



MEMORANDUM

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: BEAU D. PRYOR, CHIEF OF POLICE

BY: SHAWN COSGROVE, POLICE COMMANDER

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION TO PURCHASE BODY WORN CAMERAS FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

DATE: SEPTEMBER 10, 2019

SUMMARY OF ACTION:

Council's approval to purchase body worn cameras for the Police Department.

IMPACT ON FINANCIAL AND PERSONNEL RESOURCES:

This action will have no impact to the General Fund or the Police Department's operating budget. The purchase is to be fully funded by a Supplemental Law Enforcement Services Fund (SLESF) Citizens Option for Public Safety (COPS) Grant program. The total cost funded by the grant is \$60,625.00 for thirty (30) cameras, redaction software, pairing and docking stations, and technology support and maintenance program. Pricing is based on a State contract award from the Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC) to ensure lowest contractual cost.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended the City Council approve the purchase of body worn cameras for Police Department staff funded through the awarded SLESF (COPS) Grant program.

BACKGROUND:

As part of the Police Department's 2019-2020 Strategic Plan, and at the recommendation of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, the Chief of Police is a proponent of introducing a body worn camera program. Presently, officers are not wearing body worn cameras on their person.

ANALYSIS OF ISSUES:

In May 2015, the President of the United States released the final report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. Contained in this report was the recommendation that law enforcement agencies implement body worn camera programs to create transparency and accountability between both the public and police officers. Body worn

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cameras, when activated, capture real time video evidence of an evolving event and preserves the data for subsequent review. Body worn cameras have become an industry standard in law enforcement and a majority of law enforcement agencies in San Luis Obispo County have implemented body worn camera programs.

In 2019, the City Council approved the Police Department's 2019-2021 Strategic Plan, which included the implementation of a body worn camera program (Goal two /Action item 2.1.1). Currently, the Police Department utilizes an in-car video system purchased through Coban Technologies Incorporated. Each marked police vehicle can record an event when activated by the officer. The Police Department uses Coban software to manage data in the Department's server for storage. To fully integrate the in-car system and body worn camera system using the existing server and software, Coban body worn cameras were selected for efficiency and continuity. Since early June, the Police Department has been testing two Coban Focus X1 body cameras. Two police officers were identified to wear the camera during their shifts. As mandated by policy, each officer was required to activate their camera upon contact with the public. One officer worked the day shift in a supervisory position and the other officer worked the night shift to test the camera resolution in low light and/or darkness. Management has reviewed hours of footage of the officer's interactions and were impressed by the quality of the camera.

The body worn camera program would include the Focus X1 camera manufactured by Coban. The Focus X1 capabilities meet the department needs as they are durable, user friendly, and capable of 1080P/720P and 480P resolutions. During the testing process, the battery life was sufficient for a 12-hour patrol shift and the mounting systems were easy to use and affixed to the officer's uniform securely. The cameras can upload using two different systems. Data captured in the field can be uploaded into the Department's server by using the pairing system in the police vehicle that syncs both the in-car and body worn cameras or a docking bay inside the police station which also uploads data directly to the secured server. All video generated from the body worn cameras will be stored on a redundant network storage dedicated to the Police Department in-car video system, with adequate space for the addition of body worn camera videos. In addition to the hardware, the Police Department will need to purchase video redaction software based on Senate Bill 1421 and Assembly Bill 748, both of which relate to the disclosure of body worn camera footage to the public under the California Public Records Act.

The total cost for the body camera program is \$60,625.00 and will include: thirty (30) body worn cameras, an eight bay docking system, nine (9) police vehicle pairing systems to sync the in-car and body worn cameras, video redaction software, and a three-year technology service agreement on the hardware and software. The body worn camera program is fully funded by a Supplemental Law Enforcement Services Fund (SLESF), Citizen's Option for Public Safety (COPS) Grant with no impact to the operating budget or General Fund. Pricing is based on the State contract award from the Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC) to ensure lowest contractual cost.

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ALTERNATIVES:

The following alternatives are provided for the Council's consideration:

1. Approve staff's recommendations to purchase body worn cameras;
2. Do not approve staff's recommendations; or
3. Provide direction to staff.

ADVANTAGES:

Approving the recommended action will provide technology in a secure environment that supports the Police Department operationally and administratively, while enhancing the ability to best serve the public. Body worn cameras will assist in capturing crucial footage of an incident while preserving evidence for prosecution or exoneration. Administratively, body worn camera footage may assist in mitigating false claims against police officers while also holding them accountable for their actions.

DISADVANTAGES:

No disadvantages are identified.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

No environmental review is required for this item.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND COMMENTS:

The Agenda was posted at City Hall and on the City's website in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2.

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