



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mike Dzugan, City Manager
FROM: Bill Murphy, Chief of Police
DATE: October 19, 2021
SUBJECT: **Body Worn Cameras**

The police department's FY2021 budget included the goal of strengthening community partnerships through greater transparency, which aligned with Strategic Priority 4 – Community Safety. One of the goal's objectives was to complete a BWC staff study that included funding for BWC (16010020 – 69230).

Testing of Three Companies - The attached memorandum from Sergeant Salzman provides a summation of the staff study into body worn cameras (BWC). The study concluded the optimal system for the needs of the police department would be the Axon Body Worn Camera system. This system would require purchasing some hardware and leasing software and cloud-based storage for 5-years. The bulk of the costs involve the software and storage. There are several advantages to leasing the system that include: damaged equipment replacement, hardware/software updates, avoiding technological obsolescence, and ability to conform to potential law changes more efficiently.

Funding - The Axon Body Worn Camera System is estimated to cost approximately \$82,000 a year for the 5-year contract. In discussions with Finance Director Lehnhardt, it is projected the complete costs could be covered by the Cannabis Use Tax. In my opinion, the expenditure comports with the law requiring expenditure of the tax money, "...be used to fund cannabis interdiction efforts, including detection, enforcement...and driving under the influence of cannabis." The BWC will be deployed to engage in these activities along with daily police activities.

BWC Use Policy – A BWC Use Department Order (policy) will be developed for all Wheaton Police Department personnel. This policy will be in compliance with all necessary national and state statutory requirements including the Law Enforcement Officer-Worn Body Camera Act (50 ILCS 706/10-20), Senate Bill 1304, and House Bill 3653 (SAFE-T Act). The policy will be all encompassing and will outline clear and specific BWC operation instructions for all affected police department operations (including BWC activation/use, labelling of recorded data, FOIA procedures, supervisory audits, and digital retention periods)

Training – Sergeant Salzman will head BWC training and implementation. Training will be a collaborative effort with the Wheaton Police Department Training Office and an Axon Professional Services & Operations (PSO) team. The Axon PSO team will come to the department and personally train all affected personnel on the facets of BWC use. Selected Wheaton Police Department personnel will train all personnel on department policy and statutory requirements. This training will be prescheduled and



consist of 2 consecutive mandatory quarterly shift training dates. At the conclusion of this training, all department personnel will be trained and authorized to immediately start BWC use in the field. Throughout 2022, Sergeant Salzmann will conduct regular randomized supervisory audits to monitor BWC use to ensure all legal and department standards are met, as required by HB3653. In addition, BWC use will be integrated into quarterly shift training to facilitate understanding, compliance, and familiarity.

Timeline – Full implementation of BWC use will follow AXON hardware installation and the 2 days of in-house training by WPD personnel and the Axon PSO Team. All necessary hardware (fleet and facility) installation is estimated to take 3 full days. The Axon PSO team training and hardware installations will take place concurrently at the PD. After a contract is approved and signed with Axon, scheduling of an Axon PSO team may commence.

Next Step - Considering the staff study's extensive testing and recommendation, we would be seeking a bid-waiver from the City Council in order to ensure our initial foray into body-worn cameras is as efficient and effective as possible while supporting the strategic priority of Community Safety. The Axon BWC system is the lone system that meets all of the expectations of the police department. The Communications Department will work with the police department to produce public service announcements about the changes and the presence of the cameras.



TO: William Murphy, Chief of Police
FROM: Daniel Salzmann, Sergeant
DATE: October 13, 2021
SUBJECT: **Body Worn Camera Proposal – Executive Summary**

Background

The ability of police to serve and protect the community is dependent upon the public's trust and a perception of police legitimacy. Following the recommendations of the Illinois Chiefs of Police Association and the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Wheaton Police Department adopted a plan to institute body-worn cameras (BWC) within FY2021. This was followed by action from the Illinois General Assembly in June of 2021 with Illinois House Bill 3653 (SAFE-T Act). The new law would require the use of BWC for a municipality of 50,000 – 100,000 residents by January 1, 2024.

We have researched the implementation and associated costs along with the potential benefits and drawbacks through staff research, field testing, and relevant white paper/case law review. The recommendation is to purchase Axon body worn cameras in the 4th quarter of FY2021. This recommendation is based on Axon's software/hardware interoperability, video/audio quality, reliability, Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) integration, cost, and user feedback.

Body-Worn Camera Systems

Body-worn cameras, which an increasing number of law enforcement agencies are adopting, represent one new form of technology that can address transparency and accountability challenges and substantially improve procedural justice in law enforcement. The technology, which can be mounted on an officer's uniform, offers law enforcement with a tool to promote transparency to the public, increased civilian compliance, quicker resolutions to citizen complaints, increased officer professionalism, and greater evidence corroboration. They can potentially resolve questions following an encounter between officers and members of the public and even prevent problems from arising in the first place by increasing officer professionalism and civilian compliance.

The Police Department identified the top three companies associated BWC: AXON, Body-Worn™, and WatchGuard. These three companies have set themselves apart from their competitors largely due to the technological advances of their respective hardware and software. All three companies allowed for a 30-day+ trial period to test their products and associated software. This was the optimal option as it allowed for Wheaton officers, records personnel, and command staff to get first-hand experience with each company's products. Additionally, further long-term insight was gleaned from several local police agencies currently using AXON, Body-Worn™, and WatchGuard BWCs through a series of interviews and accompanying surveys with department heads from each agency.



Axon

The Wheaton Police Department’s body camera trial period with AXON took place from May 6th – June 29th, 2021. At the conclusion of the AXON body worn camera trial period, all participating personnel were provided a detailed survey soliciting feedback of AXON’s body camera hardware and software revealing the following:

<u>AXON BWCs: Advantages</u>	<u>Axon BWCs: Disadvantages</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Level of Video & Audio Quality • Long Lasting Battery • Safe, Durable, & Sleek Design • Handsfree Activation & Alerts • Live Streaming Capability & Quality • Mobile Compatibility • CAD Integration • User-friendly Video Management Software (Evidence.com) • Unprecedented BWC Audio-Transcription Technology * • Functional Auto Identification Redaction Software * • “Axon Citizen” Data Sharing Capability * • Built in BWC Audit Software * • Seamlessly Share Digital Evidence with the DuPage County State’s Attorney’s Office (SAO) * • Extensive “Refresh” Warranties * • <u>Recommended</u> by 100% of Wheaton Police Department Trial Period Personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited Unrecorded Data Capability • Inherent Uniform Malfunction Risk • Additional Costs for Desired Features

* AXON Exclusive Features

Police Personnel Assessment: Officers (BWC Users) & Supervisors:

Category of Assessment [Axon]	Average Score (Police Personnel) scale of 1 (Disappointing) to 5 (Exceptional)
1. Audio Quality of BWCs	4.9
2. Video Quality of BWCs	4.8
3. Battery Life of BWCs	3.7
4. Ease & Ability for Officers to Tag/Label Videos	4.4
5. Ease & Ability to Search for Desired Footage	4.5
6. Ease & Ability to View/Access Desired Footage	4.8
7. Ease & Ability of Live-Stream Ofc View Feature	5*
8. Quality of Live-Stream (lag, time-delay, audio, video etc.)	4.7*
9. Ease & Ability to Share/Download Footage (SAO’s Officer or Other Officers)	4.1
10. Responsiveness of Customer Service (if contacted)	N/A
11. Would You Recommend WPD purchase & Implement BWCs from AXON?	Yes (100% of Personnel)

* Only 30% of Personnel used the Live Stream Function. Answers reflect the answers of those who used the function

Axon BWC Cost: **\$407,692.30** (5 Year Service Agreement)

[Note: Quote includes Auto-Tagging, Hands-Free Squad Activation for entire WPD fleet, Axon Citizen, Axon Redaction Assistant, Supervisory Performance, & Auto-Transcription Specialty features]

Body-Worn™

The Wheaton Police Department’s body camera trial period with Body-Worn took place from July 2nd - August 9th, 2021. At the conclusion of the Body-Worn™ BWC trial period, all participating personnel were provided a detailed survey soliciting feedback of Body-Worn’s body camera hardware and software revealing the following:

<u>Body-Worn BWCs: Advantages</u>	<u>Body-Worn BWCs: Disadvantages</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geo Fencing Capabilities * • CAD Triggered Activations* • Wireless BWC Footage Offloads • BWCs Are Installed Within Officer Uniforms * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low Video Quality • Low Audio Quality • Low Battery Quality • Extensive Uniform Malfunctions • Low BWC Live-Stream Quality • Low Software (Case-Management) Quality (AvailWeb.net) • Terrible Redaction Software • <u>NOT Recommended</u> by 100% of Wheaton Police Department Trial Period Personnel

* Body-Worn Exclusive Features

Police Personnel Assessment: Officers (BWC Users) & Supervisors:

Category of Assessment [Body-Worn]	Average Score (Police Personnel) Scale of 1 (Disappointing) to 5 (Exceptional)
1. Audio Quality of BWCs	2.8
2. Video Quality of BWCs	2.4
3. Battery Life of BWCs	2.5
4. Ease & Ability for Officers to Tag/Label Videos	3.4
5. Ease & Ability to Search for Desired Footage	2.8
6. Ease & Ability to View/Access Desired Footage	2.6
7. Ease & Ability of Live-Stream Ofc View Feature	1*
8. Quality of Live-Stream (lag, time-delay, audio, video etc.)	2*
9. Ease & Ability to Share/Download Footage (SAO’s Officer or Other Officers)	3
10. Responsiveness of Customer Service (if contacted)	N/A (Not Contacted)
11. Would You Recommend WPD purchase & Implement BWCs from AXON?	NO (100% of Personnel)

* Only 20% of Personnel used the Live Stream Function. Answers reflect the answers of those who used the function

Body-Worn BWC Cost: **\$387,525.00** (5 Year Service Agreement)

[Note: Quote includes CAD Activation, Hands-Free Squad Activation for entire WPD fleet, and live-stream features]

WatchGuard (Motorola)

The Wheaton Police Department’s body camera trial period with WatchGuard took place from August 11th – September 17th, 2021. At the conclusion of the WatchGuard BWC trial period, all participating personnel were provided a detailed survey soliciting feedback of WatchGuard’s body camera hardware and software revealing the following:

<u>WatchGuard BWCs: Advantages</u>	<u>WatchGuard BWCs: Disadvantages</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration with our current In-Car Recording System* • Detachable Batteries* • “Record-After-The-Fact” Technology* • Acceptable Audio Quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Record-After-The-Fact” Technology • Low (Nighttime) Video Quality • Commonplace Accidental Activations • Minimal Mounting Options • Low Battery Life (<10 hrs) • Inherent Uniform Malfunction Risk • No Officer Live-Stream Capability • Terrible Redaction Software • Low Quality Software (Case-Management) (EvidenceLibrary.com) • No CAD Activation (Auto-Tagging Feature) • <u>NOT Recommended</u> by 100% of Wheaton Police Department Trial Period Personnel

* WatchGuard Exclusive Features

Police Personnel Assessment: Officers (BWC Users) & Supervisors:

Category of Assessment [WatchGuard]	Average Score (Police Personnel) Scale of 1 (Disappointing) to 5 (Exceptional)
1. Audio Quality of BWCs	3.7
2. Video Quality of BWCs	3.8
3. Battery Life of BWCs	3.5
4. Ease & Ability for Officers to Tag/Label Videos	3.5
5. Ease & Ability to Search for Desired Footage	3.5
6. Ease & Ability to View/Access Desired Footage	3
7. Ease & Ability of Live-Stream Ofc View Feature	N/A
8. Quality of Live-Stream (lag, time-delay, audio, video etc.)	N/A
9. Ease & Ability to Share/Download Footage (SAO’s Officer or Other Officers)	2.5
10. Responsiveness of Customer Service (if contacted)	2.5*
11. Would You Recommend WPD purchase & Implement BWCs from WatchGuard?	NO (100% of Personnel)

* Only 40% of Personnel contacted Customer Service. Answers reflect the answers of those who used the function

WatchGuard BWC Cost: **\$246,945.00** (5 Year Service Agreement)

Side by Side Comparison:

	Legally Required	PD Desired*	AXON	Body-Worn	WatchGuard
Cost (5 Year Service Agreement)			\$407,692.30	\$387,525.00	\$246,945.00
Recommended by Wheaton PD Trial Period Staff			✓		
100% Recommended by Local BWC Police Agencies			✓		
HD Quality Video (1080p)		✓	✓	✓	✓
Wide Angle Lens (Ofc Accurate View)		✓	✓		✓
HD Audio Quality		✓	✓		✓
High Durability			✓		✓
10 Hour Minimum Battery Life	✓		✓		✓
Multiple Mounting Options (Optimal Ofc Comfort)			✓		
Live Stream Capability			✓	✓	
Handsfree Holster Activation			✓	✓	
Handsfree Squad Activation (Gun Rack, Emergency Lights)			✓	✓	✓
Squad Car Video Synchronization					✓
CAD Integration (Auto-Tagging)		✓	✓	✓	
User Friendly Software			✓		
Ability to Digitally Share Evidence w/ DuPage SAO		✓	✓		
Ability for Citizens to Share Data w/ Law Enforcement			✓		
Auto ID Redaction Software		✓	✓		
Geo Fencing Capability / CAD Triggered Activation				✓	
BWC Installed Within Uniform				✓	
Mobile/MDT Compatibility			✓	✓	✓
BWC Audio Transcription		✓	✓		
Pre-Event Buffer (30 Second Min)	✓		✓	✓	✓
"Record After the Fact" Technology					✓
Supervisory BWC Audit Software	✓	✓	✓		
Extensive Warranties			✓		

* Features desired by the Police Department positively impact operational efficiencies

Analysis

To explore the best method of evaluating and implementing BWCs at the Wheaton Police Department, the leading BWC companies were researched. Throughout 2021, the trial periods were conducted to get field experience with each BWC company. A project team was assembled to assess critical facets of each company's BWC system's impact on the Wheaton Police Department's current infrastructure including Records, FOIA requests/redactions, evidence/case management, officer and supervisor use, software, and hardware. At the conclusion of the trials along with outside police agency consultations, one particular BWC company separated itself from its competitors – AXON.

Both Body-Worn and WatchGuard had some but not all the features necessary for optimal BWC deployment. Of the shared features, AXON exceeded performance in all categories. AXON proved to have the highest function and quality in audio and video quality, battery life, live streaming capability, CAD integration, case management and redaction software. AXON also contained exclusive critical features that exceeded its competitors capabilities including the following: audio transcription technology, "Axon Citizen" data sharing capability, auto identification redaction software, supervisory audit software, and digital evidence sharing capability with the DuPage County State's Attorney's Office.

Many departments have been forced to create new positions within their agencies to accommodate the back-end software demands that are associated with BWC implementations including redactions, FOIA requests, extensive video evidence management, and state law BWC compliance audit mandates. Body Worn™ and WatchGuard BWCs implementation would likely require additional staffing to accommodate these demands. Our current personnel and infrastructure could potentially handle the increased back-end demands associated with BWC implementation with AXON's exclusive critical features without additional staffing.

Recommendation

AXON possessed significant advantages: highest level of audio and visual quality, long-lasting battery life, hands-free squad activations, live-stream capability, CAD integration, user-friendly video management software, fully functional redaction software, supervisory audit software, seamless integration with the DuPage SAO, and comprehensive warranties.

After all trials, AXON was the only company recommended by all Wheaton PD trial period personnel. Furthermore, during outside police agency consultations, AXON was the only company that was universally recommended by all police agencies using their product. AXON proved to have the highest level of efficiency and functionality across all essential BWC shared features. Additionally, AXON proved to have exclusive critical features separating themselves from their market sector competitors. AXON provided the most cost-effective option, factoring in the inclusion of all desired features, add-ons, and backend integration.

It is recommended the Wheaton Police Department purchase and implement AXON body worn cameras.

