



Legislation Text

File #: 14-002, **Version:** 1

Staff Report for a Resolution Approving the Purchase of Body Worn Digital Video Cameras and a Digital Management System from Taser International

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The utilization of body worn cameras by police personnel will assist in criminal prosecution, potentially reduce civil liability, and aid in the review of alleged misconduct. In addition, a digital storage management system will provide an industry standard digital storage management solution for all electronic evidence, replacing the current manual storage solution.

Staff recommends the purchase of body worn digital video cameras and a digital storage management system, and authorization for the City Manager or his designee to execute the contract with Taser International, in an amount not to exceed \$441,306.82 over a 5 year period, broken down as \$127,797.08 in the first year and \$78,377.44 in each subsequent year.

BACKGROUND

The San Leandro Police Department handles an average of 90,000 incidents per year. Liability issues and allegations of police misconduct consume considerable resources for police departments throughout the United States and the San Leandro Police Department is no exception. With the advent of cellular telephones with photo and video capabilities, recorded documentation of an event can be captured by citizens after police action has begun and often does not provide a complete depiction of the incident, particularly from the officer's perspective.

The Rialto Police Department partnered with the University of Cambridge and conducted a study of officer worn body cameras over a 12-month period. The results of the study showed the department experienced an 88% decline in the number of complaints filed against officers. The study also ran a comparison of Rialto police officers who were wearing body cameras and police officers who did not wear body cameras, and the data collected revealed officers used force nearly 60% less when officers were wearing a body camera. Researchers determined that the decline in use of force and complaints were related to police officers wearing body worn cameras. The conclusion of the study provided that, "This behavioral modification is of real practical significance to the police, especially given the cost benefit ratios. We therefore foresee that body worn cameras by police will dramatically change police-public encounters."

The Rialto Police Department conducted this study on police officers wearing body cameras to determine their impact on lowering costs in litigation claims and expenses associated with citizen complaints and high liability areas including use of force incidents. It is estimated that every year U.S. law enforcement agencies spend \$2 billion dollars settling disputes between officers and civilians. Some agencies utilize in-car cameras; however many critical incidents occur away from the view of the in-car video camera. Body worn cameras provide an accurate depiction of police contact

and will assist personnel with recalling details of an incident to write police reports and to provide a factual account of police encounters.

As part of our research, the San Leandro Police Department participated in the Police Executive Research Forum conference on police body cameras. This conference was attended by over 250 agencies from across the country, and participating departments found the use of body worn cameras effective for the modern police officer. In addition, some departments reported that police officers are already carrying their own cameras to document public interactions.

The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) conducted a study in 2005 on the usage of in-car cameras. The research in that study revealed 93% of complaints regarding officer misconduct were dismissed when there was video documentation available. The study also reported that 48% of the public is less likely to file a complaint if they know there is a documented video of the incident. Based on the early research regarding digital video cameras (including in-car and body worn), staff believes that utilizing a body worn camera system will enhance operations and the ability to prosecute criminal activity through audio/video documentation. In addition, it will be a valuable tool to investigate complaints concerning police misconduct and will help to address other complaints, and civil liability.

The American Civil Liberties Union supports police officers wearing body-mounted cameras and stated, "With the right policies in place, a win for all." A copy of this report is attached.

Analysis

Staff has studied body camera systems for the last year and concluded the Taser Axon body camera meets the Police Department's operational needs. The Taser Axon camera system provides a secure and digital cloud storage management system. Staff has selected this specific camera as opposed to other body worn cameras because it is the only one of its kind that has a 30 second pre-buffer feature. This feature captures 30 seconds of prior video only (no audio) each time the officer activates the record feature on the camera system. In addition, the digital storage management system is a cost effective solution which will save a significant amount of Information Technology costs, including staffing to maintain and manage the system and hardware costs. Information Technology staff estimates that if it were to provide the same storage solution as Taser International it would be at double the cost.

The Police Department requests authorization to purchase 80 body worn cameras and the digital management storage service from Taser International. To reduce program costs, some of the cameras will be shared.

As part of this project, a digital evidence management workflow assessment was completed. Staff learned that the current digital management storage system for the Police Department is inadequate and should be updated, especially if body worn cameras are used. The assessment also identified opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness, which could save approximately \$24,000 a year (savings would be based on costs associated with staffing and supplies including the purchase of CD's). Based on the assessment, the Police Department will implement a storage solution for all Police Department digital files including photos, videos, and audio files that will be scalable to include data from the body worn cameras.

Current Agency Policies

Use of body cameras in the field may impact officers' conditions of employment, and thus is subject to negotiation with the San Leandro Peace Officers Association (SLPOA). A comprehensive policy was drafted in partnership with the SLPOA, including the care, use and evidentiary procedures of the body worn camera program.

Committee Review and Actions

The Chief's Advisory Board met on February 3, 2014, reviewed the body camera program/policy, and recommended implementation.

Legal Analysis

Staff recommends a retention period of 90 days for routine records per Government Code 34090.7, unless the recording is deemed to be evidence related to a complaint or administrative review.

The City Attorney has reviewed and approved as to form the Department Policy for Use of Body Worn Cameras, the Purchasing Contract, and the Professional Services Agreement.

Fiscal Impact

This body worn camera program will cost \$127,797.08 in the first year and \$78,377.44 in each subsequent year for a 5 year period. The total cost of this program is \$441,306.82, to be paid as illustrated in the following schedule:

	FY 2014/15	FY 2015/16	FY 2016/17	FY 2017/18	FY 2018/19
Camera System	\$59,724.44	\$60,377.44	\$60,377.44	\$60,377.44	\$60,377.44
Storage	\$68,072.64	\$18,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$18,000.00
TOTAL	\$127,797.08	\$78,377.44	\$78,377.44	\$78,377.44	\$78,377.44

Staff recommends funding the project as follows:

Year 1 Cost: \$127,797.08 funded through a combination of grant funding and available general fund line item for this project.

Year 2-5 (On-going cost): \$78,377.44 per year: Partially funded in the Police Department's ongoing operating and maintenance (O&M) costs through the IT charges allocated to the Police Department which will be determined during budget preparation for fiscal year 2015-16. The remaining costs will be added to future budgets.

Budget Authority

1. Recommend appropriating existing funding of \$127,797.08 for year one from the following funds:

\$75,000.00 General Fund Account # 010-21-004-7410
\$52,797.08 State Grant Funding Account #150-21-011-7410

2. Add \$78,377.44 per year to the Police Departments ongoing operating and maintenance (O&M) costs through the IT fund charges allocated to the Police Department. Some of these costs can be absorbed by reallocating costs for equipment replacement, off-setting a portion of the budget increase. The City may also realize savings related to costs associated with risk management, citizen complaints and administrative investigations on incidents captured on video. In addition, staff projects that there will be savings related to costs associated with risk management claims and litigation in matters that have video documentation.

ATTACHMENTS

- ACLU report on Police Body-Mounted Cameras
- San Leandro Police Department Proposed Body Camera Policy
- Taser International Quotation/Sole Source Justification
- Taser International Professional Services Agreement

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