



Memorandum

August 18th, 2025

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Josh Antoine, Chief of Police
Subject: Axon contract

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

Dear Council Members,

I hope this message finds you well.

The Spring Lake Park Police Department has maintained a long-standing and successful partnership with Axon Enterprise, Inc. (formerly Taser International), which has been instrumental in providing our department with essential, life-saving tools. Our initial purchases began with Tasers prior to my tenure with the department and later expanded to include body-worn cameras as they became standard in the field.

In 2021, I negotiated our current five-year contract with Axon, which is set to expire at the end of 2026. Late last year, I began researching upcoming Axon contract trends after hearing reports of significant price increases beginning in 2024. My findings confirmed that the cost of new Axon contracts had increased substantially due to several factors, including changes to the equipment bundling programs, increased equipment and replacement costs, and the discontinuation of the Officer CORE+ bundle we had previously used.

While I received a quote from Axon in late 2024, it was unfortunately too late to pursue due to budget finalizations. At that time, Axon projected annual cost increases between 12% and 15%.

Earlier this year, Axon reached out to discuss an early contract renewal opportunity, offering promotional discounts if we signed prior to September 1, 2025. After discussions and

negotiations, we received two renewal options: a five-year and a ten-year contract. Both proposals are attached for your review.

The ten-year contract provides significantly greater long-term savings through higher upfront discounts and a lower percentage of annual cost increases compared to the five-year option. Additionally, the ten-year plan offers more frequent equipment upgrades—four replacement cycles compared to one during the five-year term.

Both proposals include upgrades to Axon's latest technology:

- **Body 4 Cameras**
- **Taser 10 Devices** – a substantial enhancement over our current Taser 7s
- **Axon Fleet Cameras** for patrol vehicles

While we have explored less expensive options for squad and body-worn cameras, any alternative would still require purchasing Tasers and cartridges from Axon, ultimately resulting in a total cost comparable to Axon's proposals. Furthermore, Axon's latest offerings include several advanced features that enhance officer safety and investigative efficiency:

- **Real-time video access:** Supervisors—and soon Anoka County 911 dispatch—can view live footage from body and squad cameras during emergencies.
- **Unlimited third-party data storage:** This feature allows for seamless integration and storage of external digital evidence (e.g., surveillance or Ring camera footage) into Evidence.com for easy case sharing with prosecutors.

We understand that the proposed contracts represent a substantial increase from our current agreement. Presently, our annual Axon costs—including previous add-ons—are approximately \$30,000. I had already projected an increase to \$37,000 in our 2026 budget. Under the ten-year contract, we would see larger increases in the initial years (especially in 2027) but significantly lower increases thereafter.

Given the longstanding partnership with Axon, the value of their comprehensive technology suite, and the cost-efficiency of locking in pricing now, I recommend that the council approve the ten-year contract prior to September 1, 2025. Doing so will protect us from further cost escalations and avoid another renegotiation in five years, when prices are likely to be even higher.

Thank you for your consideration. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like to discuss the proposals in further detail.

Sincerely,
Josh Antoine
Chief of Police