



Council Agenda Item

Meeting Date: 10/06/2026

Agenda Item: Monthly Flock Update

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BACKGROUND

(Enter the who, what when, where, why)

WPD Concerns/Successes:

- The changes voted on by Council on 9/1/26 have been adjusted in WPD policy.
- On 9/10 we met virtually with reps from Flock to begin the process of adjusting system settings as needed:
 - Patrol staff access removed. This was completed by PD administration.
 - Flock customer support team requested to adjust sharing settings from nationwide to Midwest states (Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Indiana, Ohio and Michigan). Customer support is still working on adjusting these settings.
 - Flock customer support team requested to adjust retention setting from 30 days to 7 days. This change has now been incorporated.

Flock Safety Company Updates:

- Numerous cities and counties have ended their relationships with Flock Safety or are planning to. I've researched the issues, reached out to leaders in these agencies, and spoken with representatives from Flock Safety on the issues. The primary reasons provided for ending the contract with Flock Safety for each of the agencies was:
 1. **City of Sheboygan:** A Flock rep contacted Sheboygan DPW offering to sell them up to five years' worth of traffic data that the city's existing Flock cameras could record. Flock safety refuted the claim stating that the ALPR technology and traffic data programs are two different things.
 2. **City of Menasha:** Removed due to a lack of trust in what data Flock Safety is sharing. Vendor specific issue, not opposed to ALPR in general.
 3. **City of Neenah:** Sheboygan incident seen as a "tipping point." Recommended forming an advisory committee to research other ALPR options.
 4. **Fond du Lac County:** Issue was related to control of their investigative data. An out-of-state agency reportedly shared their data in response to an open records request. Data captured

in Fond du Lac County was subject to other state agencies' records decisions, and those decisions were made without the department's knowledge or consent.

5. **Racine County:** Sheriff Schmaling said their department learned that Flock "generates a separate data set from information collected by its cameras and markets that dataset to other government and private customers through its 'Traffic Analytics' product."
6. **Winnebago County:** Due to concerns noted by Fond du Lac County.

In summary, the concerns noted hinge on two issues; either the "Traffic Analytics" product that Flock tried to sell Sheboygan DPW using data from Sheboygan PD's cameras, or the sharing of Fond du Lac County's LE-sensitive data by an out-of-state agency in response to a FOIA request.

It should be noted that a significant number of communities continue to utilize Flock cameras despite the recent trend of canceled contracts. On September 14th the Green Bay Police Department held a press conference detailing their reasoning for continuing to utilize Flock cameras. GBPD has made a number of changes and restrictions (very similar to the guardrails we have incorporated) in their use of Flock in an effort to reduce the risk while continuing to realize the benefits.

Analysis of the Issues:

Traffic Analytics product

It was reported that Flock Safety attempted to sell the anonymized data collected from the cameras the Sheboygan PD had under contract to the Sheboygan Department of Public Works. At issue is whether this breached Flock's contract with Sheboygan PD. Technically, Sheboygan PD's contract with Flock stated that Flock "does not own and shall not sell Anonymized Data." This is the same terminology in our contract with Flock Safety. Whether or not Sheboygan PD and Sheboygan DPW are technically the same entity (City of Sheboygan) seems to be irrelevant due to the agreement stating that Flock Safety would not sell that data.

It is my understanding that the only anonymized data that was advertised to Sheboygan DPW was the data obtained by Sheboygan PD's cameras. The representatives from Flock Safety stated that the anonymized data is held for 5 years and includes data that does not individually identify vehicles (information such as traffic counts). I have no evidence to say that Flock Safety has attempted to sell anonymized data from our Whitewater PD Flock cameras. Brad Marquardt confirmed that no such conversations have occurred here.

I requested Flock's official stance on this Sheboygan situation, and received the following response:

"...A preliminary sales promotional email was sent to the [Sheboygan] public works department advertising the Traffic Analytics (aggregate dashboard display) product add-on while the PD was an existing customer. No further discussion or exploration occurred. Confusion arose when the email was interpreted as selling their data, which is not true. As always, the PD owns the data and has control over who it shares with, even within the same municipality. For clarification purposes, say a public works department wanted to discuss the Traffic Analytics (aggregate dashboard display) add-on to the PD's existing contract. The

discussion would need to include the PD and require their approval for data access so that the PD's data (vehicle images) can undergo further aggregated analysis for public works to view the Traffic Analytics dashboard to study de-identified traffic patterns over time."

Data Sharing through FOIA Requests

This is a more complex issue. The primary concern is that information specific to agency searches in Flock was posted online in a searchable database. Some have stated that Flock Safety released this data. I have found no evidence to support that Flock Safety released any agency's data. Instead, law enforcement agencies throughout the country received FOIA (Freedom of Information Act aka Open Records) requests for their Flock data including "audit logs." These individual agencies collectively released information that included search data (plate numbers, employee conducting the search) to the requesting entity. All of those record responses were then collated into a searchable database with portions of the license plate numbers redacted.

In my opinion, this is an issue of records law, rather than a breach of data security by Flock Safety. Ultimately, the only way to prevent this issue is to reduce the number of agencies we have a reciprocal sharing relationship with. In response to this, Flock Safety has automatically redacted certain data in the audit logs including the license plate searched, the searching employee, and the agency case number from each search, to reduce the impact of any future dissemination of data related to FOIA requests. Ultimately, in my opinion, any vendor who has a similar system will be at risk of this issue because agencies are bound by records laws.

In reviewing our audit logs with Flock reps during the meeting, we observed outside agencies had completed nationwide searches for reasons that would no longer comply with our internal standards for searches (requiring a criminal offense, community caretaker function, or at discretion of Police Chief or designee). The Flock reps indicated that the setting could be adjusted so that departments we share with have to follow our internal standards in order to access Whitewater camera data. Follow-up on that issue will continue after the system changes are made.

Ongoing Conversations:

Law enforcement leaders throughout the state recognize that the issue has seen some polarizing responses. Locally, Walworth County Chiefs and Sheriff met at the Lake Geneva Police Department on September 17th for an in-depth discussion on the topic. Representatives from agencies utilizing Flock cameras (Walworth County, Delavan, Lake Geneva, Genoa City and Whitewater) were present to discuss the issue, policy concerns, and intent moving forward. There was unanimous support for continuing to use Flock cameras and fairly uniform support in how to address risk, most of which Whitewater PD has already employed. Agencies collectively agreed to enforce strict internal standards, including conducting audits every 2 weeks. As such, WPD policy has been edited to make our auditing schedule on a biweekly basis, which is more stringent than the Council-approved monthly audit schedule.

On September 29th, CVMIC hosted a roundtable discussion about Flock cameras open only to law enforcement administrators. A panel consisting of chiefs from communities that have canceled their Flock contracts as well as communities continuing to use Flock cameras discussed the key issues. Ultimately, the reasons provided for communities no longer using Flock cameras hinged on poor customer service from

Flock reps, confusion about data ownership, or lack of support from elected officials. The communities that are continuing to use Flock generally did not share the same concerns regarding customer service or data ownership confusion and believed that the cameras were making a significant safety impact.

Local/National News:

- <https://wisconsinexaminer.com/2026/09/02/milwaukee-further-restricts-flock-as-controversy-continues-to-grow/>
- <https://spectrumnews1.com/wi/madison/news/2026/09/09/wisconsin-flock-cameras-police-contracts>
- <https://www.wearegreenbay.com/news/local-news/more-ne-wisconsin-municipalities-end-flock-camera-use/>
- <https://www.wbay.com/2026/09/14/green-bay-leaders-defend-flock-cameras-propose-new-police-policy-address-concerns/>
- <https://fox11online.com/news/local/fond-du-lac-county-halts-flock-cameras-after-data-release-concerns-alpr-law-enforcement-active-investigation-automated-license-plate-recognition-security-surveillance-wisconsin-crime>
- <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/other/groomed-and-abducted-woodruff-girl-12-rescued-in-ark-and-suspect-31-arrested-sheriff-says/ar-AA2bUyKs?ocid=hpmsn&cvid=6aa2e80615054b3d809e6c40d58c1942&ei=40>
- <https://www.newsfromthestates.com/article/california-kills-bill-regulating-flock-cameras-even-public-rage-grows>
- https://www.wdtimes.com/news/local/watertown-chief-backs-flock-cameras-as-council-weighs-policy-concerns/article_2240fc7b-b49e-4163-b291-65752d90a5a2.html

PREVIOUS ACTIONS – COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

(Dates, committees, action taken)

N/A

FINANCIAL IMPACT

(If none, state N/A)

N/A

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

N/A

ATTACHMENT(S) INCLUDED

(If none, state N/A)

1. Flock Rep Email
2. Flock camera location security Email

