

Camera Oversight Committee Meeting

January 10, 2018

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

In attendance:

Committee Members: Susan Howards, Ian Polumbaum, Harry Chaveriat, Jack Corrigan

Town Staff: Chief O'Leary, Officer Scott Wilder, Officer Casey Hatchett, Austin Faison

Members of the Public: Clint Richmond, Cornelia van der Ziel, C Scott Ananian

Meeting Minutes:

Chair Howards called the meeting to order at 5:40pm, with comments to Chief O'Leary, thanking him for his years of service and work.

Chair Howards asked for corrections on three typos in the minutes as suggested by a member of the public in attendance, Mr. Richmond. The corrections were noted and the committee accepted them.

Chair Howards turned the meeting over Chief O'Leary to discuss the year-end camera report which was distributed to the Committee (hard copies were available for members of the public). Chief O'Leary reviewed the report, which indicated that there were 48 requests to review the camera footage and of that number, 30 resulted in a request for a recording of the footage.

Chief O'Leary opened for discussion on the report.

Mr. Polumbaum asked if there have been any allegations of misuse of the cameras, the Chief answered no. He further asked if there have been claims that footage gathered included images of concern. The Chief said no. Mr. Polumbaum asked if there have been any further discussion with Town Hall about extending the retention period. Chief O'Leary said no. He asked if in the cases when the retention period had passed, would the 30 day extension to the period would have allowed that data to be retained. Mr. Polumbaum asked a few questions about whether footage was helpful in a couple of specific cases.

He then asked about the status of license plate readers and drones. Chief O'Leary stated that the license plate readers are "off the plate" and we have "had nothing to do with drones".

Chair Howards asked if the Police Department gets notified regarding a case disposition and Chief O'Leary reported that in some cases we do get informed but not in many.

Mr. Polumbaum stated that Chief O'Leary has done a very good job with the implementation of the cameras and the politics associated with it. He asked if Chief O'Leary would do anything different and Chief O'Leary replied that he would like to get the retention period into compliance. Mr. Polumbaum stated that the Board of Selectmen are aware and there does not seem to be opposition (even by those in opposition to the cameras) to get our retention period into compliance with state law.

Chief O'Leary commented that the Police Department often uses cameras that are private to solve crimes and identify suspects and gave an example of a recent use of cameras from BU along Comm Ave. Mr. Polumbaum shared some examples of successful use of cameras to identify and prosecute a suspect in Suffolk County.

Chair Howards opened the meeting to members of the public to comment. Mr. Richmond and Ms. Van de Ziel passed. Mr. Ananian asked about the use of the cameras for Federal purposes. In one case, the Federal government had shared information with Brookline Police regarding a suspect with cell phone pinging in Town and during the apprehension of the suspect, one of our officers was assaulted. Mr. Ananian asked if the use of body or cruiser cameras would have benefited the case which involved an officer. A discussion regarding body cameras took place. Chief O'Leary stated he's on the record as supporting body cameras. Mr. Ananian asked if body camera footage would also be subject to a public records request and Chief O'Leary told them that they would.

Mr. Richmond asked if with the Marathon becoming such an event of concern, does the Police department retain that footage automatically and Chief O'Leary reported that only the year of the bombing did we retain footage. Chief O'Leary was asked if there are other events like the marathon for which similar use of the cameras (jointly with Boston) takes place. There are not currently.

Chair Howards made a motion to accept the report. All were in favor. Chief O'Leary then also pointed out there was an audit prepared (which was distributed to the Committee with hard copies available at the meeting), which was also accepted. Ms. Howards asked Chief O'Leary if the need for the committee still existed or if there were any changes needed. Chief O'Leary said he thinks having the committee in place ensures the data is reviewed, but that regardless, the Brookline Department will continue, by policy, to track and audit the use of the cameras. Ms. Howards stated the committee will continue to meet and will look to meet the summer.

Mr. Richmond asked when the meeting was posted because he only got 45 hours notice. Chief O'Leary replied the meeting was posted prior to 5pm on Monday, in order to meet the 48 hour notice requirement. Mr. Richmond was displeased with the short notice and Chief O'Leary replied that he was hoping to meet with the group prior to his retirement and was waiting for replies from the Committee and that we were within the by-law. Mr. Ananian asked about the auditing of the website and he was referred to Ben Vivante for an answer as to the website settings.

Chair Howards moved a motion to end the meeting.