

**From:** [Portland Copwatch](#)  
**To:** [Commissioner Hardesty](#); [Wheeler, Mayor](#); [Commissioner Ryan Office](#); [Commissioner Rubio](#); [Commissioner Mapps](#)  
**Cc:** [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** (2 of 3) TESTIMONY on item 55, Body Worn Cameras  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 25, 2022 3:15:45 PM

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Mayor Wheeler and Commissioners

Portland Copwatch's official stance on the adoption of body worn cameras is neutral. This is in part because many of our community allies think police should have them and in part because on rare occasions they may be used to hold police accountable for misconduct.

The ordinance before you today has many flaws, the most significant of which is that it presumes the Portland Police should be the agency charged with storing, monitoring and retrieving video from body cameras. This is stated clearly in the financial impact statement.

This particular problem leaves an agency that was revealed in the past few months to have members who released false information about a Council member for political reasons, asked community members not to vote for that council member or for the District Attorney, and who hid the existence of a violent and prejudiced training slide, in charge of important data.

But the broader problem is that the City is proposing to jump into a \$2.6 million pilot project before the parameters of the program have been defined. In other words, until there's a comprehensive policy, this program should be put on hold again.

The City is framing this as a means to return to compliance with the US DOJ Agreement-- in amendments the City hasn't even voted to adopt yet. That comes later on Wednesday. Then those amendments have to be approved by Judge Simon after he hears testimony if they are Fair, Adequate and Reasonable.

There are many other parts of the DOJ Agreement that could have been put into place before this formal process ended, such as hiring someone to review the 6000+ uses of force in 2020. Instead of accelerating that process and getting a report out immediately upon DOJ's request in April 2021, the city is now coming up on the two year anniversary of the first protests, meaning the ability to do a comprehensive review is being compromised.

Aspects of the policies that will be different based on the kind of technology being requested include whether or not the officers have the ability to turn the cameras on and off and whether they can review footage after using force before writing reports or being interviewed.

Until those issues are resolved, Council should not move forward with this pilot program.

Just as a final thought to those of you who have shared doubts or of not should consider the real purpose of body cams: A body camera points outward from a police officer and records what community members are

doing. It takes copwatchers-- third parties recording the cops and the civilians-- to get a full view of what is going on.

We have yet to see a study looking at whether cities which adopt body cams end up incarcerating an increased number of community members-- and whether, as is likely, most of those are people of color. The documents you're considering today stress that the main function of body cameras is to hold officers accountable. But if that were true, the Police Association would not be such big fans. The real use will be to spy on, criminalize and over-police certain community members.

Keep this in mind as you adopt the policies and then, sometime after that, start your pilot program.

Thank you  
dan handelman  
portland copwatch

**From:** [Mariana Garcia Medina](#)  
**To:** [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** ACLU Testimony for Council Items 54 & 55 January 26  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 25, 2022 5:04:51 PM  
**Attachments:** [image003.png](#)  
[City of Portland Council item 55 Re. Body Cameras Testimony 2022.docx.pdf](#)  
[City of Portland Council item 54 Re. JTTF Report Testimony 2022.docx.pdf](#)

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Hello,

I hope you are doing well. Below I have attached two written testimonies for two different council items:

- Council Item 54: Accept the Portland Police Bureau's report to City Council on the 2022 Portland Joint Terrorism Task Force
- Council Item 55: Authorize competitive solicitation not to exceed \$2,600,000 for a body-worn camera implementation for police officers

Thank you for all your help and please let me know if you will need anything else from us.

Warmly,

**Mariana Garcia Medina**

Pronouns: she, her/ ella

**Senior Policy Associate**

American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon

P.O. Box 40585 Portland, OR 97240

(503) 444-7010 | [mgarciamedina@aclu-or.org](mailto:mgarciamedina@aclu-or.org)

[aclu-or.org](http://aclu-or.org)  



The 2022 legislative session is just around the corner! [Tune into our legislative session preview webinar](#) on January 27 to meet our policy team and learn how you can engage and advocate with us!



January 25, 2022

City Council  
City of Portland  
1221 SW 4th Ave.  
Portland, OR 97204

**RE: Testimony in opposition of the emergency ordinance to authorize competitive solicitation not to exceed \$2,600,000 for a body-worn camera implementation for Portland Police Bureau**

Dear Mayor Wheeler and Commissioners Hardesty, Mapps, Rubio, and Ryan,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon (ACLU of Oregon). The ACLU of Oregon is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing civil liberties and civil rights, with more than 20,000 members in the Portland area.

**The ACLU of Oregon opposes the solicitation and purchase of body-worn cameras without a fully developed City of Portland body-worn camera policy in place.**

For public safety efforts to be effective, the City and Portland Police Bureau need a relationship of trust and collaboration with the community. Consistent with this value, especially in the past several years, the City of Portland has created spaces to engage community members and stakeholders in matters involving public safety and the Portland Police Bureau, including the City's efforts to create and implement a policy about body-worn cameras by Portland Police officers.

However, the Portland Police Bureau's recent emergency request for the City Council to approve a RFP solicitation process for a body-worn camera system - even though a body-worn camera policy has not yet been developed - undermines the City's commitment and process of involving the community in this very critical public safety policy area.

The specifications of a particular body-worn camera technology and vendor contract can drive or limit the City's body-worn camera policy. For example, if a technology cannot be automatically activated when an officer draws their weapon, the selected technology would not be able to meet a City policy that requires camera activation when a weapon is drawn. Likewise, if a vendor contract requires that all video footage reside with the vendor, the selected technology would not be able to meet a City policy that requires that video footage reside with a neutral agency or body to protect the privacy of those captured in videos.

Therefore, it is important that the City develop a body-worn camera policy as a first step. As a next step, the policy should be used to develop the criteria that is used in the RFP process to select a vendor. As well, the policy should be used to set contract terms that are consistent with the policy.

**Let us be clear that if the City proceeds with a RFP solicitation process and purchase of body-worn cameras without a policy in place, there is significant danger that body-worn cameras will be a significant budget expenditure for the City that does not improve police**

**accountability and public safety and poses grave risks to the privacy rights of community members.**

Police officers are endowed with significant powers by the City, including the ability to enter homes and encounter bystanders, suspects, and victims in stressful, embarrassing, upsetting, and extreme situations. It is crucial that a policy is in place to ensure accountability and privacy when police are wearing body cameras. Police body cameras are not inherently a useful and desirable tool. It is the vision and policies that guide their use that make all the difference. Recently publicized training slides of PPB show that some Portland Police officers espouse or support extremist, violent, and derogatory views towards community members, and it is not enough to simply trust that Portland Police will do the right thing. We need to ensure that there is a clear policy in place that Portland Police must follow.

**For these reasons, the ACLU of Oregon urges the City of Portland to hold off on the solicitation and purchase of body-worn cameras for PPB officers until there a body-worn policy has been developed and approved by the City Council with input from the community.**

Respectfully,

**Sandy Chung**

Executive Director

ACLU of Oregon

Pronouns: she, her

Email: [schung@aclu-or.org](mailto:schung@aclu-or.org)

**Mariana Garcia Medina**

Senior Policy Associate

ACLU of Oregon

Pronouns: she, her

Email: [mgarciamedina@aclu-or.org](mailto:mgarciamedina@aclu-or.org)

**From:** [Portland Copwatch](#)  
**To:** [Commissioner Hardesty](#); [Wheeler, Mayor](#); [Commissioner Ryan Office](#); [Commissioner Rubio](#); [Commissioner Mapps](#)  
**Cc:** [Council Clerk – Testimony](#); [News Media](#); [Portland Copwatch](#)  
**Subject:** COMMENTS: Follow up on Body Worn Cameras (Item 84, Wed 9:30 AM)  
**Date:** Friday, February 4, 2022 3:20:45 PM

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Mayor Wheeler and Commissioners:

Portland Copwatch reiterates its concerns from the January 27 hearing on body worn cameras that the Portland Police Bureau should not be placed in charge of the data collected by the cameras. Specifically, the impact statement says the \$2.6 million being set aside includes 6 full time police employees-- five in records and one in the IT department.

As noted in our testimony (included below in written form without some extemporaneous remarks I also made on the record), making this part of the purchase ordinance is indeed setting the policy on the cameras. The City, the DOJ and Judge Simon have all heard community concerns that the police should not be the ones managing the data.

Thus, the claim that this is only about a purchase agreement and is not about policy is misleading.

We strongly urge the other members of Council to join Commissioner Hardesty's call for the "Request for Proposals" (leading to a purchase of hardware) be changed into a "Request for Information." As the Commissioner pointed out, the information from the various companies about the capabilities of their products can then be used to select a vendor once the city's policies are in place.

Another policy that was explicitly discussed was the ability to review footage in the field, which is apparently one consideration being evaluated. Yet with the DOJ and community members calling for police to write force incident reports before reviewing any body camera footage, it seems that should be a capability that would disqualify a vendor.

We hope you will take the "middle path" and send out the Request for Information rather than setting up a policy by way of making an equipment purchase.

Thank you  
dan handelman  
portland copwatch

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Date: Tue, 25 Jan 2022 15:15:37 -0800  
From: Portland Copwatch <copwatch@portlandcopwatch.org>  
To: Portland City Council Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty  
<joann@portlandoregon.gov>, Mayor Ted Wheeler  
<mayorwheeler@portlandoregon.gov>, Commissioner Dan Ryan  
<commissionerryanoffice@portlandoregon.gov>, Commissioner Carmen Rubio  
<comm.rubio@portlandoregon.gov>, Commissioner Mingus Mapps

<mappsoffice@portlandoregon.gov>  
Cc: cctestimony@portlandoregon.gov  
Subject: (2 of 3) TESTIMONY on item 55, Body Worn Cameras

Mayor Wheeler and Commissioners

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Thank you  
dan handelman  
portland copwatch

**From:** [Michelle Stevenson](#)  
**To:** [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony on Body Worn Cameras Item 84  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 8, 2022 1:44:50 PM

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To Whom This May Concern,

My name is Michelle Stevenson. I am a community member.

I am against spending \$2.6 million on body cameras for the police when we do not have a policy in place. I am against body cameras completely if police have the opportunity to prereview and access footage. Body camera footage should be stored by a third party and the footage should be available for civil rights, and to hold the police accountable. Prereview and ability to view footage in the field would defeat that purpose.

Please vote no for spending \$2.6 million on body cameras at this time. Thank you,  
Michelle Stevenson

**From:** [Zeenab Fowlk](#)  
**To:** [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [jared.hager@gmail.com](mailto:jared.hager@gmail.com); [Fowlk, Zeenab](#)  
**Subject:** [User Approved] February 9, 2022, City of Portland Council Meeting - Agenda Item #84  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 9, 2022 7:57:48 AM

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The public may provide written testimony to Council by emailing the Council Clerk at [cctestimony@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:cctestimony@portlandoregon.gov).

**[\\*Authorize competitive solicitation not to exceed \\$2,600,000 for a body-worn camera implementation for police officers](#)** (Emergency Ordinance)

Introduced by Mayor Ted Wheeler Bureau Police Previous agenda item 55.  
Oral record is closed, written record remains open until February 9, 2022 at 9:30 a.m.

Dear Mayor and City Council,

The area that is on the agenda includes:

3. The Police Bureau has determined that the best option is to conduct a competitive solicitation, including a broader pilot of body-worn cameras to select the most appropriate solution before full implementation of a system;

**COMMUNITY STATEMENT/QUESTION:**

The City of Portland, in the pilot testing, should either look at electronic/digital or technology driven activated devices solely given the advances in technology, or test both manual activated and electronic/technology activated devices to determine the best solution for police accountability, etc.

Before any pilot launches with the new Body Worn Cameras, there should be preliminary policies and directives that will help with the training and onboarding, and to prevent harm to police and community during the piloting of the BWC, especially related to Violence Against Women, and vulnerable populations.

[Search | International Association of Chiefs of Police \(theiacp.org\)](#)  
[DeliberationsfromtheIACPNationalForumonBWCsandVAW.pdf](#)

The International Chief of Police Association has several helpful documents and policies that should be reviewed and adopted before any BWC are piloted in the City of Portland.

Thanks,

Zeenab A. Fowlk

**City Council Meeting - Wednesday, January 26, 2021 9:30 a.m.**

| <b>Agenda No.</b> | <b>First Name</b> | <b>Last Name</b>                          | <b>Zip Code</b> |
|-------------------|-------------------|---|-----------------|
| 55.1              | Dan Handelman     | Peace and Justice Works/Portland Copwatch | 97242           |
| 55.3              | Mariana           | Garcia Medina                             | 97240           |
| 55.4              | Jake              | Dockter                                   | 97206           |
| 55.5              | Marc              | Poris                                     | 97212           |
| 55.6              | Rev. Dr. Mark     | Knutson                                   | 97211           |