

**Public Safety Committee
MINUTES****REGULAR MEETING
September 28, 2015**

The Public Safety Committee convened in a regular meeting on Monday, September 28, 2015 at 301 W. Second St. in Austin, Texas.

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Zimmerman called the Board Meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Don Zimmerman, Chair; Greg Casar, Vice Chair; Ora Houston; Leslie Pool

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Committee approved the minutes, motions made by Council Member Houston, seconded by Council Member Pool, motion moved 4/0.

2. STAFF BRIEFING AND RECOMMENDATION TO THE COMMITTEE REGARDING AUSTIN - TRAVIS COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (ATCEMS) FRANCHISE APPLICANT, ACUTE MEDICAL SERVICES.

Austin – Travis County EMS staff member, Rick Branning, provided an overview and said that Acute Medical Services failed the vehicle inspection even though they knew in advance the requirements and they still had several deficiencies. Due to City Ordinance, this item will still need to go before full Council on October 1, 2015 to set the public hearing on the franchise application and then the public hearing will take place on October 15, 2015. Austin – Travis County EMS Chief of Staff James Shamard explained that more detail was given to the ATCEMS Advisory Board and after their review of the material; board members also supported the decision to disapprove this additional franchise.

Council Member Pool moved to deny the application based on the work that was submitted and the inspection done by the Austin – Travis County EMS Staff, on Council Member Houston's second. Motion moved 3/0 with Council Member Casar off the dais.

3. STAFF BRIEFING, INVITED TESTIMONY, AND POLICY DISCUSSION REGARDING POLICE BODY CAMERAS, INCLUDING AUSTIN POLICE DEPARTMENT'S REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL UPDATE.

A panel discussion took place with the following individuals on the panel and with Committee Members.

- a. Kim Rossmo, Chair, Public Safety Commission – Urged the committee to consider all of the ramifications of body cameras. He cautioned that this was not a panacea. FBI/DOJ cannot recommend cameras and says the shelf life depends on how much you spend on the camera. Chair Zimmerman asked Mr. Rossmo to bring this forward to the Public Safety Commission. He will follow-up with Chair Zimmerman for direction after the meeting.
- b. Ken Casaday, President, Austin Police Association – Talked about the positives of body cameras, as well as the negatives. He stressed that all calls need to be recorded, regardless of the call. Mr. Casaday urged the Committee to determine the true cost prior to committing to program.
- c. Nelson Linder, President, Austin Branch, NAACP – Cited report on positives and negatives. National data shows that the cameras help a lot of situations. FBI/DOJ has the entire program that cites recommendations and lessons learned. Battery life is about 10 hours and they are easily recharged.
- d. Margo Frazier, Police Monitor – Recently attended a national forum on body cameras where they spoke about pitfalls and lessons learned. Council Member Pool asked about shelf life of cameras. Police Monitor Frazier said that the camera is the least expensive part of the program. Cameras do not wear out so they should last until new technology is available and replacements are warranted. In Denver, Colorado they require their officers to wear body cameras even on extra duty assignments. Council Member Houston asked about whether or not the group would go back to the stakeholders to make sure their needs are covered; Commander Reyes agreed they would.
- e. Ely Reyes, Commander, Austin Police Department – He talked about protections allowed by State of Texas legislature to ensure citizens are not losing privacy rights with this program. Cameras will turn on the same way regardless of whether or not the officer is in the car. No infrared technology will be used. They want the recording to be as close to what the officer is seeing to not skew the perception of being able to see more than is possible with the human eye. Council Member Casar asked about prosecutor and defendant access to recordings. The prosecutor would have access to recordings by case number because recordings are stored on the Cloud. Commander Reyes indicated the prosecutor determines what the defendant has access to. He also indicated the group can schedule a community forum prior to RFP. Council Member Pool wants stakeholder input prior to the RFP. Chair Zimmerman asked when the RFP would be available for them to view. Reyes indicated that he would get with the Purchasing Office to make sure purchasing rules are strictly followed. Chair Zimmerman said the Committee definitely wants to review the RFP before it goes it out. Chair Zimmerman wants the dash cam policy and private body cam policy from the Austin Police Department.

4. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION

- Isla Waters - in support of the using body cameras.
- Monica Brieger - in support of using body cameras.
- Andrew Bucknall - in support of using body cameras.
- Randy Moreno - against the reclassification of positions for the Wildfire Division.

- Jim Von Wolske - in favor of allowing landowners to eliminate cedar trees from their property to prevent and control wildfires.

NEXT MEETING

Monday, October 26, 2015

ADJOURN

Chair Zimmerman adjourned the meeting at 5:45 p.m. without objection.

The minutes were approved on this the 26th day of October, 2015 on a unanimous vote.