

OHIO
HUDSON

POLICE DEPARTMENT
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Date: 02/24/2026
To: City Council
CC: Thomas Sheridan, City Manager
From: Perry Tabak, Chief of Police
Reference: HPD Body Worn Camera System

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to provide City Council with background information regarding the Hudson Police Department's body-worn camera (BWC) program, the conclusion of our initial five-year lease/purchase agreement, and our recommendation to transition to a new vendor—Axon—for the next five-year contract cycle.

Background

In 2020, the Hudson Police Department (HPD) initiated its first comprehensive body-worn camera and in-car camera program. At that time, Council authorized a five-year lease/purchase agreement with WatchGuard for an integrated camera system. This contract, approved through emergency legislation, allowed HPD to implement a modern camera platform that enhanced officer safety, improved transparency, and strengthened public trust.

The WatchGuard system has served the department well and has been a valuable tool in documenting police interactions, assisting in investigations, and providing objective evidence in both criminal and administrative matters. However, as with all technology, the equipment has reached the end of its useful life. The current lease/contract is set to expire at the end of the five-year term.

Evaluation and Vendor Transition

As we approached the conclusion of the initial contract, HPD conducted a review of available BWC and in-car camera systems to ensure we continue to utilize the most effective and reliable technology. Like all equipment used in modern policing, camera systems evolve rapidly, and it is essential that we continually evaluate new products to support our mission and better serve the public.

Although WatchGuard has been a solid vendor, their current platform no longer meets the long-term needs of the department. After evaluating multiple options, HPD has identified **Axon** as the vendor offering what we believe to be the most robust, reliable, and future-ready system. Axon is widely recognized as an industry leader in body-worn camera technology, cloud-based evidence management, and system integration.

Cost Considerations

Council will notice an increase in cost compared to the original 2020 WatchGuard contract. Several factors contribute to this difference:

- Five years have passed since the initial contract, during which time technology costs, software licensing, and cloud-storage expenses have increased industry-wide.
- Axon's system includes expanded capabilities, improved hardware durability, enhanced video quality, and more advanced evidence-management tools.
- Market-wide inflation and supply-chain pressures have affected nearly all technology-related purchases across the public sector.

These increases are consistent with trends seen in law enforcement technology nationwide. Despite the higher cost, the Axon system provides significantly improved functionality and long-term value.

As part of the procurement review, staff evaluated pricing available through both the **State of Ohio Term Contract** (State Term Contract) **MCSA0096** (valid through June 30, 2027) and the **Omnia Partners cooperative purchasing contract** (Omnia Contract) **3544-21-4615**. Omnia is already more competitive than the State Term Contract; however, the **Hudson Police Department negotiated pricing that is lower than both contracts**.

Specifically:

- The State Term Contract price for the same Axon products is higher than the HPD quote.
- The Omnia cooperative pricing, which already provides a discounted government rate, is still higher than the HPD-negotiated amount.
- The vendor's final quote to HPD therefore represents the lowest available government-contract price, ensuring full compliance with cooperative purchasing requirements while maximizing cost efficiency.

Total Project Cost

The total cost for the five-year Axon program is **\$328,293.76**, as reflected in the signed quote. This amount includes all hardware, software, cloud storage, warranties, and services.

Annual Cost Breakdown

The annual payment schedule from the Axon quote is as follows:

Year	Annual Cost	Source
Year 1 – March 2026	\$32,829.36	“2026” payment table
Year 2 – March 2027	\$73,866.10	“2027” payment table
Year 3 – March 2028	\$73,866.10	“2028” payment table
Year 4 – March 2029	\$73,866.10	“2029” payment table
Year 5 – March 2030	\$73,866.10	“2030” payment table
Total (5 years)	\$328,293.76	Quote Summary

These figures are taken directly from the Axon payment schedule included in the attached quote.

Importance of Body-Worn Cameras in Modern Policing

Body-worn cameras have become an essential tool in contemporary law enforcement. They:

- Provide objective documentation of police-citizen interactions
- Enhance transparency and accountability
- Improve officer safety
- Assist in evidence collection and prosecution
- Reduce complaints and help resolve disputes more efficiently

Given the critical role these systems now play, it is not advisable for HPD officers to operate without a high-quality, reliable BWC platform in place. Maintaining continuity in our camera program is vital for both public trust and officer protection.

Recommendation

HPD recommends that City Council authorize the City Manager to enter into a five-year lease agreement with Axon for a new integrated body-worn and in-car camera system. This transition ensures that the department continues to utilize modern, dependable technology that supports our mission and meets the expectations of the community we serve.

If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

Thank you,

Perry Tabak
Chief Perry Tabak