



NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Work group sets initial goals for body camera pilot program in Howard County

A newly-established Howard County Police body camera work group established goals for developing a pilot program to evaluate the possible use of the devices at its first meeting on April 20.

The work group has been tasked by Police Chief Gary Gardner and County Executive Allan H. Kittleman with examining the technology, cost, usefulness, transparency, training, accountability and privacy issues in launching a pilot. The group established three initial goals for the pilot, and the issues which may need to be addressed to achieve each goal.

Goal #1: Make vendor, equipment and operational recommendations, which may include:

- Possible vendors
- Equipment options
- Issuing the cameras
- Locations of charging and download stations
- Personnel needed to test the cameras in the field
- Length of the pilot program

Goal #2: Make policy and training recommendations, which may include:

- Recording mandates
- Fourth amendment issues
- Video downloads and review
- Requirements for notification of recording to a third party
- Responding to requests under the Md. Public Information Act (PIA)

Goal #3: Determine technical requirements to operate the pilot program, which may include:

- Costs of technology
- Back-end requirements, such as servers, connectivity, etc.
- Storage issues
- Redaction, video search and camera capabilities
- Personnel needed to manage the program, such as Records, Computer Operations, and others

“In considering the volume of material now available on body cameras, and a recent recommendation by our Police Citizens’ Advisory Council to consider a pilot program, we will explore the potential for use of this technology to assess its value as a law enforcement tool here in Howard County,” said Chief Gardner.

The work group is comprised of 18 members, representing various facets of the department, as well as organizations outside the agency. The group is expected to meet monthly and will provide updates on its progress. It is expected that it will be a number of months before the cameras can actually be deployed into the field.

Reps from HCPD: Operations; Technology; Information Management; Records; Computer Operations; Policy; Training; Research & Planning; Public Affairs; Patrol. Reps from outside HCPD: Ho. Co. Technology & Communication Services; Ho. Co. Office of Law; Ho. Co. State’s Attorney’s Office; Minority Officers’ Association; Supervisors’ Alliance; Police Officers’ Union.

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