

**CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS  
AGENDA ITEM  
AGENDA SUMMARY FORM**

DEPARTMENT: Mayor & Council

AGENDA DATE: January 23, 2018

CONTACT PERSON NAME AND PHONE NUMBER: City Representative Henry Rivera – 915-212-0007  
District 7

DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED: All districts

STRATEGIC GOAL: #2 – Set the Standard for a Safe and Secure City

SUBJECT:

APPROVE a resolution / ordinance / lease to do what? OR AUTHORIZE the City Manager to do what? Be descriptive of what we want Council to approve. Include \$ amount if applicable.

Discussion and Action to create a special projects City account/fund to accept public monetary donations to help defray the cost of body worn cameras for the El Paso Police Department.

**BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION**

Discussion of the what, why, where, when, and how to enable Council to have reasonably complete description of the contemplated action. This should include attachment of bid tabulation, or ordinance or resolution if appropriate. What are the benefits to the City of this action? What are the citizen concerns?

The city will benefit from receiving public donations to help defray the cost for body cameras and/or use for match grant funding.

**PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:**

Has the Council previously considered this item or a closely related one?

CCA: 11.28.17 Regular Agenda - Body-Worn Cameras

**AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

How will this item be funded?

Has the item been budgeted?

If so, identify funding source by account numbers and description of account. Does it require a budget transfer?

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\*\*\*\*\*REQUIRED AUTHORIZATION\*\*\*\*\*

**EVERY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER  
SHOULD HAVE A BODY CAMERA**

**REGISTER YOUR DEPARTMENT  
TODAY & START RECEIVING  
DONATIONS**

**REGISTER NOW**

**DONATE TO AN AGENCY OF  
YOUR CHOICE OR THE GENERAL  
FUND**

**DONATE NOW**



# Donations & Increase use of Body-Worn Camera

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*Feb 05, 2016*

## **Donation made to South Boston Police Department for Body-Worn Cameras**

In appreciation for its service to the community, Wayne S. Stevens Company made a donation to the South Boston Police Department.

The money will go towards the purchase of body worn cameras for South Boston police officers.

Chief Jim Binner thanked Wayne S. Stevens company as well as other businesses, civic organizations, and private citizens who have supported the department in improving its video documentation capabilities.

<http://wsls.com/2016/02/04/donation-made-to-south-boston-police-department-for-body-cameras/>



## **Police Departments Increasingly Using Body-Worn Cameras**

As the New Hampshire Senate prepares to consider House Bill 617, “An act requiring state police to wear a camera when interacting with the public,” several North Country



agencies are already using the equipment and getting praise from an occasional critic — the American Civil Liberties Union — for doing so.

Although the body-worn camera is not a brand new technology, its use became the subject of much national discussion following a series of incidents that called into question the veracity and conduct of police officers and their relationship with the people they're sworn to protect and serve.

Byron Charles, the chief of the Haverhill Police Department, said his agency began exploring body cameras years ago. While the cameras can help provide accountability for both officers and the public, Charles said another reason was simply to keep his officers out on their beats.

With eight full-time and three part-time officers, the Haverhill Police Department is small with a lot of ground to cover and Charles recalled being struck by how some of his officers were spending lots of time doing paperwork.

“And I thought, ‘How can I put officers back on the street where they should be?’” said Charles, and he hit upon body cameras.

The Haverhill Police Department became one of the first in the Granite State to take part in a body-worn camera pilot program, and later, using drug forfeiture funds to purchase the cameras.

The cameras have helped Haverhill's officers in writing their reports and the digital recordings have been shown in court, which has had the effect of reducing the amount of time an officer has to appear during the criminal proceedings.

The fact that video footage is available also increases the likelihood that a person charged with an offense will plead guilty and thus taxpayers will avoid the cost of a trial altogether.

Although he declined to talk about the case of Hagen Esty-Lennon, it's obvious that Charles and the Haverhill Board of Selectmen trust in the ability of body cameras to act as a powerful corroborating witness.

On July 7, 2015, two Haverhill police officers encountered 41-year old Canterbury resident Esty-Lennon, carrying a knife, on Route 302 in Bath. Their handguns drawn, the officers repeatedly ordered Esty-Lennon to drop the knife, but he failed to comply, and as video from the officers' body cameras later showed, he then charged them and ran into a fatal hail of bullets.

Following a month-long investigation, the Attorney General's Office said the officers' actions were justified.

Asked how strongly the Haverhill Police Department believes in body cameras, Charles cited the fact that the department recently signed a multi-year.

Charles encouraged other departments to explore using body cameras but cautioned that the larger departments should make provisions for handling the volume of data their officers will be continually generating.

In Lincoln, which is about 30 miles east of Haverhill on the Kancamagus Highway, Police Chief Theodore Smith said data storage will be done onsite.

A member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police's Community Policing Committee, Smith said body cameras have been "discussed for years now" and will go into service in Lincoln shortly.

As in Haverhill, Smith said body cameras are being used because it makes sense, not because of any precipitating event.

"We have very few complaints about the police department here, however, (body cameras) are a way of looking at the interaction" between an officer and the public, said Smith. He added that in some jurisdictions that "look" at the body-camera video has not only upheld an officer's account but led to charges against those who falsely accused him or her of misconduct.

Smith expects more police departments to use body cameras, adding that using them "is simply moving with the current stream."

Devon Chaffee, the executive director of the ACLU of New Hampshire, said body cameras aren't a "silver bullet."

"They don't replace the need for a police department to build strong relationships with their community," she said, "but they can foster accountability and community trust but only if you have proper regulations in place that ensure the integrity of the footage collected and also people's privacy."

Chaffee thinks that HB617, which was passed in January by the House of Representatives, will help create uniform guidance on how body cameras are used while

also shielding police from prosecution under the state's current Right-to-Know and wiretapping laws.

The bill spells out when and how the cameras are to be activated; who has access to the footage and the steps that should be taken to prevent tampering; and where individuals should have the reasonable expectation of privacy, such as in a private residence or during the interview of a crime victim.

Chaffee said studies have shown that the use of body cameras has reduced the instances of the use of force by police, and also of having a positive effect on community members interacting with officers.

HB617 reflects New Hampshire's attempt to stay ahead of technology while protecting privacy rights and its passage, said Chaffee, would "put New Hampshire at the top of adopting such guidelines at the state level."

Deputy Chief Dan Buteau of the Berlin Police Department called the use of body cameras "an important and evolving issue in law enforcement," adding that their use "has improved transparency."

But he nonetheless cautioned that in the Berlin Police Department's experience, "...we have found that camera footage does not tell the whole story. Its scope is very limited as far as painting a picture of what the officer observed, with all of his senses, at a particular incident."

"While our initial take is positive, time will tell whether that continues to be the case," said Buteau.

- See more at: <http://www.unionleader.com/North-Country-police-departments-increasingly-using-body-worn-cameras#sthash.dIuQMb2k.dpuf>

By - [jkoziol@newstote.com](mailto:jkoziol@newstote.com)

# LAPD outfits Mission Division officers with body cameras

By Darsha Philips and Laura Montenegro

Monday, August 31, 2015

MISSION HILLS, LOS ANGELES (KABC) --

Officers at the Los Angeles Police Department's Mission Division in the San Fernando Valley were equipped with body cameras Monday as part of a roll out of 860 such cameras over the next month.

The cameras were provided by \$1.5 million in private donations raised by the Los Angeles Police Foundation, according to the LAPD.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti outlined funding for about 7,000 body cameras and equipment in his 2015-16 budget proposal, but the funding has yet to be appropriated. City officials are still waiting on federal grants that they hope will pay for half of the costs.

When all the cameras are distributed in July, the department will become the largest police force in the country to use the body cameras on a wide scale.

"I really think that this piece of technology is going to be really beneficial, not just to Mission area but I think to the community that we serve as well as the department overall," said LAPD Capt. Todd Chamberlain, who oversees the LAPD's Mission Division.

The body cameras are manually turned on and off by the officer, and the officer is required to have the body camera on anytime he or she is investigating a crime or an incident.

The use of body cameras has become prominent in the wake of controversial police shootings across the country. LAPD hopes the

cameras will help build more trust in the community.

"All we're after is one thing and that is clarity and the truth. These on-body cameras aren't the ultimate, but they sure are a great tool," said Steve Soboroff, who heads the Police Department's civilian oversight board. "They're an up-close video and audio. Many times if there's five officers, it will be from five different angles. If there's two officers, it'll be from two different angles. It should make things a lot clearer."

A tense debate still remains on why the footage will not be released to the public.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California dropped its support over two policy points that allows officers to review the footage before making a report or statement and allows them to not publicly release the recordings unless they are part of a criminal or civil court proceeding.

"Body cameras won't provide transparency if they never show footage to the public," said Peter Bibring, ACLU senior staff attorney. "If there's a controversial shooting or an incident of misconduct, it's crucial for the public, if they're going to have faith in the process, to see what actually happened."

The body cameras have a 12-hour battery life and hold 5 and a half hours of footage. The footage is downloaded to Apple's iCloud service every single time an officer returns to his or her station.

Mission Division police officers became the first to receive the cameras on Monday. Officers at the Newton Division will receive their body cameras on Sept. 15 and the Central traffic and specialized divisions on Sept. 28.

The Mission station serves the Arleta, Panorama City, Sylmar, North Hills and Mission Hills areas, the Newton division covers the Fashion District, South Park and Pueblo Del Rio, and the Central Division serves



much of downtown Los Angeles.

*City News Service contributed to this report.*