

## Management Committee

Meeting date: Wednesday, March 11, 2020

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of March 11, 2020

**Subject:** Body Worn Cameras: Policy and Public Comment Report

**District(s), Member(s):** All

**Policy/Legal Reference:** Minnesota Statute § 626.8473 (subd. 2)

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Leah Palmer, MTPD Project Manager, 612-349-7232

Sgt. Brooke Blakey, MTPD Executive Officer, 612-349-7200

**Division/Department:** Police

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Reviews and accepts the public comment report related to body-worn cameras;
2. Reviews and adopts the Council Policy on body-worn cameras.

### Background

Over the last decade, body worn cameras (BWCs) have gained popularity in law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve across the country. They are now recognized as a standard for police in order to increase trust between police and the communities they service, to reduce violent confrontations, and to provide another source of evidence for criminal prosecution.

The MTPD previously appeared in front of the Metropolitan Council on two occasions:

1. November 13, 2019, as an information item to introduce body-worn cameras;
2. December 11, 2019, with a request to open public comment as required by Minnesota Statute § 626.8473 (subd. 2).

The MTPD appeared before the Transportation Committee on February 24, 2020 to request approval of the Council policy, which was granted.

The Council policy was also presented and approved by the Policy and Procedure Review Team on February 19, 2020.

### Rationale

Minnesota Statute requires the governing body (Metropolitan Council) to conduct a public comment period, which happened from December 11, 2019, through January 30, 2020.

In addition, the MTPD must gain Council's approval on the policy in order to move forward with toward implementation with the contract and equipment procurement. The MTPD has conducted extensive research into national best practices and model policies in order to develop its policy and procedures.

### Thrive Lens Analysis

BWCs dovetail with the Thrive MSP 2040 plan's three principles, as well as the Equity outcome:

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- Integration: “The Metropolitan Council is committed to integrating its activities to pursue its outcomes, achieve greater efficiencies, and address problems that are too complex for singular approaches.”
  - BWC footage can be shared with other Council departments such as the Office of General Counsel and Risk Management in order to coordinate legal and risk responses more effectively.
  - BWCs allow the MTPD to cooperate more meaningfully with other metro-area police departments as well as prosecutors to improve criminal justice outcomes.
- Collaboration: “Collaboration recognizes that shared efforts advance our region most effectively toward shared outcomes.”
  - Provides additional accountability for police interactions with the public which can increase trust.
  - Provide an additional form of evidence to our criminal justice partners such as other law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and the courts.
- Accountability: “For the Council, accountability includes a commitment to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our policies and practices toward achieving shared outcomes and a willingness to adjust course to improve performance.”
  - Create a data-driven approach to policy analysis and training needs in order to better serve the public.
  - Respond to complaints against officers using video footage that may aid in the assessment of a police conduct.
- Equity: “Equity connects all residents to opportunity...[by] engaging a full cross-section of the community in decision making.”
  - The proposed public comment plan brings the MTPD’s policy out directly to the communities it serves by asking for input and hearing concerns in a multitude of formats.

### **Known Support / Opposition**

During the public comment period, MTPD received eight (8) emails in support of BWCs and zero opposing.

## Committee Report

*Business Item No. 2020-82 JT SW*

### Transportation Committee

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of March 11, 2020

**Subject:** Body-Worn Cameras: Review of public comment report and adoption of the Council policy on body-worn cameras.

#### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Reviews and accepts the public comment report related to body-worn cameras;
2. Reviews and adopts the Council Policy on body-worn cameras.

#### Summary of Committee Discussion/Questions

There were no comments or questions from Council Members.

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Cummings. Motion carried.

## Transportation Committee

Meeting date: Monday, February 24, 2020

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of March 11, 2020

**Subject:** Body Worn Cameras: Public Comment Report & Policy Adoption

**District(s), Member(s):** All

**Policy/Legal Reference:** Minnesota Statute § 626.8473 (subd. 2)

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Leah Palmer, MTPD Project Manager, 612-349-7232

Sgt. Brooke Blakey, MTPD Executive Officer, 612-349-7200

**Division/Department:** Police

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

3. Reviews and accepts the public comment report related to body-worn cameras;
4. Reviews and adopts the Council Policy on body-worn cameras.

### Background

Over the last decade, body worn cameras (BWCs) have gained popularity in law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve across the country. They are now recognized as a standard for police in order to increase trust between police and the communities they service, to reduce violent confrontations, and to provide another source of evidence for criminal prosecution.

The MTPD previously appeared in front of the Metropolitan Council on two occasions:

3. November 13, 2019, as an information item to introduce body-worn cameras;
4. December 11, 2019, with a request to open public comment as required by Minnesota Statute § 626.8473 (subd. 2).

### Rationale

Minnesota Statute requires the governing body (Metropolitan Council) to conduct a public comment period, which happened from December 11, 2019, through January 30, 2020.

In addition, the MTPD must gain Council's approval on the policy in order to move forward with the rest of the project and toward implementation. The MTPD has conducted extensive research into national best practices and model policies in order to develop its policy and procedures.

### Thrive Lens Analysis

BWCs dovetail with the Thrive MSP 2040 plan's three principles, as well as the Equity outcome:

- Integration: "The Metropolitan Council is committed to integrating its activities to pursue its outcomes, achieve greater efficiencies, and address problems that are too complex for singular approaches."

- BWC footage can be shared with other Council departments such as the Office of General Counsel and Risk Management in order to coordinate legal and risk responses more effectively.
- BWCs allow the MTPD to cooperate more meaningfully with other metro-area police departments as well as prosecutors to improve criminal justice outcomes.
- Collaboration: “Collaboration recognizes that shared efforts advance our region most effectively toward shared outcomes.”
  - Provides additional accountability for police interactions with the public which can increase trust.
  - Provide an additional form of evidence to our criminal justice partners such as other law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and the courts.
- Accountability: “For the Council, accountability includes a commitment to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our policies and practices toward achieving shared outcomes and a willingness to adjust course to improve performance.”
  - Create a data-driven approach to policy analysis and training needs in order to better serve the public.
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- Equity: “Equity connects all residents to opportunity...[by] engaging a full cross-section of the community in decision making.”
  - The proposed public comment plan brings the MTPD’s policy out directly to the communities it serves by asking for input and hearing concerns in a multitude of formats.

### **Known Support / Opposition**

During the public comment period, MTPD received eight (8) emails in support of BWCs and zero opposing.

# REPORT ON PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING BODY-WORN CAMERAS

*METRO TRANSIT POLICE DEPARTMENT*



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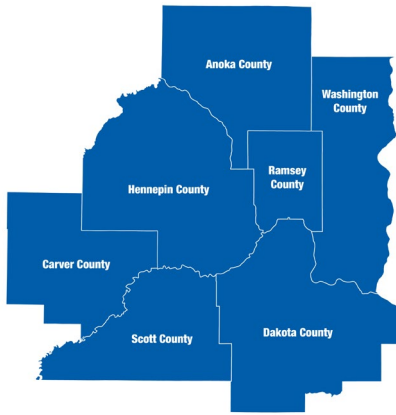
The Council's mission is to foster efficient and economic growth for a prosperous metropolitan region

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**Metropolitan Council Members**

Charlie Zelle	Chair	Raymond Zeran	District 9
Judy Johnson	District 1	Peter Lindstrom	District 10
Reva Chamblis	District 2	Susan Vento	District 11
Christopher Ferguson	District 3	Francisco J. Gonzalez	District 12
Deb Barber	District 4	Chai Lee	District 13
Molly Cummings	District 5	Kris Fredson	District 14
Lynnea Atlas-Ingebretson	District 6	Phillip Sterner	District 15
Robert Lilligren	District 7	Wendy Wulff	District 16
Abdirahman Muse	District 8		

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The Metropolitan Council is the regional planning organization for the seven-county Twin Cities area. The Council operates the regional bus and rail system, collects and treats wastewater, coordinates regional water resources, plans and helps fund regional parks, and administers federal funds that provide housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income individuals and families. The 17-member Council board is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the governor.

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## Comment Overview

This report serves to summarize public comments received for the proposed Body-Worn Camera policy by the Metro Transit Police Department. The proposed policy was released for the purposes of public comment on December 11, 2019, and comments were accepted through January 30, 2020. During that time, the draft policy was available on the Metropolitan Council's website and through printed copies as requested.

The Council proactively promoted availability of the comment draft, including advertising it and the public hearing through social media and other means. An opportunity for in-person comment from members of the public was provided at the regularly-scheduled meeting of the Metropolitan Council on January 8, 2020. No member of the public made comment during this time.

The Metro Transit Police Department, via Met Council's Communications Department, received comment from eight people related to the policy, all via e-mail, and all in support of body-worn cameras for Transit police.

The table below summarizes the comments received; the contents of each comment are on the following pages.

Date	Format	Resident Last Name	Resident First Name	Support or Oppose
12/13/2019	email	Grinde	Ian	Support
12/13/2019	email	Zellers	Stephanie	Support
12/13/2019	email	Kaardal	Wade	Support
12/17/2019	email	Hruska	Joseph	Support
12/17/2019	email	McCullom	Chris	Support
12/17/2019	email	Yavner	Dan	Support
12/18/2019	email	Morrison	John	Support
12/31/2019	email	Ricciardi	Alexa	Support

### Comments in their full text:

*"I have only rarely used the light rail due to where I live, but I am vastly in favor of bodycams on the Transit Police, along with all Police if I am honest.*

*"It protects police from false allegations, and also acts like a built in constituent protection.*

*"If we have body camera, and there is a controversy, all we need to do is check the footage, and a bunch of drama can be saved.*

*"These days, if I hear 'The body cam was turned off', I, along with many people I know assume that an abuse of power occurred, regardless of what the police say.. Our 4th amendment rights as citizens are already getting eroded, so we may at least share the benefits of surveillance for once.*

*"If police want citizens to trust them, they need to show them that they are worthy of trust. What better way then to prove it with recorded proof? Actions speak louder than words, and police should be held to an elevated standard of conduct anyway.*

*"In summary, I think they are a solid idea, and will lead to increased trust in police."*

--Ian Grinde

*"Body cams would be a good idea. I live in Hopkins and very close to the future SWLR. I'm all for it, but something needs to be done about the crime and the non payers. There is not enough enforcement on the light rail."*

--Joseph Hruska

*"In interest of transparency and public safety, the MTPD police officers should be required to wear body cameras while on active duty. We give our police officers great powers and great responsibility, asking them to exercise the duties of their job under as much sunlight as possible is a must."*

--Wade Kaardel

*"100% they should have to wear body cams, at a minimum. I think training and codes of conduct on how to treat all people using the metro system with respect, yes that includes the homeless, is a bigger priority however."*

--Chris McCollom

*"I support the use of body cameras for the police, in order to properly protect and serve, we should have accountability in place."*

--John Morrison

*"I am in support of Metro Transit police wearing body cameras. I believe this will increase their accountability as they interact with the public."*

--Alexa Ricciadri

*"The policy, as much as I could plow through, is acceptable with this caveat: It is ok, so long as the video and audio are used to complement and not supersede officers' accounts and testimonies."*

--Dan Yavner

*"My name is Stephanie Zellers, I am a resident of St. Paul and I utilize Metro Transit services multiple times a week. I am writing in support of the proposal for Body Worn Cameras by Metro Transit Police. I believe such a policy will assist in protecting public safety as well as improving police-public relations and trust."*

--Stephanie Zeller



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