

**LODI CITY COUNCIL  
SHIRTSLEEVE SESSION  
CARNEGIE FORUM, 305 WEST PINE STREET  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2015**

A. Roll Call by City Clerk

An Informal Informational Meeting ("Shirtsleeve" Session) of the Lodi City Council was held Tuesday, December 15, 2015, commencing at 7:00 a.m.

Present: Council Member Johnson, Council Member Nakanishi, Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne, and Mayor Chandler

Absent: Council Member Mounce

Also Present: City Manager Schwabauer, City Attorney Magdich, and City Clerk Ferraiolo

B. Topic(s)

B-1 Presentation and Discussion Regarding TASER Body Cameras (PD)

Lodi Police Sergeant Eric VerSteege provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding body cameras. Specific topics of discussion included the need for body cameras, considerations, recommendation, Flex versus Axon, TASER Axon video, local TASER users, cost, reasons TASER is superior, how the system works, and research and evaluation.

In response to Council Member Johnson, Sgt. VerSteege confirmed that Lodi Police Department vehicles are not equipped with dashboard cameras. With regard to pre-event recording, Sgt. VerSteege explained that, if an officer witnesses an event, once he pushes the record button on the body camera, he can capture the previous two minutes leading up to the event.

In response to Mayor Chandler, Sgt. VerSteege explained that the camera is always recording, but the video is not stored until the record button is activated. City Manager Schwabauer further explained that if the record button is not pushed within two minutes, the system discards the video.

In response to Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne, Sgt. VerSteege stated that videos cannot be edited.

In response to Council Member Nakanishi, Sgt. VerSteege stated that videos can be deleted; however, it is an involved process that requires high-level administrative review, authority, and ability to do so; officers will not have the power to delete videos. In further response, Sgt. VerSteege stated that the Department preference is to store the data in the Cloud versus local storage. Council Member Nakanishi questioned what local authorities, such as Stockton, Tracy, Sherriff, and California Highway Patrol (CHP), are using for body cameras, to which Sgt. VerSteege responded that Stockton is still in the testing phase, Manteca is using and is pleased with the TASER cameras, the local district attorneys are highly satisfied with the quality of the TASER videos, and he was uncertain about the status of the Sherriff's Department and CHP, but he believed those agencies were a long way off from making a selection.

In response to Council Member Johnson, Sgt. VerSteege stated that the Department is looking to purchase 75 cameras and docks, which will provide a system for each of the 71 officers, while leaving extras should one break or malfunction or for equipping Animal Control and Code Enforcement Officers. He stated that the company will fix, replace, and maintain the equipment.

In response to Mayor Chandler, Sgt. VerSteege stated that the goal is to assign a camera to each officer so that videos can be labeled with the officer's name and to allow downtime for cameras to recharge and to download videos to evidence.com.

Council Member Johnson questioned why the cameras are equipped with a mute button, to which Sgt. VerSteeg responded that the policy on use of the mute button will be extremely restrictive in order to ensure complete transparency. He stated there may be rare circumstances requiring use of the mute button, such as discussions with a supervisor under tactical supervision, but for the majority of the time it will not be utilized and will be governed by policy. Sgt. VerSteeg added that videos will also be reviewed to ensure officers are behaving appropriately and recording events properly and will be used for training purposes. Sgt. Mike Kermgard added that the cameras can be initially set up to enable or disable use of the mute button under the permissions setting.

Council Member Johnson commented on a recent Sacramento Bee article, which reported that incidents have dropped dramatically and officers have a more conservative approach since the implementation of body cameras.

Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne expressed support for body cameras, stating the price is reasonable when it comes to safety of the public and officers. He questioned if there was a way to estimate a potential savings from lawsuits as a result of the body cameras. Mr. Schwabauer stated it would be difficult to estimate a figure, but he believed it would significantly reduce the number of claims and could also help to resolve them more quickly, which would likely result in a savings. Additionally, the off-site storage and management of videos represents a significant savings to the City rather than assigning a high-level staff person to manage the policy. City Attorney Magdich concurred with the City Manager that the savings will likely pay for the cameras.

Captain David Griffin stated that the Department does not have the necessary manpower to manage the videos and, because this program is still in its infancy stage, it is unknown how much time will be needed in the future to manage videos once there are multiple years in storage. He stated that it will take significant staff time to review and delete videos, review videos for court cases, and blur faces if necessary.

In response to Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne, Ms. Magdich stated that the minimum retention for videos is two years, but it will depend on the specific court case. Cpt. Griffin stated that videos will be tagged, which will help determine how long they should be maintained, and at the conclusion of two years, staff will review to determine how many are to be kept and how many can be destroyed. Some videos must be maintained for a longer period of time, or kept indefinitely, and will require additional storage. Ms. Magdich further stated that the videos cannot be edited, redacted, modified, or deleted; only faces can be blurred and the audio distorted. Mr. Schwabauer stated that this process will require a significant amount of staff time, and Ms. Magdich stated the policy will cover those areas and be limited to a small pool of individuals who will have access to manipulate videos. Sgt. VerSteeg added that the original video will always be maintained and the copy will be the version with blurred faces and distorted voices for use in court. He added that TASER also provides experts who can testify to the quality of videos and that they were not changed.

In response to Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne, Sgt. VerSteeg stated that grant funding is available for body cameras; however, because it is restrictive and does not cover long-term costs, staff believes it is not beneficial to pursue and that the Department should be self sustaining in this regard. Mr. Schwabauer added that the Federal grants specific to body cameras have too many strings attached that require agencies to manage the program, store videos, and spend funds according to its guidelines, which leaves little room for local control of the program.

In response to Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne, Deputy City Manager Jordan Ayers stated that the initial funding for body cameras comes from grant funding in the current year budget and some operational funding. He further explained that there are two different grants: one specific to body cameras, which the City is not pursuing; and one from generic grant money that the Department is applying toward the purchase of body cameras. The bulk of the generic grant has been appropriated, but some will be used to cover the cost of the cameras, which is on the Council agenda tomorrow evening. The future costs of \$60,000 per year can be funded through a combination of grant and operational funding, depending on the availability of grants.

Council Member Nakanishi expressed support for body cameras.

Council Member Johnson questioned if staff will return in the future with a plan for cameras in Police vehicles, to which Sgt. VerSteeg stated that not much research has been done on that so he could not quote a solid number, but TASER has an add-on feature that could accommodate it. Cpt. Griffin stated that staff felt the body cameras provided the best approach for the cost.

Myrna Wetzel expressed support for the recommendation, stating it was a positive step in assuring the safety of officers.

C. Comments by Public on Non-Agenda Items

City Manager Schwabauer informed Council that he will be attending the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors' meeting later this morning regarding its item on the Groundwater Management Act. He will inform the Supervisors of the City's position and reference the \$60 million that Lodi's rate payers invested in its water sustainability. In reply to Mayor Pro Tempore Kuehne, Mr. Schwabauer stated he would report back to Council on the outcome of the meeting.

D. Adjournment

No action was taken by the City Council. The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 a.m.

ATTEST:

Jennifer M. Ferraiolo  
City Clerk