



Minutes - Final

Public Safety Committee

Wednesday, February 13, 2019

5:30 PM

Council Chambers

Roll Call: Chairperson Hendricks, Affa, Zucal

[15-2757](#)

Bill 6 Public Safety, Recommended Favorably
Amending the 2019 Grant Fund Budget to provide for a supplemental appropriation of One Hundred Forty-Six Thousand Seven Hundred Eighty-Four (\$146,784.00) Dollars from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency as a pass-through grant to fund the Allentown Cure Violence program being implemented by Promise Neighborhoods.

Attachments: [Bill 6 Pass Through Grant for Promise Neighborhood](#)

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if there were any questions regarding this grant from the committee.

Ms. Candida Affa asked what exactly is a pass through grant.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that the city applied for the grant and the police department got the grant and passed it to the Promise Neighborhood to implement the grant. The Police is not directly benefiting from it. The Promise Neighborhood is implementing the program to reduce gun violence in the city.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that it is Hasshan Batts community group that Cynthia works for.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that this money will go to Promise Neighborhood. What exactly are they doing?

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that it is a nationally known Cure The Violence Program. The whole point of it is to reduce gun violence in the community.

Mayor Ray O'Connell stated that they will hold seminars and group meetings throughout the neighborhoods to educate the youth and adolescents on gun safety and gun violence and try to cure it.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if there were any other questions from Council or the public.

Mr. Lewis Shupe, 814 Walnut Street, asked about the grant and stated that Councilwoman Mota works for Promise Neighborhood. He wished them well, but stated that he is concerned.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that it is her understanding the Bettina McClure, the Grants Coordinator for the city looked into this. Everything was deemed OK.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that the \$146,000 grant is to help beforehand. After we have incidents of gun violence that they will intercede. It is something good and beneficial to the city.

Mayor Ray O'Connell stated that the Promise Neighborhood is under the umbrella of United Way of the Lehigh Valley.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if there were any other questions from the public.

Mr. Julio Guridy suggested that Ms. Mota recuse herself when Council votes on this. It would clear up Mr. Shupe's concern. She gets paid by that organization.

Mr. Michael Hanlon stated that she is looking into that.

A motion was made by Ed Zucal, seconded by Candida Affa, that this Bill be forwarded to Council for approval. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Daryl Hendricks, Candida Affa and Ed Zucal

[15-2761](#)

Bill 7

Amending the 2019 General Fund Budget to provide for a supplemental appropriation of Ten Thousand (\$10,000.00) Dollars from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development grant to the City of Allentown for the purchase of drones to be utilized to document major accidents and crime scenes.

Attachments: [BILL 7 DCED POLICE DRONE GRANT](#)

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked Assistant Chief Gail Struss if she wanted to comment on it.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that this was a grant through Representative Peter Schweyer. She stated that the Police Department is trying to set up a policy for this. The Police Department looked at buying drones, but they did not have the money. They are relying on help from the county.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that he assumes that up to now the Police Department hasn't used drones in any way.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that they have, but they were not city-owned drones. During the explosion scenes, the AFT and FBI were there with their drones.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if there were any questions from members of the committee.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked how many are you planning to buy. This is a lot of money.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that it says three, but she is not sure if they would be able to buy three. It depends on the size and capability of the drone.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that it would be for training for the officers that will be utilizing it.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that she is not sure. This is more towards the purchase of the drone. They will work with the county to get the training that is required. It includes the cost of any training.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that it may be more expensive than the drones itself. He asked if there were any other questions from the committee or the public.

Mr. Lewis Shupe asked about current legislation going through the federal government. Drones have to be licensed.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that the Allentown Police Department will be trained through the county and they already have them. They may be already aware of that.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that the Allentown Police Department is trying to put together a policy for the drones.

Mr. Chris Woods, 1035 W. Walnut Street, stated that it is for major accidents and crime scenes. Could it be for surveillance of citizens or is it strictly prohibited?

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated to Mr. Woods when you say surveillance of citizens she is not sure what she means.

Mr. Chris Woods stated he is wondering about civil liberties and rules and regulations following the county.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that they will not use it in violation of the 4th Amendment. They will follow all laws, regulations and the Constitution.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that they will be implementing policies. He asked if there were any other questions from the public.

A motion was made by Ed Zucal, seconded by Candida Affa, that this Bill be forwarded to Council for approval. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Daryl Hendricks, Candida Affa and Ed Zucal

[15-2762](#)

Bill 8 Public Safety, Recommended Favorably
Amending the 2019 General Fund Budget to provide for a supplemental appropriation of One Hundred Fifty Thousand (\$150,000) Dollars from the United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance for the Body Worn Camera Enhancement Grant.

Attachments: [BILL 8 BODY WORN CAMERA ENHANCEMENT GRANT](#)

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that this for a payment. These have been ordered already.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated they have not. This is also a matching grant. We are prepared to do. This is to upgrade the body cameras. They would like to tie the body cameras to the in car camera system so the officer only has to worry about turning on one camera. A representative is coming this week to take a look at our different vehicle styles to figure out how we will mount in the vehicle. She stated that they are in the testing phase right now.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if there were any questions from the committee.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked if it was put in the budget for \$150,000.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated yes.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that we just bought cameras a couple of years ago. What are we going to do with these cameras that we spent all this money on.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that a lot of them are broken and can't be repaired.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that a lot of them are first generation technology.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that they are having a hard time finding parts to repair them. They are no longer being produced.

Mr. Julio Guridy asked if the city has to budget every two years or every three years \$150,000 or more for body cameras. Does this have a longer life or usage?

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that she is hoping, but the way technology is changing she can't answer that.

Mayor Ray O'Connell stated that it is hard to get replacements and they are so difficult to deal with. The company the Police Department is going with is more flexible and more cooperative.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that it is the in-car camera system.

Mr. Joseph McMahon stated that the cost of technology is always higher.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that he knows that but, if he had to think about every two or three years for \$150,000 for body cameras in the budget.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that the Police Department bought the body cameras in 2016. Unfortunately, when we bought those, that was the technology and years later it is already obsolete.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that he is not against body cameras. We just have to plan how much we are going to spend every two to three years. He stated that spending over \$300,000 just to press a button.

Ms. Candida Affa stated it is not about pressing a button. This new technology you don't have to press a button. You go out and the car is already on. The body camera is already on.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that this new body camera will integrated with our in-car camera system is just a plus. The current camera system we have is outdated and breaking and can't be replaced.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if there are any questions from the public.

Mr. Lewis Shupe asked about the body cameras and the state of technology. Technology has been marching onward and onward for years. He stated that he has seen 30 years of a microcosm of technology. He suggested that it be put off for a year or so. It is a strong possibility that the Department of Homeland Security will pay for everything.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that the problem that Assistant Chief Struss eluded to is we are having problems with the ones we have. It doesn't make much sense to prolong it.

Mr. Lewis Shupe stated maybe get an extended warranty.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that is a good idea.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Shupe and asked if there were any other questions from the public.

A motion was made by Ed Zucal, seconded by Candida Affa, that this Bill be forwarded to Council for approval. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Daryl Hendricks, Candida Affa and Ed Zucal

[15-2764](#)

Bill 9 Public Safety, Recommended Favorably
Amending the 2019 General Fund Budget to provide for a supplemental appropriation of Fifty-Five Thousand Seven Hundred (\$55,700) Dollars from the United States Department of Justice for the purchase of Fifty-Five (55) ballistic tactical helmets, four (4) portable radar speed signs as well as Twelve Thousand (\$12,000) to the County of Lehigh toward the purchase of their drone camera and computer software equipment.

Attachments: [BILL 9 RADAR SPEED SIGNS AND BALLISTIC HELMET JAG GRANT](#)

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked Assistant Chief Struss if she wanted to comment on it.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that unfortunately the \$55,700 is not all coming to the city. She stated that \$12,000 of that is going to the county. This is a grant the city gets every year. They are using it for a portable radar speed sign. It gives that the ability to put four out in the city and to purchase ballistic helmets for our officers.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Assistant Chief Struss and asked if there were any questions from the committee.

Mr. Ed Zucal asked about the software. Are we buying that software for them or is it going to be for the cameras we are buying.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that is their portion. The county is getting \$12,000 out of the \$55,700. They are using their money for a drone and software equipment.

Ms. Candida Affa asked how many portable speed signs we have now.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that there are two and one is utilized.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that the Police department doesn't have any.

Mr. Ed Zucal stated that the Police Department used to have at least one and used to put it on back of the car.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that she doesn't think that works anymore.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that there is one on Parkway Boulevard.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that there is one on American Parkway Bridge, but it wasn't working.

Ms. Candida Affa asked if there is one on Chew Street.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated yes, College Heights and Chew. They are portable.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated that it gives the Police Department some useful data.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that they are effective because brake lights go on as they approach.

Ms. Candida Affa asked if \$12,000 goes to the county for these.

Assistant Chief Gail Struss stated no. She stated that the county elected to use their money (\$12,000) to buy a drone and computer equipment.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if there were any other questions from Council or the public.

A motion was made by Ed Zucal, seconded by Candida Affa, that this Bill be forwarded to Council for approval. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Daryl Hendricks, Candida Affa and Ed Zucal

Adjourned: 5:55 PM