

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: REPLACEMENT OF POLICE DEPARTMENT BODY-WORN CAMERAS

BACKGROUND:

In 2018, the City Council approved the purchase of body-worn cameras (BWC) for all sworn police officers. The equipment selected, from WatchGuard, was determined to be the best option after staff researched and tested several products. WatchGuard is owned by Motorola Solutions, Inc. These cameras have been in operation since 2018 and continue to be a vital tool for the police officers and the Ames community.

The equipment related to the cameras includes docking/charging stations and the server system for storing and retrieving video recordings. The cameras are subject to extreme temperatures and damage from activities in the field. The expected life of the cameras is three to four years. The original purchase included a three-year no-fault warranty, and though the warranty has expired, the officers have had minimal operational issues with the cameras and related components until recently. Parts are becoming more difficult to obtain thus repairs are more difficult to complete. The cameras are now in need of replacement.

City staff has evaluated the options to obtain replacement BWC equipment. WatchGuard, the current vendor for BWCs, is also the vendor for the in-car camera systems. Other vendors of BWCs exist but transitioning to another vendor would result in incompatibility with the department's current equipment and previously recorded data. In addition, staff believes the WatchGuard products are the best value for the City in terms of costs and the features of the cameras.

To maintain the continuity of the WatchGuard BWC system, a single source purchase is required. The City Purchasing Policy requires such a purchase to be approved by City Council. There is a cooperative contract between WatchGuard and the State of Iowa that the City can utilize to make this purchase. Purchasing staff has reviewed the proposal from WatchGuard and determined it is based on the best possible pricing available. The proposed agreement includes pricing for up to five years and includes device license and support. The first-year purchase total is \$126,822. The remaining years consist of subscription costs only, as detailed in the table below. The five-year total cost is \$190,382.

Contract Year	Pricing
1	\$ 126,822
2	20,615
3	20,615
4	11,165
5	11,165
TOTAL	\$ 190,382

The agreement provided is paid annually and can be cancelled within 30 days of payment due. The cost of the system includes all elements necessary to purchase, implement and operate a WatchGuard Vista/V300 system. The proposal includes equipment, system setup, configuration, testing and training. It also includes a three-year no-fault warranty for cameras. The warranty provides that if any of the cameras fail for whatever reason (including battery failure or damage from a dropped device) WatchGuard will replace them for no cost for the three-year period. The proposal includes a new system server to manage and store video as the old server is not compatible with the new system.

WatchGuard estimates an 8 to 12 week lead time after receipt of the equipment order. The timeline estimates the deployment of BWC in early spring or summer 2023.

At the time the current BWC system was purchased in 2018, staff did not anticipate that the equipment would become completely incompatible with future equipment in each subsequent generation (i.e., the current cameras are not compatible with newer docks, and vice versa). **Therefore, staff has not been budgeting replacement funding for a complete replacement every few years. Instead, funding for this purchase is available from the Police Department's computer replacement account, which currently has a balance of \$321,643.** This account has accumulated funds exceeding what is necessary to replace the Department's computers, according to the replacement schedule. **In future years, the Police Department's operating budget will include a replacement amount that will accumulate for a complete replacement of BWCs and related equipment on a four-to-five-year schedule.**

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Waive the City's purchasing policy requirement for formal bidding procedures and award a five-year contract to WatchGuard Vista/V300, Motorola Solutions, Inc., Chicago IL, for Body Worn Cameras, equipment, server, testing and training in an amount not to exceed \$190,382
2. Do not approve the purchase of body-worn cameras.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Both the public and police officers have come to expect the use of body-worn cameras by police officers. The current camera system is in need of complete replacement in order to provide reliable video recording and retrieval. The system from WatchGuard provides the most compatibility with the Department's needs.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, as described above.