forgive me, if this sounds disrespectful, they go to REI, and get a tent and go take it to the quad and sit down. That would be creating a space for people to think more, in a more nuanced issue, instead of the oversimplification that happens in these protests, because there's no space for discussion and deliberation. If they're taking in other people's points of view. So, the university is modeling this priority

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for safety, and, and not modeling spaces for civic discourse. So, in light of what I just said, would you do anything differently were this to happen again?

Greg Fenves: Well no, these are great questions. I believe Emory has lots of space for civil discourse, it takes place every day. And we should look for what those appropriate spaces are. And how do we facilitate those discussions, they are so important to what happens at the university. But as I have seen at other universities, you can see in the news today, these aren't tents in the quad, where students and faculty or others are gathering for important discussions. They grow quickly. They can be safety hazards in themselves. They become highly disruptive to the university. There are members of our community who, it changes the way they look at the university. And they can be very difficult to end. They can go on for a long time. So, if we can have spaces, as you, as you mentioned, I'm certainly open to that. But what I have seen, and what I've seen around the country, those are not spaces for having these important discussions.

Noelle McAfee: But they could be. And all I'll end with is, I mean, if they did go on, what's wrong? And then the decision to dismantle them, no matter what, led to violence. It led to violence against our students and our faculty. It was, it was, I think, a really terrible decision.

George Shepherd: I think we have to move on. Thank you. Well, I think we have to move on now that we'll look to the open session part of our of proceedings. And we have already three people on the queue. First will be Francis.

Francis Yeji: Yes, thank you so much for having me, and, and an opportunity to ask my questions on behalf of the students who I speak for. I would like to preface this because I currently now lead the Graduate Students Association, Government Association in Emory. And this is my first time connecting. I missed all what has been going on since last week, which we are all very worried about, and what has happened. And so, I would want to make this opening statement very quickly. I just took over officially. And I think among all these student leaders, I am the last to have taken office just two days ago on Monday. So, there are a lot of things that I don't know, especially the fact that I have not been transitioned yet by anybody. Apart from a few comments I got from CELT, who are also currently because of the situation, not in place.

So having said that, all I want to say is that now, all of a sudden, and as graduate students, what happened last Thursday, and the students I lead, are going through a lot of situations, traumatic situations, or miss exams or miss preparing to graduate, and want to graduate, and going through a lot of stress. And so, my first question would be, what is the administration currently doing to support students in what they are going through, as well as what happens post the protests and the arrests of students, staff, and faculty. What is the administration doing to support them post arrest? Are there any measures that we are doing to support them?

Greg Fenves: Well, thank you for your question. Francis, congratulations on being president of GSGA. We are looking at all of that, and how we support our students. As you mentioned, Campus Life in general,

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is working very hard with all with all students in a very, very distressing time. And we look forward to working with you and the GSGA leadership and the other student governance organizations to hear from you in this time, how to how to be able to best support you.

Francis Yeji: Thank you.

George Shepherd: I think we have to move on to the next question, I'm sorry. It will be Kenan.

Kenan Bajraktarevic: Yeah, I have three quick questions. So, you highlighted that the primary reason for the protests being considered not permissible was the nature that it was an encampment. So first, I was wondering where those students protesting were told or communicated that their encampments broke the university's open expression policy, to your knowledge.

Greg Fenves: To my knowledge, I don't know. That's part of the fact finding that we're doing.

Kenan Bajraktarevic: Okay. And then, so yesterday, the Oxford SGA met and multiple people from the Oxford SGA, who looked through the open expression policy, found no mention of encampments. I'm just wondering, are encampments a violation of the codified open expression policy? I'm just looking for a yes or no.

Greg Fenves: It is not in the policy.

Kenan Bajraktarevic: Okay. And,

George Shepherd: I think we need to, Kenan, I think we need to give somebody else a chance.

George Shepherd: So, Susan.

Kenan Bajraktarevic: Okay. All right. Thank you. Thank you.

Susan Ray: Thank you very much for coming to speak with us. And I'm Susan Ray from the School of Medicine. I've been at Emory forever, and my family, my parents, my children, my grandparents, have all been at Emory. And I love the school. And I think we all do, and we want for Emory's legacy to be a positive one, and not to be ruined, or significantly harmed in this time. One of the things that seemed clear, seems to me, that the students, protesters had not felt that the administration was paying any attention to them. And their concerns, and I have read about ways administrations have engaged with students and other universities that sound very collaborative and fruitful. For example Brown, where they are meeting together to have dialogue about what to do, or their concerns. Or their times. Have you been, over the last seven months, had the administration been meeting with students, and really seriously entertaining their concerns about examining even whether it was possible to engage with the kinds of things they were asking for or not?

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Greg Fenves: We have. Many will think that was not enough. But again, through the student organizations, the leadership organizations with fabulous communications, I did meet with various student groups, but perhaps could have done more of that. But that's something I'm certainly open to reexamining.

George Shepherd: Thank you. And next would be Ilya. And let's just try to keep our questions short so as many people as possible have a chance, Ilya.

Ilya Nemenman: I'm Ilya and I lead the Open Expression Committee right. So, what I start with is that we need to have police in some situations, right? So, it is important to understand that the protest was in violation of policy. And the standard here, Atlanta things are different from other institutions as [*uninterpretable*] because they stop Cop City movement, it adds additional dimensions to the whole situation, right? I get it that the tents are inherently a problem, as far as police is concerned, especially in a state like Georgia, where gun control is absent and who knows what's inside those stands, right, I get all of this. What I do not understand is, why the choice was made to short circuit the open expression policy, right? The policy is very explicit that there have to be communications with the chair, the chair has to kind of certify that all attempts to resolve violations to negotiate with the protesters are not going anywhere, and then has to agree to the arrests. And I wasn't looking forward to it. I was scared to have to make those decisions. And I was kind of relieved that I didn't have to. But I don't understand why this wasn't done, why we did not follow the policy.

Greg Fenves: Yeah, that's an excellent question. And I would have liked to have done that. But the information I had at the time with the assessment was that this was going to grow, become even more dangerous. And I was concerned about open expression observers and open expression committee, they're just as you are related. And that's a decision I'll take responsibility for because this looked like it was going to grow quickly.

George Shepherd: Um, Neeti. If you could be quick, because you've already had a chance to ask one question, but that's fine. Just go ahead.

Neeti Patel: Yeah, I just wanted to ask if you have engaged with the protesters, seemingly they've been on the quad every day since then regarding their demands, which I just want to clarify, it was complete and total divestment from Israeli apartheid and cop city, which is, you know, what they wanted this school to listen to. And the negligence of even listening to that since October is what's causing all of this violence. And I just really want that to be clear for the 80 people in this room.

George Shepherd: Josh.

Josh Kaufman: Um, thank you President Fenves and everyone.

Neeti Patel: I'm sorry, can we answer the question? Have you attempted to engage with the protesters on those demands?

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Greg Fenves: I had met with students earlier.

Neeti Patel: No, since Thursday.

Greg Fenves: No, I have not.

Neeti Patel: Thank you.

George Shepherd: Again, Josh Kaufman.

Josh Kaufman: I just wanted to ask a quick follow up regarding what April touched upon earlier with trespassing. And specifically, to ask for clarifications around the difference between the charges and the campus bands that were brought against students, faculty and staff, and those who are a part of the Emory community, but don't identify currently all students, faculty and staff, so maybe alumni or students from parents' tuitions. I'm just wondering about maybe updates on those charges or bands and the difference between faculty, staff and students and other folks who are part of the Emory community.

Greg Fenves: So, I don't have any more updates. One of our university attorneys was at the hearings the next morning and did ask to waive restrictions on returning to campus, especially for students so that they could complete their classes and studying. I don't have any information right now about the other charges and the conditions.

George Shepherd: JaMor Hariston

JaMor Hariston: Hello, everybody. We're here some PhD student here. But directly to my question. I actually want to run back to what Noelle said. I don't feel her question was answered and that was, would you do something different from your decision?

Greg Fenves: This is part of what we're going to collect the information. That's very important. And I can't answer that now, based on what I know so far. And we will certainly look at, at how the decision was made. And are there ways to improve it.

George Shepherd: James.

James Chizungo I'm an MBA candidate. I have one question, but it's really split up in two parts. Yesterday, graduate students at Goizueta received notification that the Business School has invited the Global Head of Investor Relations for Starbucks to speak on campus. For anyone sort of questioning relevance, Starbucks and McDonald's have sort of evolved as the most prominent and high-profile controversial companies within the BDS movement in light of sort of the current temperature on campus and everything discussed in this call. And do you think that now is sort of the best time to be inviting such a senior executive of a controversial company on campus?

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Greg Fenves: An open expression policy is our policy. Back to some of the earlier discussion, this should be a place for debate, to hear from perspectives. I think when universities get in the position of not allowing speakers based on their viewpoint, it's hard to make the decision that when, you know, which one, which viewpoints do you pick, which viewpoints do you not allow? I will point out, on Sunday, there was a very controversial speaker, who was scheduled to speak at the law school. Sunday, it was a very busy day of protests, all peaceful. And we welcomed that speaker, was welcomed by the by the law students and their organizations. I don't think it turned out the way they wanted to. But if I had gotten that question, should we disinvite? Or should the law school disinvite that speaker? I think it would have been a problem.

JaMor Hariston: Okay. And so just the really quick, the second part of that question, is that, if given the high profile nature of the speaker, if this were to escalate in a similar way, as the protests did last week, are you prepared to redeploy the same type of violent resources that resulted in the arrests that we saw broadcasted online globally?

Greg Fenves: The answer is we want to keep the campus safe. And if we have lots of protests around speakers, and there's, that's what the open expression policy is for, that we'll have open expression observers there. But how that transpires depends on what happens, and I can't say, I can't say, because it depends on what happens. It will be an open expression event.

JaMor Hariston: Okay. But so are we...

George Shepherd: James, we have to continue on. I'm sorry. And we only have about seven more minutes and we have four people that want to ask questions. So, Joy.

Joy McDougall: Thank you. I know, first of all, I want to say, well, one thing I want to just underscore something that George said, that I've seen this at Yale's campus, they had a larger police force. And this seems to be something I mean, within the Yale community, to help clear their encampment and deal with and deescalate. And I think that's just extraordinarily important to look at right now. The two things, that there's lots of bits and pieces and competing narratives, and I don't know everything, but there's a couple of pieces that would help me to understand the heightened level of alert. And that is, and I don't know if you can speak to that, but what was this graffiti? And what the line is to hate speech? And is it simply what the vandalism of that property? What actually precipitated that extreme sense of anxiety and fear about the safety that will help me a lot. And the last thing is, I wanted to know if anybody else was called into deescalate that morning, like people from the office of religious life or other people from open expression, whatever. I wonder whether de-escalation in a very fluid and difficult situation. So, I want to say that I hear that, but what else could be brought in?

Greg Fenves: So, I'm on the first question. We don't allow graffiti on our buildings, whatever it is. So, it, it could have been a peaceful message. We don't allow graffiti. So, the content of the graffiti was not relevant to having it removed. But the content and other materials from that vandalism were relevant, as

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a result of the investigation that EPD had done. And at this time, I can't say any more about that, because the investigation is still ongoing. To your question of de-escalation. Yes, we would like to de-escalate a potentially violent situation. But as I answered with Ilya's question, I did not feel it was safe to try to do it because of the information I had about how the protest was developing and started to grow.

George Shepherd: Thank you. David.

David Kulp: I am one of the alumni representatives. In the last week or so and beyond, I know that in the last several years, there have been concerted efforts, starting in my time with President Claire Sterk to talk to alumni about this issue in particular, and I'm sort of curious, In what ways is the university planning to engage with alumni given that these videos have now been seen across the US and the world, is my first question. And the second question, how is the school planning on responding to alumni who are concerned that some of the speech that has been coming out in these videos and from campus crosses a boundary into hate speech? And in what ways? Is the school going to reevaluate their policies about what qualifies as speech that is appropriate on campus? Thank you.

Greg Fenves: Well, those are two, two important questions. And we'll work with AAE on how we can communicate to our 150,000 alumni. The priority now is to make sure that we can finish the semester and have a commencement for the class of 2024. We will be having a communications plan.

Your question about open expression is a very, very crucial, but also challenging question. We have a broad open expression policy. Again, I'll say it's a very good policy. And it doesn't, it doesn't have a category of hate speech. And even though I know, and I think everybody knows, there's hateful speech. But very much like the First Amendment, there isn't the category of hate speech. We can call it out, we can identify it, we can criticize it. But if we're going to have open expression, to have a category of speech that is not included, I think for many may seem desirable, but it's very, very hard to do, to take actions on identifying some speech as hateful. And then who makes that decision, under what criteria? And what actions should be taken? So, this is a fundamental issue of free speech. And I believe our open expression policy handles it well.

George Shepherd: Thank you. We have a hard stop in about two and a half minutes. So, we'll do our best here. But there's three more people on the queue.

Michael Martin: Okay, thank you. I'm Michael, I teach at Oxford College. I'm the Chair of the Committee on the environment. I wanted to know if at any point on Thursday you had the opportunity or took the opportunity to see what was happening on the quad with your own eyes. And if you didn't, why that was the case?

Greg Fenves: I was. We got there sometime near 8am. And so, I could see it.

George Shepherd: Um, let's see. I think Kenan was first and then Khegan.

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Kenan Bajraktarevic: Okay, thank you. So, the universities at Oxford last night, Emory SGA voted to proceed with a referendum of no confidence in your leadership. Will you listen to the students if this proceeds?

Greg Fenves: I will listen to the students if that proceeds or if it doesn't proceed.

Kenan Bajraktarevic: Okay. Thank you.

George Shepherd: Khegan.

Khegan Meyers: This might be a good question to exit off on because it talks about the future. For some of your answers, you spoke about an external review going forward so you can understand the events in the morning. That's obviously seeking a more objective truth. I think everybody has a different kind of angle on things. But what's really important is that that is not delayed. I know those investigations take time. But, you know, as Kenan just mentioned, there's voting going on whether we have confidence in your leadership. So, can you commit to having that review out in an expedited manner? Or at least some kind of communication out to the community about what the decision making was that morning in a very explicit and detailed manner with timestamps? And things like that? And if not, why not?

Greg Fenves: We are going to try to do the investigation as expeditiously as possible. There's a lot of information. There were many people involved, but we will try to accomplish it in an expeditious manner, as I said.

George Shepherd: Well, thank you so much. I'm sorry we don't have any time for further questions. And I just wanted to thank very much President Fenves and the other administrators who appeared today and also thanks, everybody, for their thoughtful questions.