

Body Camera Subcommittee
March 5, 2015 - 3:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Barrett; Supervisors Wright and Veitch; Sheriff Zurlo; Undersheriff Mullahey; Chief Deputy Castle; Spencer Hellwig, Administrator; Steve Dorsey, County Attorney; Karen Heggen, District Attorney; Greg Veitch, Saratoga Springs Police Chief; Eileen Bennett, Data Processing Director; Press.

Chairman Barrett called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Veitch the minutes of the January 28, 2015 meeting were approved unanimously.

Saratoga Springs Chief of Police, Veitch, gave a brief overview of the experiences that the City of Saratoga Springs Police Department has had with the use of body cameras. He said as an overall piece of equipment from a management prospective the cameras have been very helpful. He said in the six months that the cameras have been in use there have been no rudeness complaints, compared to the months prior to that where there were 5 to 10 complaints a year. Corresponding to that same time frame, the use of force reports has remained consistent, but the accusations of excessive force have gone to zero.

Mr. Veitch said at this time it is not mandated that every officer wear a camera, just in certain situations. He said the approach is to do it in stages, giving officers time to understand the benefits of wearing a camera.

Mr. Veitch said after the cameras are done recording they are loaded into a port where they are recharged and the video is downloaded to the server.

Chief Castle said the Sheriff's office would need a central server. He said the issue they have, unlike Saratoga, is that they have eight stations and would have to be able to upload the video from all the stations to the main station. He said the Sheriff's office is a much bigger operation with some days having 17 or 18 officers coming off shift at one time which could produce 15 to 40 hours of video three times a day that would have to be uploaded to the server. The estimate that was received for 90 days of storage was \$70,000.

Ms. Heggen said the District Attorney's office has been able to resolve many cases much more quickly with the use of video cameras.

Mr. Barrett asked Mr. Veitch if his office has seen an overwhelming increase in the administrative workload. Mr. Veitch said it wasn't overwhelming, but there has been a significant increase in the number of requests, with most people requesting a copy of the video in their general requests. He said with every crime a copy of the video is sent to the District Attorney's office.

Ms. Heggen said, although they are solving cases quicker, there is more upfront time involved.

Mr. Barrett asked Mr. Veitch if the body cameras have made police work more effective. Mr. Veitch said he believes that if you reduce the number of rudeness complaints and you have officers using less excessive force and acting toward citizens more respectfully it is worth the number of cameras you have to put out on the street.

Mr. Barrett asked that Chief Castle work with Ms. Bennett from Data Processing to look at the different stations today and how that would look if you needed additional bandwidth.

On a motion made by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Veitch the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom