



DICKINSON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Joseph R. Cianni

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November 24, 2025

Ref: Axon Encumbrance/10-year contract

President Decker and Commissioners,

Attached you will find an Axon contract which bundles most of the technology and hardware associated with Axon Enterprises Inc. currently used by the Dickinson Police Department. This bundled contract was negotiated using a 10-year timeframe in an effort to help mitigate the increasing financial impact associated with multiple short-term contracts. This contract also adds additional resources essential to keeping pace with technology related to law enforcement.

The proposed contract is based on a lease type of agreement as the traditional outright purchase of hardware and software products is no longer an option. Axon no longer offers its proprietary products for direct purchase due to the constant, rapid evolution of technology. This rapid evolution quickly results in many products becoming obsolete and unsupported within a few years of actual field deployment. Throughout the term of the proposed 10-year contract, Axon will regularly provide equipment and technological upgrades as they are developed and become available at no additional cost.

Unfortunately, we are now at crossroad where our Axon body worn camera contract signed in 2021 is expiring; Our current allotment of (Axon) Tasers are very near their expected lifespan and are no longer supported by Axon. To further complicate things, all of our evidence management and interview room recording systems based on the Axon platform are tied to short-term contracts making them extremely cost ineffective. Another matter of concern is the fact our Virtra use of force firearms simulator is no longer being supported by the developer, it is currently being limped along by our talented in-house staff. A system upgrade is not financially feasible.

After an extensive evaluation of resources, we began researching our options in preparation for the future. The cost associated with just a renewal of our expiring body worn camera system would be approximately \$700K. With that, it was determined the most cost-effective course would be to bundle all of our future needs associated with Axon into one long-term contract. The estimate for this type of contract at the time was \$1.4M.

The intent to potentially seek a long-term, bundled contract with Axon was brought to the attention of the commission in 2024 when our interview room contract was presented for approval. At that time, a memorandum was also included in the commission packets which included a notation of our future contractual intentions. **See attached copy of memorandum.*

With one major Axon component, our body worn camera system contract, coming due within the next few years, we began to budget funds through ongoing yearly incumbrances. These incumbrances were established to mitigate the financial impact of (only) this specific contract renewal. After looking deeper into the holistic contract concept with Axon we learned that our initial estimate of \$1.4M had since increased to \$1.9M over the course of 1.5years and will likely continue to increase yearly by 7-10%.

At this point we feel it is imperative for the department to lock in a long-term contract which mitigates the inevitable antiquation of related hardware and technology while combating yearly inflation. With that, we now come before you requesting consideration for a future budgetary adjustment beginning in 2028 which supports a comprehensive upgrade and reorganization of several existing technology and equipment fiscal line items. The Axon contract before you now will need to be signed before the end of 2025 to prevent the contract amount from increasing to \$2.2M effective January, 2026.

Where will the funds come from....

The first few years of this proposed new contract will be paid through existing encumbered and previously allocated funds. The budgetary impact of this contract will be realized in 2028 at approximately \$53K above and beyond the current (2026) budgeted funds allocated toward our existing segmented Axon network broken down as follows...

Current Approved 2026 Budget Allocations:

- Axon Body Cam Project (Encumbered Funds): \$85,000
- Interview Room Cameras: \$18,000
- Dictation System: \$25,000
- Community Engagement Tools: \$11,250
- Taser Purchases: \$15,000
- Taser Cartridges: \$3,500
- ***Previous (2025) allocation of \$10K for Virtra Simulator maintenance not included)*

Total: \$157,750

Hypothetically the department's 2026 and 2027 budgets will remain neutral at approximately \$142,500 due to existing financial encumbrances and ongoing previously projected costs associated with the Axon project. Beginning in 2028, the above-listed line items will be consolidated into a single comprehensive contract totaling \$209,883.32 per year. This bundling approach matrix creates an actual realized budget increase of approximately \$53K more than the approved 2026 budget with the initial true budget impact/shortfall beginning in 2028.

This long-term holistic contractual reorganization will not only streamline departmental accounting and procurement processes but also provide significant technological advancements to enhance operational efficiency, officer safety, professionalism and customer service. Through this new Axon contract, the department will receive:

- *Taser*- New Taser energy weapon systems and supporting equipment to include in-house training w/new equipment; additionally, any deployments (duty or training) when cartridges are expended will be replaced at no additional cost.
- *Body Camera*- Next-generation body cameras with real-time translation capabilities
- *Draft One*- AI-enabled report writing and dictation tools
- *VR*- Virtual reality training systems applicable to all law enforcement training domains (replacing our existing unsupported Virta simulator)
- *Axon Standards* which is software that will digitize our current workflow of hardcopy paperwork such as pursuit review, use of force evaluations, personnel records keeping system, and early intervention tracking.
- *My90*- Community engagement tool. This serves as a direct connection for citizens and the agency to provide case updates, gather more information, and even gather feedback related to customer service provided by both telecommunicators or officers.

These upgrades represent a major modernization effort, aligning the Dickinson Police Department with best practices and future technological standards. This contractual pathway to the future using a similar Axon template is trending with multiple other agencies within the state. Bismarck PD, Fargo PD and Minot PD have recently entered into similar long-term contracts with Axon.

Although the budgetary impact of this proposal will take effect in 2028, early planning and commission awareness will ensure a smooth transition without disrupting ongoing projects or fiscal stability while staying ahead of inflation associated with technological advancement. We appreciate the City Commission's continued support and partnership in maintaining the highest standards in public safety and community service.

I thank you for your consideration and understanding of the importance of this project!



Chief Joe R. Cianni



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October 9th, 2024

Ref: Axon Interview Room Contract

EXHIBIT

President Decker and Commissioners,

Attached you will find a 5-year Axon contract related to the PSC interview room audio/video hardware and software upgrade project. The Dickinson Police Department currently has three interview rooms at the PSC used for interviews and interrogations. The current system was installed in 2015 and has become obsolete and extremely problematic as the vendor no longer supports the system.

The Dickinson Police Department is in the process of transitioning all audio/video-related technology to Axon-based systems. This includes body-worn cameras, in-car video systems, and Tasers. The interview room system is the final piece of the technology upgrade however, due to the significant costs associated with the upgrades we have tried to spread the expense over a 5-year period.

The first year of the 5-year contract has additional costs associated with hardware, installation, and training. The subsequent years are more budget-friendly. The first year's billing of \$40k will be paid through a grant recently awarded to DPD by Marathon Petroleum. The subsequent years will be a budgeted line item established through the normal budget process. Although this initial contract is a stand-alone contract exclusively for the interview room project, we intend to bundle everything (body cameras, in-car video, interview room, and Taser) into one more affordable long-term contract. The revision and bundle of Axon contracts should occur within the first few years of the contract which is before you now.

This contract has been reviewed by the city attorney and city staff recommends approval.

Thank You!

Chief Joe Cianni