

STAFF REPORT

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF COBOURG



Report to:	Mayor and Council Members	Priority:	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low
Submitted by:	Brent Larmer, Director, Legislative Services/ Municipal Clerk Legislative Services Division blarmer@cobourg.ca	Meeting Type:	Open Session <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closed Session <input type="checkbox"/>
Meeting Date:	July 11, 2022		
Report No.:	Legislative Services-044-22		
Submit comments to Council			

Subject/Title: Town of Cobourg By-law Enforcement Department Body-Worn Camera partnership with Cobourg Police.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council receive the report for information purposes; and

FURTHER THAT Council endorse the Town of Cobourg By-law Enforcement Department to equip Cobourg Municipal Law Enforcement Officers with Body-Worn Cameras in partnership with the Cobourg Police Service; and

FURTHER THAT Council approve the expenditure of a Body-Worn Camera Program with AXON Public Safety Canada through the Cobourg Police Body-worn Camera Program for a five (5) year agreement in the amount of \$19,537.00 excluding HST to be paid annually in the amount of \$3,907.40 for the Municipal Law Enforcement Department for three (3) full-time Officers in partnership with the Cobourg Police Body-Worn Camera Program and that Council approve \$3,907.40 to be funded through the Parking Reserve account to pay for the 2022 unbudgeted cost of this program; and

FURTHER THAT Council authorize the preparation of a Body-Worn Camera Policy for the Town of Cobourg to be approved by Municipal Council prior to the roll out of the Body-Worn Cameras by Municipal Law Enforcement Officers.

1. STRATEGIC PLAN

Not Applicable

2. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The Town of Cobourg Police Service conducted a comprehensive community consultation with the residents of the Town of Cobourg on Body-Worn Cameras (BWC). As part for the results of the surveys that were conducted, generally, respondents indicated support for the use of BWCs. With over half of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that they feel safer when a police officer is wearing a BWC and BWCs will enhance police transparency and increase public trust, while protecting police against false accusations. Although, Municipal Law Enforcement Officers are not Police Officers, the activities that Town Officers engage in have a similar process, but just at a smaller scale and specific to Municipal By-laws and other Provincial Offences statutes. In addition, this proposal is in collaboration with the Cobourg Police and will be supported by the Service regarding the handling of the digital evidence keeping.

The Legislative Services Division, with the Communications Department will introduce a Communications Campaign to let residents know of this collaboration with the Cobourg Police and additionally that our Municipal Law Enforcement Officers will be using Body-Worn Cameras. Additionally the approved BWC Policy when completed and approved will be shared and posted online through the By-law Department Website.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Staff report is to provide Council with a Staff recommendation on the option to engage in the opportunity to partner with the Cobourg Police Service in their Body-Worn Camera Program in the Town of Cobourg for the Town's Municipal Law Enforcement Officers.

4. ORIGIN AND LEGISLATION

As part of any Town of Cobourg Body-Worn Camera Program, the Town of Cobourg will identify the legislative authority for the collection of personal information that will be captured by the cameras and ensure that any such collection aligns with that authority and all other relevant legislation, including any legislative provisions addressing data, information or records storage, access, use and/or disclosure. The Town of Cobourg will be compliant with all legislative processes and in consistent collaboration with the Cobourg Police Service.

5. BACKGROUND

In August of 2020, the Cobourg Police Service reported on a survey related to community perceptions and beliefs around BWC benefits and limitations. The survey identified support for the use of BWCs, with a sample size of 211 responses. Of those, only 9 were responding from outside of Northumberland County or Cobourg. There was a large show of support for officers wearing body-worn cameras from 94% (200) of the survey respondents. The Toronto Sun (26Nov20) on behalf of Axon surveyed 2000 Canadians and 97% support use of BWC by police officers.

As part of the Body-Worn Camera Program the Cobourg Police approached the Town of Cobourg with an option to partner with their BWC roll-out and the ability to be a collective enforcement team in the community and having the ability to leverage an agreement for a tool at cost and personnel savings.

6. ANALYSIS

Municipal Staff is committed to providing fair, effective, efficient, equitable and accountable services to the residents of our community, in accordance with the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Human Rights Code of Ontario.

The Town of Cobourg is also committed to ensuring that the inherent worth and dignity of all individuals who come into contact with Municipal Law Enforcement Staff is respected in all interactions. By recording interactions with members of the public, a body-worn camera is one way to increase transparency, enhance accountability during the interaction of officers with the public, and improve law enforcement practices by identifying where a need may exist for additional training.

Body-worn cameras will also enable the timely and fair investigation of any allegations of misconduct by Municipal Staff, and a quick resolution of complaints. In addition, body-worn cameras are an effective tool for gathering evidence and providing a more accurate record of events, thus improving the work of the by-law enforcement investigation and enforcement system as a whole.

On June 24, 2022, the last group of Cobourg Police Service constables completed the body worn camera training. Public-facing special constables and uniform officers are now equipped with body worn cameras.

The mission of the Body Worn Cameras Program:

- Accuracy and quality of evidence and collection and the related judicial oversight processes.
- Maintaining trust through transparency with our community, our members, and partners.
- Enhancing accountability of both our members and the members of the community.
- Body worn cameras will also provide information on the effectiveness of our procedures and training.

The Town's By-law Enforcement Department has a unique opportunity to partner with the Cobourg Police Service to equip Municipal Law Enforcement Officers with the use and introduction into the enrollment on the use Body-Worn Cameras.

The By-law Enforcement Department's Body Worn-Camera Digital Evidence collection will be managed and collected through the Cobourg Police Service. The Cobourg Police will also provide training and will be the Town's resource throughout the partnership and with Axon Public Safety Canada during the length of the agreement.

Prior to the introduction and the roll-out of the Municipal Law Enforcement Officer Body-Worn Cameras, a Municipal Body-Worn Camera Policy must be established

and put into place prior to the Cameras being used in the field. The Cobourg Police Service currently has their own Policy, but the Town's By-law Department will also draft a specific Town Policy which will be brought forward to Council for approval. The Policy will be reviewed by the Cobourg Police Service as they are supporting the Town's involvement in the program, and also the Town of Cobourg will use components of the recommendations set out in the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada's Guidance for the Use of Body-Worn Cameras by Law Enforcement Authorities (2015), and ensure that new recommendations and best practices continue to be monitored and implemented as they are identified by the relevant Provincial and Federal authorities.

The proposed policy will ensure that staff is able to provide fair, effective, efficient, equitable and accountable services to the residents of our community while ensuring transparency of the enforcement process. The implementation of Body-worn cameras will also be a vital tool used in capturing and securing the chain of custody of evidence during the enforcement process.

In addition, the Cobourg Police Service will be providing training through their certified training staff to the Municipal Law Enforcement Officers for the use and operation of the Body-Worn Cameras as well as providing ongoing training as it arises to ensure effective deployment of this tool. This is another additional benefit and savings with entering the Body-Worn Camera Program with the Cobourg Police.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/BUDGET IMPACTS

The Town of Cobourg has the advantage of creating a new partnership with the Cobourg Police Service to be part of the Body-Worn Camera Program which will come at a considerable amount of savings for the Town and the By-law Enforcement Department.

The Town of Cobourg has been provided a quote from Axon Public Safety Canada under the Cobourg Police BWC Program which includes being included as part of the current five (5) year agreement the Police has entered into with Axon Public Safety Canada. The total cost of the Body-Worn Camera Program for the five (5) year agreement will be \$19,537.00 excluding HST, which will be invoiced out annually to the Town in the amount of \$3,907.40.

This costing includes:

- Three (3) Axon Body Cameras
- Three (3) Charging Stations
- Warranty on Cameras and Dock
- Basic Evidence Storage Application

This program has been rolled out by the Cobourg Police Service this month in across the Service, and the Town of Cobourg is looking to take advantage of the expertise of current Sergeant Paul Legere of the Cobourg Police Service who has led the roll-out of the BWC Program, to onboard and train the Town's Officers. This

means that the Town would need to purchase the BWC and the equipment this month and the current expenditure being proposed for this year is unbudgeted. Staff are recommending that the \$3,907.40 be funded through the Parking Reserve Fund for 2022 and for the remaining four (4) years that the Town include the annual cost of the BWC Program in the By-law Enforcement Department operating budget as the remaining costs will be for the licensing program and updates throughout the term to software and warranty.

8. CONCLUSION

As part of the Town's commitment to service excellence, staff is confident that the implementation of Body-Worn Cameras as part of the daily duties of Municipal Law Enforcement Officers is vital. The implementation of a Body-worn Camera policy will ensure greater accountability and transparency of the enforcement process while limiting safety and liability risks encountered in the regular duties of Municipal Law Enforcement Officers.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	By-law Enforcement Officer Body-Worn Cameras - Legislative Services-044-22.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Jul 7, 2022

Approved By: Tracey Vaughan, Chief Administrative Officer, July 7, 2022 at 10:01 A.M.