



DATE: September 16, 2024

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council through City Manager

FROM: Brian Miller, Police Chief
Nick McGowan, Deputy Police Chief
Garrett Glaviano, Professional Standards Lieutenant
Kate McCoy, Senior Management Analyst

SUBJECT: Resolution Authorizing a Ten-Year Contract Renewal with Axon Enterprise, Inc. for the Replacement of Body Worn Cameras, Taser 10 Devices, Associated Equipment, Licensing of Evidence.com Software, and Cloud-Based Storage Subscription and Related Services Pursuant to a Master Services And Purchasing Agreement, in the Amount of \$2,379,702.63 Over Ten Years, with a Year 1 Cost of \$251,092.25, and Authorizing the City Manager to Execute All Documents Necessary to Complete the Renewal and Replacement

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council adopt the attached Resolution Authorizing a Ten-Year Contract Renewal with Axon Enterprise, Inc. for the Replacement of Body Worn Cameras, Taser 10 Devices, Associated Equipment, Licensing of Evidence.com Software, and Cloud-Based Storage Subscription and Related Services Pursuant to a Master Services And Purchasing Agreement, in the Amount of \$2,379,702.63 Over Ten Years, with a Year 1 Cost of \$251,092.25, and Authorizing the City Manager to Execute All Documents Necessary to Complete the Renewal and Replacement

BACKGROUND

The Petaluma Police Department has long prioritized the integration of advanced technologies to enhance transparency, accountability, and community trust. In 2014, recognizing the increasing call for greater oversight in law enforcement, the Department began evaluating body-worn camera (BWC) systems. At the time, the market for BWCs was still developing, and VieVu was the only vendor willing to provide equipment for a comprehensive field test. Their commitment to working closely with our police and IT staff during this trial period made VieVu the primary focus of our initial BWC program.

In 2015, following a successful evaluation, the Department purchased 40 VieVu LE-3 body-worn cameras for our sworn officers. This initial investment marked a significant step forward in our efforts to leverage technology for improved policing practices. However, the rapid increase in the volume of digital evidence generated by these cameras soon revealed the limitations of our physical storage solution. Initially, digital recordings were stored on a local server, which quickly became both time-consuming and costly to manage.

In 2018, the Department was awarded a Body Worn Camera (BWC) grant from the Department of Justice. This grant provided the opportunity to expand and upgrade our existing BWC program. As part of this initiative, a Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued in 2019 to identify a vendor capable of meeting our growing needs. Axon Enterprise, Inc. was ultimately selected as our new partner, largely due to their commitment to honor a buyback of our existing VieVu cameras. This arrangement allowed us to transition smoothly to Axon's more advanced BWC system, ensuring continuity in our operations while upgrading our technology.

The same year, the Department also made a strategic decision to transition from physical storage to a cloud-based solution provided by Axon's Evidence.com platform. This transition not only alleviated the growing storage demands but also significantly streamlined the process for our staff, saving both time and resources. Additionally, recognizing the importance of capturing interactions beyond those involving sworn officers, the Department expanded the use of BWCs to include Community Services Officers (CSOs), Parking Enforcement Officers (PEOs), and the Abandonment Vehicle Abatement (AVA) officer.

Simultaneously, the Petaluma Police Department has long recognized the value of Taser devices as a critical tool for de-escalating potentially dangerous situations. The Department began issuing Taser devices to sworn staff in 2006 providing officers with a non-lethal option that significantly reduces the likelihood of fatal encounters. Over the years, these devices have proven essential in preserving life and maintaining public safety by offering officers a means to incapacitate subjects without resorting to deadly force.

As the Department approaches the end of our current ten-year contract with Axon Enterprise, Inc., staff is recommending that the City Council authorize the City Manager to re-new the contract with Axon Enterprise, Inc. for ten (10) years. The new contract includes the latest version of the Axon BWCs along with the newest Taser device. Our current Taser devices are antiquated, have exceeded their lifecycle, and are in need of upgrading. By bundling these essential tools together, the Department can reduce overall costs while continuing to meet the high standards of service and accountability that our community expects. The integration of all equipment and software into the evidence.com platform, which has a direct link to the Sonoma County District Attorney's office, has proven invaluable in streamlining the collection, storage,

and sharing of digital evidence, thereby facilitating the investigation and prosecution of criminal offenses.

DISCUSSION

The integration of body-worn cameras and Taser devices has become a cornerstone of modern policing strategies, reflecting our commitment to transparency, accountability, and the safety of both officers and the community. Since their inception in 2014, BWCs have served as a critical tool for enhancing oversight by providing an objective record of interactions between law enforcement and the public. This technology has been instrumental in addressing complaints, identifying misconduct, and exonerating officers from false allegations. The presence of BWCs also promotes public trust, as community members can be confident that their encounters with law enforcement are being monitored and evaluated fairly.

The transition from VieVu to Axon in 2019 was driven by the Department's need for a more robust and scalable solution to manage the growing demands of digital evidence collection. Axon's comprehensive system, including their Evidence.com platform, offered a seamless integration that met our operational needs. This platform allows for the automatic upload of all digital evidence, including BWC footage and Taser data, ensuring that evidence is securely stored, easily accessible, and readily shareable with the Sonoma County District Attorney's Office, which exclusively accepts this format.

The Independent Police Auditor, IntegrAssure, has consistently supported the use of BWCs and Taser devices as critical tools for modern law enforcement. According to IntegrAssure, the transparency provided by BWCs is crucial for maintaining public trust and holding officers accountable. The footage captured by BWCs is routinely reviewed during incident audits involving use of force, vehicle pursuits, or complaints against staff. This independent review process ensures that the Department adheres to best practices and that any deviations are promptly addressed.

Similarly, the Independent Police Auditor has endorsed the use of Taser devices as a clear, less-lethal option that aligns with the principles of proportionality and restraint in law enforcement. The new Taser 10 devices represent a significant advancement over the older models currently in use. The Taser 10 offers improved accuracy and a longer effective range, allowing officers to maintain a safer distance while still effectively incapacitating a subject. Additionally, the redesigned cartridge system reduces the risk of accidental discharge, enhancing both officer safety and reducing liability for the Department.

Transitioning to the Taser 10 devices is a critical step forward for the Department. The current Taser models are nearing the end of their operational life and lack the enhanced safety and performance features of the Taser 10. By upgrading to the latest model, the Department ensures that our officers are equipped with the most effective tools available to manage potentially volatile situations while minimizing the risk of serious injury. The new Taser devices, like the BWCs, will also be integrated into the Axon system, allowing for comprehensive documentation and review of all use-of-force incidents.

Additionally, Taser 10 and Evidence.com present a compelling case as a sole-source solution for City Council approval due to their unique, integrated capabilities that streamline law enforcement operations and evidence management. The Taser 10 offers advanced features that enhance officer safety and de-escalation tactics while syncing with Axon’s BWC, ensuring that all use-of-force incidents are comprehensively documented. Evidence.com, as Axon’s proprietary digital evidence management platform, is the only solution that provides end-to-end integration with both the Taser 10 and Axon BWCs, allowing for automatic, secure storage and retrieval of critical data. This single-vendor approach minimizes compatibility issues, reduces administrative burdens, and ensures that all evidence is consolidated in a secure, centralized system. The unmatched functionality and efficiency offered by the integration of Axon BWC with Taser 10 and Evidence.com make them a singularly effective solution, justifying their selection as a sole source for procurement in compliance with the City’s purchasing requirements.

As we approach the end of our current five-year contract with Axon Enterprise, Inc., it is imperative that we continue to build on the successes of our BWC and Taser programs. The proposed new ten-year contract with Axon includes the replacement of BWCs, Taser 10 devices, and all associated equipment, licensing, and software necessary for their operation. The total cost of the contract is \$2,379,702.63, with a year-one cost of \$251,092.25 and years two through ten costs of \$236,512.25 annually. This investment will not only provide our officers with the necessary tools to serve the community effectively but also reinforce our ongoing commitment to transparency, accountability, and public trust.

The continuation of our partnership with Axon through this new contract will ensure that the Petaluma Police Department remains at the forefront of modern policing practices, equipped to meet both current and future challenges while upholding the high standards expected by our community.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

This agenda item appeared on the City’s tentative agenda document on September 16, 2024 which was a publicly-noticed meeting.

COUNCIL GOAL ALIGNMENT

This effort aligns with and achieves the City Council’s goal of “A Safe Community that Thrives.”

CLIMATE ACTION/SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

There is no climate action or sustainability impacts associated with this item.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This item is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5), in that purchasing software, body worn cameras and tasers does not meet CEQA's definition of a "project" because the action does not have the potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. However, if this action was a project, it would be exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing Facilities) and 15061(b)(3) (Commonsense Exemption) as the purchase of BWC and tasers is replacing equipment that the Petaluma Police Department already uses.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS

We are requesting authorization for the City Manager to renew a ten-year contract with Axon Enterprise, Inc. for the continued provision of Body Worn Cameras (BWCs), Taser devices, associated equipment, and software services.

The total cost of the contract over the ten-year period is \$2,379,702.63, with annual payments structured as outlined:

Overview of Costs by Year

- **Year 1 (2024-2025):** \$251,092.25
- **Years 2-10 (2025-2033):** \$236,512.25

Breakdown of Costs

Each year, the contract includes the following components:

1. Licensing and Software:

- **AXON Evidence.com:** This platform includes features such as auto-tagging, redaction, and unlimited storage for Axon device-generated data. The software is crucial for managing digital evidence securely and efficiently.
- **AXON Auto-Transcribe Service:** This service automates the transcription of audio and video recordings, facilitating easier and quicker access to important information.
- **AXON Community Request:** Allows for the collection and management of digital evidence submitted by the community, improving public engagement and transparency.

2. Hardware and Equipment:

- **Body Worn Cameras:** The contract includes the replacement and refreshment of BWCs throughout the 10-year period, ensuring that officers are equipped with the latest technology.

- **Taser 10 Devices:** The agreement covers the cost of Tasers and their associated accessories, including holsters, magazines, and cartridges, necessary for operational readiness.
- 3. **Training and Services:**
 - **Taser Instructor Courses:** Training for officers on the proper use of Taser devices, ensuring compliance with safety and operational protocols.
 - **Virtual Installation Services:** Support for the installation and integration of the new systems within the Department's existing infrastructure.
- 4. **Warranties and Maintenance:**
 - **Extended Warranties:** Coverage for both BWCs and Taser devices, including battery packs and docking stations, to ensure they remain functional throughout the contract period.
 - **Hardware Refreshes:** Scheduled hardware refreshes for BWCs and multi-bay docks at set intervals during the contract term, ensuring that all equipment remains up to date and fully operational.

This 10-year contract with Axon represents a strategic investment in the Department's ability to maintain transparency and accountability through cutting-edge technology. The contract also includes a significant cost saving of \$863,521.80 compared to the unbundled pricing of \$3,192,058.20. By locking in these rates for the full term of the contract, the Department can avoid future cost increases and budget more effectively over the long term.

Additionally, the current Axon BWC contract is expiring soon. The proposed costs associated with the new contract are more than double the cost of our initial agreement, currently about \$100,000 annually. However, the additional services and value provided by the updated contract with the inclusion of the Taser 10 devices and services more than justify the additional cost. Committing to a 10-year contract presents a substantial cost-saving opportunity in years 2028 through 2033, compared to opting for shorter-term renewals. Furthermore, Axon remains the industry leader in BWC technology and is the exclusive supplier of Taser devices, making them a vital partner for our operations. Securing a longer contract not only stabilizes our budget over a decade but also ensures continued access to top-tier, critical law enforcement technology. The additional cost of about \$151,000 was not included in the adopted FY 2024-25 budget. Current estimates are that half of this additional cost can be absorbed by department salary savings, and the remainder will likely require a mid-year budget increase. The Police Department will be closely monitoring their budget and coordinate with the Finance Department to ensure the least impact possible to the General Fund budget.

Lastly, the integration of all equipment and software into the Axon Evidence.com platform ensures seamless management of digital evidence, which is critical for efficient law enforcement operations. The advanced features such as auto-transcription, auto-tagging, and redaction streamline evidence management processes, saving time and reducing the risk of human error.

ALTERNATIVES

There is no alternative

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution
2. Axon Renewal Contract