

For immediate release

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**FARIBAUT POLICE WELCOME PUBLIC INPUT ON NEW BODY WORN CAMERA POLICY AND PROGRAM
PUBLIC FORUM – JANUARY 16, 2019 AT THE FARIBAUT POLICE DEPARTMENT 6:00-7:00 PM**

On Wednesday, January 16th, the Faribault Police Department is hosting an open public forum to discuss recommended policy and protocol on the newly purchased AXON body worn camera (BWC) technology. The police department plans to undergo training in February and anticipates rolling out the body worn cameras to patrol officers in March.

Body-Worn Cameras are a relatively new addition to the law enforcement toolkit. According to the United States Department of Justice, they hold “tremendous promise” for improving public safety and increasing transparency and accountability while reducing liability. In addition, BWCs provide a means of capturing more evidentiary proof for use in criminal cases and protecting officers against false claims of wrongdoing. The need for body worn cameras has been discussed several times over the past couple of years with the City Council. City leadership and elected officials supported the initiative. The BWCs and the technology were purchased before the end of 2018. Minnesota law mandates communities moving forward with a BWC program must provide an opportunity for public comment before implementing a BWC system. Comments may be submitted by mail or email to police@ci.faribault.mn.us and must be received no later than Wednesday, January 30th. A copy of the draft policy has been placed on the Police Department’s webpage under “Department Forms” for the public to view.

The department has reviewed the League of Minnesota Cities’ recommended policies and utilized its best practice language. The drafted policy has been reviewed by other agencies which currently utilize BWCs and has also been forwarded for review and input from the city’s attorneys. The City Council has been provided opportunity for input on the proposed draft policy. Once the public has had an opportunity for input the policy will be finalized and brought back to Council for final approval.

Faribault Police Chief Bohlen stated, “We are excited to introduce Body Worn Camera technology to the public and welcome their input on our draft policy and protocols as we implement a program utilizing this modern technology. At the meeting, we will show sample BWC videos and have copies of the proposed policy for review. Police staff will be available for questions and will be open to input from the public.”



Faribault Officer shows how a BWC is worn on uniform



Actual BWC Device