

Capitola City Council

Agenda Report



Meeting: October 12, 2023

From: Police Department

Subject: Body-Worn Cameras and Tasers

Recommended Action: Authorize the City Manager to execute a 5-year agreement with AXON in an amount not to exceed \$336,500 to purchase body-worn cameras and tasers; and authorize the surplus of current inventory of tasers and body cameras.

Background: The Police Department is committed to providing the highest level of policing services to the community. Body-worn and fleet cameras systems have been used for many years and are the industry standard for most police agencies. The camera systems provide video evidence of any interactions with the public and help achieve a higher level of trust and accountability between the department and the community.

Capitola's Police Department was the first agency in Santa Cruz County to acquire body-worn cameras. Since the program's inception, the City has employed Motorola Solutions body-worn cameras, supplied by Watchguard. These body-worn cameras (BWC) and fleet camera systems were initially procured in 2015 through funding from the State Supplemental Law Enforcement Services Fund (SLESF).

Typically, a body-worn camera has a lifespan of three years, while vehicle cameras coincide with the vehicle's lifespan (3-5 years). Data from these cameras is stored locally, but challenges arise due to limited storage, high costs, and service continuity issues. Staff is seeking a suitable data storage vendor capable of managing the collected data and providing ongoing technical support.

Although individual cameras have been replaced as needed, the City's current inventory of Motorola BWC and fleet cameras needs to be replaced and updated. Motorola notified the Police Department that they can no longer provide repairs or replacements for the City's current BWC and fleet camera systems.

Tasers, essential tools for officer safety and de-escalation, are used by all Capitola officers. The current inventory of Axon "Taser 2" devices has surpassed its service life and is no longer under warranty, prompting the need for replacement. Tasers are effective in incapacitating individuals, facilitating safe detainment, and contributing to the force's decision matrix for de-escalation strategies.

Discussion: Staff sought bids from three vendors: Motorola, LensLock, and Axon. Motorola, the City's current vendor, provides a new camera system which requires a five-year contract. LensLock and Axon both offer comparable BWC and fleet camera systems.

The Police Department researched all three vendors for information and estimates. All three vendors have switched to five-year lease programs rather than a traditional purchase. The vendors provided similar costs, ranging from \$325,000 to \$361,000. Two of the vendors, Motorola Services and Axon, provide built-in Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR) as part of their fleet of cameras. Axon offers various models of conducted energy devices (tasers) that are integrated with the body-worn camera technology to be activated and collect data when tasers are deployed.

Axon offers bundling discounts for agencies that simultaneously update their conducted energy devices (CED) equipment, BWC and fleet cameras, and data storage. This presented an opportunity to upgrade the City's inventory of BWC and tasers, while also solving the City's data storage issues. This will eliminate the need for frequent replacement purchases and ensure stability throughout the five-year lease period. Axon offers a fleet camera, but it is currently unavailable to order due to limited supply. Staff intends to replace the fleet camera inventory once Axon is able to fulfill the order and will amend the agreement to that effect.

Axon has partnered with a cooperative purchasing organization (Sourcewell) that provides competitively solicited contracts to government agencies, educational institutions, and nonprofits. This partnership allows City staff to access pre-negotiated government pricing for services without completing a traditional Request for Proposal (RFP) process. The five-year contract for BWC, data storage, and tasers is \$336,500, and this meets the needs and requirements of the City for the duration of the contract.

Fiscal Impact: The 5-year agreement with Axon will cost a total of \$336,500. The adopted FY 2023-24 Budget includes \$230,000 from the General Fund for this equipment, and \$120,000 can be appropriated from the Supplemental Law Enforcement Services Fund. Therefore, there is adequate funding for the five-year agreement. The estimated sale of the surplus body cameras and tasers is estimated at \$2,000 – \$2,500 and will be deposited into the City's Internal Service Equipment Fund.

Attachments:

1. Axon Agreement

Report Prepared By: Andrew Dally, Chief of Police

Reviewed By: Julia Moss, City Clerk; Samantha Zutler, City Attorney

Approved By: Jamie Goldstein, City Manager