

NEWS RELEASE

Board approves RFP for law enforcement body worn cameras, feasibility study for upgraded Oakland County Sheriff facilities

Commissioners Jackson, Spisz introduce separate resolutions aimed at increasing transparency, improving public safety buildings. Budget amendments support improving public safety.

September 25, 2020, OAKLAND COUNTY, MI. – At its meeting on September 23, 2020, the Oakland County Board of Commissioners adopted two resolutions relating to the Oakland County Sheriff's Office. One resolution authorizes the development of a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the purchase, maintenance and video management of body worn cameras for law enforcement on behalf of the Oakland County Sheriff's Office by the end of this year. The second resolution authorizes the development of a feasibility study for the Oakland County Sheriff's Office Training Center, Sheriff's Operation Center and Oakland County Emergency Operations Center.

"We must hold accountable those dedicated to protect and serve our residents and take every opportunity to ensure Oakland County is transparent and improves public safety practices," said Commissioner **Janet Jackson** (D-Southfield), who introduced the body camera resolution. "This program would go a long way to increase trust between the general public and local law enforcement in our communities, and I am so proud of the unanimous, bipartisan support of the Board recognizing these benefits."

A body camera pilot is underway in the county and will inform the RFP and implementation of a body worn camera program for the Oakland County Sheriff's Office. Local law enforcement agencies around the county and state have shown that footage provided by body worn cameras has helped improve transparency and accountability in a variety of ways, such as increasing civility between law enforcement and citizens, accelerating resolutions of complaints, supporting the documentation of corroborating evidence, and enhancing training opportunities for officers.

In addition, the Board approved an RFP for a feasibility study to perform a needs analysis and prepare a preliminary budget for the construction of new facilities for the Oakland County Sheriff's Office Training Center, Sheriff's Operation Center and Emergency Operations Center. Current training spaces are not co-located for personnel and are often not convenient for the wide range of training needs, including

classroom teaching, emergency vehicle operations, gun range training and incident-specific scenarios. The county dispatch center and Emergency Operations Center house a growing number of services and agencies, however the building is currently at capacity with no room for growth or expansion.

“Our training centers are outdated, our 9-1-1 call centers are cramped, and our emergency operations center is not efficient,” Commissioner **Michael Spisz** (R-Oxford) said. “Most of these facilities were built in the mid-20’s, and we must bring them into the 21st century. Conducting this feasibility study will provide us with the information to move forward. We must provide the facilities and tools that allow our law enforcement agencies to continue to be world class and protect all of our citizens.”

The Board also approved the budget for FY 2021 at the meeting, which included an amendment from Commissioner **Bob Hoffman** (R-Highland) for \$1 million to obtain architectural and design plans associated with a county public safety training facility and Emergency Operations Center. The budget also included an amendment from Commissioner **Gwen Markham** (D-Novi) for \$1 million to create a public-private partnership supporting Oakland County communities interested in the adoption and implementation of community policing initiatives.

“Body cameras and better training go hand in hand,” Board Chairman **David T. Woodward** (D-Royal Oak) said. “To improve public trust and ensure law enforcement accountability the public demands, we need to do both.”

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