

**MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS**

**May 22, 2018**

**Developing Next Steps on Body-Worn Cameras**

In recent years, high-profile shootings by law enforcement, including the Ferguson and Garner cases, have led to increased public scrutiny of police agencies and concerns regarding inappropriate use of force, particularly against people of color. As a result, many jurisdictions across the nation have adopted body-worn camera programs in an effort to improve accountability and transparency of law enforcement.

Los Angeles County (County) has similarly been exploring the issue of body-worn cameras. In 2012, the Citizens' Commission on Jail Violence was the first entity to recommend that the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (Department) use "lapel cameras as an investigative tool" to address problematic use of force. On November 2, 2012, the Department delivered a comprehensive study detailing the various cameras types as well as implementation options, but expressed concern about investing in such a rapidly changing technology at that time.

On July 12, 2016, the Board of Supervisors (Board) requested that the Sheriff develop a body-worn camera implementation plan within 120 days. In addition, the Board directed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to prepare a budget proposal in support of the

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body-worn camera plan prepared by the Department. On October 10, 2017, the CEO submitted her report and determined that to implement body-worn cameras in Los Angeles County (County), an estimated \$84 million and 302 additional staff would be required. Of that amount, \$76 million and 239 additional staff were attributed to the Department. More recently, the Civilian Oversight Commission's (COC) ad hoc committee on use of force has taken on the issue of body-worn cameras, in part at the request of the Sheriff.

There are many potential benefits of body-worn cameras if used correctly, including recording all contact a deputy has with individuals in the field. These recordings can provide evidence in criminal prosecutions, improve both citizen and officer conduct, assist with assessing complaints about deputy misconduct, and ultimately enhance law enforcement and community relations. However, the use of body-worn cameras is complex, and raises many policy, legal and practical concerns. This includes issues around privacy rights (of deputies and those being recorded), storage and maintenance of recordings, and who has access to the footage. The equipment and personnel required to implement a body-worn camera program represent major, long-term financial investments. Additionally, other jurisdictions have struggled with appropriate use of this technology, leading to too many scenarios where a camera was not turned on during an incident involving use of force.

The County is committed to the accountability and transparency of its law enforcement agencies, as demonstrated by the creation of the COC and other Board actions. As one of the few large agencies that has yet to implement this technology, time is of the essence to resolve this issue. Given the complexity of the issues surrounding the use of body-worn cameras, however, as well as the high cost, it requires a deliberative

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approach to deployment, as well as consideration of its long-term consequences and impact on the Department and lessons learned from other jurisdictions. Consistent with the CEO's October 2017 report recommendations, prior to moving forward, more direction is needed to assist the Board in deciding whether and how to implement body-worn cameras in the County.

**I THEREFORE MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), in consultation with the Sheriff, County Counsel, and the Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission (COC), to engage a consultant (Consultant) with relevant content expertise to:
  - a. Review and assess previous Los Angeles County (County) reports and analyses conducted on body-worn cameras, including those of the COC; and
  - b. Submit a written report to the CEO within 180 days that is informed by community and stakeholder input and includes recommendations on proposed policies, procedures, deployment plan, staffing levels, and the operational impacts of body-worn cameras on the Sheriff's Department and the public it serves.
2. Direct the CEO and request the Sheriff to provide an updated and detailed cost analysis for the implementation and use of body-worn cameras in writing within 30 days upon receipt of the Consultant's report.

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