



Police Review Commission

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INFORMATION CALENDAR

January 27, 2015

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Police Review Commission
Submitted by: Michael Sherman, Chairperson, Police Review Commission
Subject: Security Camera Database

INTRODUCTION

At its June 3, 2014 meeting, the Council asked the City Manager to report on the possibility of setting up a database under the purview of the Berkeley Police Department to allow individuals to register their private surveillance cameras with the City, to serve as a resource for police to help them contact camera owners when a Part 1 crime has been committed nearby. This item was also referred to the Police Review Commission.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The PRC found the general concept of a voluntary registry to be appealing, in that it could save police officers time when seeking out privately owned surveillance cameras or trying to contact their owners. The PRC's primary concern was the potential for the invasion of privacy that could occur by monitoring the activities of individuals through access to live streaming of video. Another concern was the police keeping video footage that is turned over to them if the footage is not used as evidence. Accordingly, at its July 23, 2014 meeting, the PRC passed the following motion (M/S/C: Perezvelez/Allen):

"Inform the Council of the Commission's general support of the creation of a voluntary registry of existing video cameras to be maintained by the Police Department, provided that it is not contemplated that the Department maintain custody of videos or that the Department have access to live feeds."

Ayes – Allen, Bernstein, Lowhurst Perezvelez, Rogers, Zerrudo and Halpern (temporary appointment for Sherman); Noes -- None; Abstain – None; Absent -- Sherman, Cardoza.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the subject of this report.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

The City Council could direct the Police Department to set up a voluntary registry so individuals in the City of Berkeley who choose to participate could inform the Police

Department that they have a security camera. Police personnel could then contact these individuals if their camera may have captured evidence of a crime.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Police Department staff time to set up and maintain registry.

CONTACT PERSON

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