

City of Columbia, Missouri

*701 E. Broadway
Columbia, Missouri*



Meeting Minutes - Final

Wednesday, April 24, 2024

6:15 PM

Work Session

Conference Room 1A/1B

Columbia City Hall

701 E. Broadway

Citizens Police Review Board

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board Members Present: Denise Balazic, Harry Castilow, Stephanie Coleman, Reece Ellis, Douglas Hunt, Xavier Lee Scruggs, and Steph Yoakum
Excused Absence: Steven Jeffrey, and Jamie Thornsberry

Unexcused Absence: None

Staff Present: Assistant City Manager Matt Unrein, Assistant Chief Paul Dickinson, Adam Ward, Laura Gardner and Rose Wibbenmeyer

Members of the public were present.

Call to Order:

Doug Hunt called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Doug Hunt welcomed the participants to the work session. There were no introductions.

III. DISCUSSION OF THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

Review of Police Policy 447

Attachments: [Police Policy 447 \(Body Worn Cameras\)](#)

The Board and members of the public discussed police policy 447. Doug Hunt started the discussion by outlining three themes of interest:

1. When should body worn cameras be turned on and off
2. Retention of recordings
3. Who should have access to the recordings

Reece Ellis agreed those are the main questions for discussions. Assistant Chief Dickinson discussed when body worn cameras are to be turned on.

Reece Ellis asked about policy 447.3 (d) and the origination of the language surrounding the restriction on communications with other police personnel without the permission of the police chief. Assistant Police Chief Paul Dickinson said that he did not know where the questioned language originated from it. Chriss Jones discussed how the former police chief got caught doing something on an officer's body camera video. Assistant Police Chief Dickinson discussed the costs associated with storage of the video. Chriss Jones expressed concerns that the officers were not turning on the videos when they should have done so. Assistant Chief Paul Dickinson asked for specifics and Chriss Jones responded. Assistant Chief Dickinson again stated that it was caught on body worn cameras. Chriss Jones also mentioned another police shooting with a report that did not mention the police body worn camera videos. Chriss Jones would like to know if the body worn cameras were engaged. Steph Yoakum asked to focus on the policy implications, not disciplinary matters. Doug Hunt questioned if it was more of a question of if a policy was not followed.

Chriss Jones said that the police should turn the body worn cameras on with any interaction with the public. Chriss Jones said anytime they step out of the vehicle and they are not on break, the camera should be turned on. Steph Yoakum said that Chriss

Jones was advocating that anytime they step out of the vehicle and they are not on break, the camera should be turned on.

Stephanie Coleman asked about training on body worn cameras in high risk situations. Assistant Chief Dickinson said the longer an officer is here, the more it becomes muscle memory. Assistant Chief Dickinson said they do not have a simulator.

Assistant Chief Dickinson said that they are required to report the times they do not activate the camera. Steph Yoakum asked if self reporting is the best way to do it.

Matt Unrein said that the city manager wants to have technology to automatically activate the cameras. Matt Unrein said they will plan to budget for that technology in the next fiscal year.

Assistant Chief Dickinson said they are having issues with how the videos are tagged and that there are technologies that will automatically tag the videos.

Doug Hunt said this jumps ahead to the retention and that the judgement on whether to pursue the steps that are necessary involves discretion. Assistant Chief Dickinson said the supervisors are to be looking for the body worn camera footage. He further stated that there are departments who have positions for managing all of the video technologies and they are exploring that option.

Reece Ellis asked about costs and the use of evidence.com. Steph Yoakum asked if it is industry standard rating. Assistant Chief Dickinson said they are told that they are spending less than that on retaining the video. Doug Hunt mentioned the state retention schedule. Doug Hunt was excited to hear that the City Manager is interested in spending more money on improving the system.

Assistant Chief Dickinson said that there needs to be an activation point for the automatic turn on. Doug Hunt asked if the police department gets to decide the activation points to use. Assistant Chief Dickinson said that the system has some activation points that are programmable.

Susan Renee Carter read from the PERF standards. She encouraged the Board to look at the PERF standards. Assistant Chief Dickinson said he felt that their policy seemed to be compliant with the PERF standards that Susan Renee Carter read. Doug Hunt said that the Board should look at the PERF standards side by side with the policy. Susan Renee Carter said that the PERF standards also include lessons learned.

Harry Castilow asked about how officers feel about the cameras. Assistant Chief Dickinson said that now it is second nature. Assistant Chief Dickinson said many officers use it for report writing purposes.

Doug Hunt said that he read it was useful in training and asked how often and how are body worn camera recordings used in training. Assistant Chief Dickinson said that Mike Hestir uses body worn camera recordings in training to show successes, rather than focusing just on failures.

Stephanie Coleman asked about revamping the policies and whether they have started reviewing this policy and what changes they are considering. Assistant Chief Dickinson said they are reviewing the policy and are focused on muting. They are in discussions as to how to reword the policy to clarify when muting is permitted and when it is not.

Assistant Chief Dickinson said there are cameras that keep the camera on and that the officer would have to hold it to mute it. The current cameras require them to turn them on and off. Denise Balazic suggested that the officers could record that information in their report. Assistant Chief Dickinson discussed the functions of the camera and the use of the beeping.

Doug Hunt presented a hypothetical scenario surrounding a muting of the camera. Harry Castilow and Steph Yoakum found the muting problematic. Denise Balazic said that having the recording would let you know what is in someone's head. Denise Balazic asked about how people feel about having every conversation recorded. Steph Yoakum said that many employers do that. Denise Balazic said that she agreed. Steph Yoakum discussed Doug Hunt's scenario and Chriss Jones' scenario. Chriss Jones clarified what happened in the situation she described.

Assistant Chief Dickinson said he believes that officers discussion about the report, the thought process, and their work should absolutely be recorded. Assistant Chief Dickinson said that he wants to capture that information. Stephanie Coleman said that is not in the policy. Doug Hunt said that if they look literally at the policy and procedures written, the officer could understand that the officer could mute it if not talking to the citizen. Doug Hunt questioned the Assistant Chief about the changes. Doug Hunt noted that he is hearing a willingness for the police department to consider changes to the policy.

Assistant Chief Dickinson clarified that tactics should not be recorded for officer safety. There was additional discussion about what should or should not be recorded. Chriss Jones asked if the recording were allowed to capture everything could the recording later be edited out for sunshine purposes. Assistant Chief Dickinson said that it would be in the after action report. Doug Hunt asked when the recording would become public. Assistant Chief Dickinson said that after everything was resolved, it could become public. Doug Hunt said he was hearing consensus for wording to limit the officers ability to mute the camera.

Doug Hunt returned to the subject of retention. Reece Ellis said that Spokane has an ombudsmen and he will contact them to see how they settled on a year retention. Steph Yoakum suggested surveying other cities to see what they do and what their contracts contain. Doug Hunt suggested that the City consider holding the video for a year to allow time for filing a complaint. Susan Renee Carter said the PERF document has information about costs.

Doug Hunt then asked about who should be allowed to see and hear the recordings. Assistant Chief Dickinson said that the officers get to see their own recordings and supervisors get to see the recordings of those they supervised. Doug Hunt said that if a citizen appeals to the review board, the board gets to see the recordings. Reece Ellis said that the court system has access. Assistant Chief Dickinson mentioned the Sunshine Law. Doug Hunt asked about the Sunshine request vetting process.

Stephanie Coleman discussed the first set of audits and discussed who should be wearing the body worn cameras. She asked if it is just uniformed officers or does everyone has access. Adam Ward said uniformed officers are issued the cameras, and another mix of people such as SWAT.

Susan Renee Carter quoted PERF standards regarding the recording of crime victims and consent. Reece Ellis asked about when a citizen can request that the camera be turned off. Assistant Chief Dickinson said in accordance with their policy, they will have the

camera turned on. He said that there will be more requirements related to sexual crime victims. Susan Renee Carter said that PERF standards suggest that officers ask for consent for recording of all crime victims. Harry Castilow said that it would be difficult to do on an actual call. Steph Yoakum, Stephanie Coleman and Harry Castilow stated concerns about evolving situations as compared to follow up interviews with crime victims. Doug Hunt said that they should look at the PERF recommendations but there seems to be some concern that the PERF standard might interfere with the goal of having the recordings for all interactions with the public.

Steph Yoakum said she is strongly in favor of extending the thirty day standard retention period and suggested they aspire to a one year retention. Matt Unrein said that they can get some pricing. Denise Balazic said that it seemed positive.

Steph Yoakum said that she is excited about the automatic activation technology. Matt Unrein said that it will be very expensive. Xavier Scruggs asked if it would be in the next budget year and Matt Unrein confirmed.

A man in the audience gave a statement. John Sanders said that he has a complaint that he wanted to file at the police station. Steph Yoakum suggested that it sounded like he wanted to file a report with the police. Stephanie Coleman asked if the police representatives would be able to assist in providing the information to John Sanders after the meeting and they concurred.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:30 p.m., Stephanie Coleman made a motion to adjourn. Denise Balazic and Xavier Scruggs seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.