



SPD127B rev. 07/05

## **SHEBOYGAN POLICE DEPARTMENT**

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### **NEWS RELEASE**

#### **Sheboygan Police Department will begin testing body cameras**

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**DATE: 10/21/2015**

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT**

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**CASE NO.**

Over the next several weeks, the Sheboygan Police Department will be performing a body camera pilot project in order to evaluate body camera hardware, software, feasibility, and cost related to the implementation of body cameras. Body cameras will be issued to selected groups of officers who will be asked to use the body cameras to record their interactions with the public for the purpose of comparing and contrasting the cameras and storage systems offered by several product vendors.

Portable Recording Devices, commonly referred to as Body Cameras, are a small, digital recorders worn either on the Police Uniform or attached to a headpiece, that allow an officer to capture an audio and video record of their interaction with the public. The police department has used in-squad video recorders to record traffic stops and other exchanges with citizens since 2008. Body cameras are designed to be used similarly to in-squad video cameras, but allow much more versatility. They are not dependent upon the position of a squad car in order to capture quality video, and can be used to capture interactions virtually anywhere the police officer is. This allows for the officer to record many different types of interactions with citizens that take place away for the police car.

Currently, the Police Dept. is in a testing phase in order to identify which hardware and software best helps the department meet the goal of obtaining an effective system. Select officers will be issued the body cameras to use in their daily assignments in order to assess the quality and the ease of use for each product. Though this is product testing, the video captured will be saved and available as a record of that encounter and as evidence if necessary.

The Police Department has discussed the place of body cameras in operations for several years; however, the technology is rapidly changing and can be cost prohibitive. Local retired businessman Lyle Watson, however, came forward this fall with a generous donation in order to open a funding source to spur this project. That donation has been the catalyst for entering into the product testing phase. As of yet, no specific funding has been appropriated for the acquisition of a system for deployment.

The movement toward portable recording devices in police operations has been made to ensure there is transparency in police operations. The Sheboygan Police Department welcomes the opportunity to enhance the current level of transparency and trust we share with our community, and believe that the deployment of these devices will only enhance the effectiveness of police operations. Any questions related to the use of these devices or the status of this project at the Sheboygan Police Dept. can be directed to Capt. Steve Cobb, (920)459-4268.

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