From:	Bonnie Roe
To:	All Alders; PD PSRC; Equal Opportunities Commission
Cc:	Haas, Michael R
Subject:	Body-Worn Cameras Feasibility Review Committee Report
Date:	Thursday, February 4, 2021 4:22:19 PM

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Dear Alders, Members of the PSRC, and Members of the EOC,

I have been a resident of Madison for 21 years. I became interested in the subject of body-worn cameras over the summer, in the wake of the horrible killing of George Floyd and the national concerns over injustice and systemic racism. I began attending the Body-Worn Cameras Feasibility Review Committee and have attended nearly every meeting for the past several months, and there were many. I was very impressed with the discussion and detail that went into writing up the report. As one who is strongly in support of body-worn cameras because of the accountability and transparency they provide on both ends of the camera, I can say that at times I was afraid this committee would not give a recommendation for body cameras. It was a mystery right up until the vote on January 22, 2021.

The research, detail, and objectivity taken by committee members was impressive to watch. They heard from many members and segments of the community. They considered reports and studies on both ends of the spectrum. They brought in special guests on all sides and had Captain Brian Austin of MPD's North District on the committee in an advisory role. I was impressed with the leadership of the committee.

As with many things, there are pros and cons to body-worn cameras. There are issues and concerns with their use that warrant the use of clear policies along with accountability and oversight. Thankfully we have a robust system of accountability here in Madison as well as a very cooperative police department. There is a cost to their use, although not using them costs the city in other ways.

As time went on, one member of the committee, who was obviously opposed to body-worn cameras, seemed to become more and more determined to continue to add edits, new information and new studies to the report. There seemed no end to his quest for new and very skewed information to add. An extension was unanimously requested by the committee (and received) because of this member's desire to continue adding new research, new studies, new data, never-ending edits, and plenty of speculation to an already very extensive report. One could go on collecting data and different points of view indefinitely and never run out of research. New studies are constantly being done. There comes a time to submit the excellent work. And there comes a time to have our own Pilot Program for body-worn cameras and learn what we can from the process.

One member seemed unable to sign on to the report, even though it thoroughly reflected the many concerns and issues he had brought up regarding body-worn cameras. As the committee was so close to wrapping up its thorough and very objective document to pass on to the Common Council, this individual resigned from the committee in pretty dramatic fashion on January 15, 2021. In my opinion, he seemed unable to see this issue outside of his own bias and when the committee seemed to be moving forward with the report, he moved on in an attempt to discredit it.

I urge you to take a careful look at this long and detailed report. Look at the time, work, and objectivity that went into this document. During the meeting where the final vote was to take place, I honestly had no idea how the committee would vote. I know how I would have voted had I been on the committee. I am in support of body-worn cameras for our MPD officers at this point of time, with all the safeguards and accountability we have. I think we are behind the times on this, and now the report seems to be all tied up, bouncing from committee to committee, as time moves on. I urge you to watch the publicly available video of their meetings, in particular the meeting on January 15, 2021, linked below. Starting around 15:00 into the video, this member shares his concerns, followed by the thoughts and perspectives of everyone else on the committee. All of the other members, on both sides of the issue, vouched for the quality and objectivity of the report and were in favor of moving forward with it.

https://media.cityofmadison.com/Mediasite/Showcase/madison-city-channel/Presentation/1c9c0348f4474ac4bf9feb09c800f71f1d

Another noteworthy section to watch, starting at 00:04:40 in the video linked below (from the January 19, 2021 meeting) is Veronica Figueroa, who was the sole vote against recommending body cameras, as she makes the case for the report and voices her frustration at this member's attempted discrediting of the report. She even refers to it as bullying. Although she opposes body cameras, she strongly vouches for the credibility of the report.

https://media.cityofmadison.com/Mediasite/Showcase/madison-city-channel/Presentation/f8f6529e17c74625abc24070db4ac3881d

The meeting back on December 17 shows additional evidence of how this report was slandered by this same committee member, starting at 58:55 in the video linked below:

https://media.cityofmadison.com/Mediasite/Showcase/madison-city-channel/Presentation/da7600b5a22b42b6b1d2e08cd51b9cf81d

Lastly, the vote for or against recommending body-worn cameras took place on January 22, 2021. You can hear each member's well-thought out conclusions starting at 2:10:25 in the video linked below.

https://media.cityofmadison.com/Mediasite/Showcase/madison-city-channel/Presentation/60de1b0103634db2a8dea7c7ccb119431d

Thank you for taking a close look at this report as you move forward with your next steps on the Body-Worn Camera program we so desperately need. Please move this along so that we can soon equip every MPD officer with a body-worn camera to help provide accountability and transparency for all and to provide crucial, objective evidence to the Police Civilian Oversight Board and the Independent Monitor as they do their work. In my opinion, there is no time to waste.

I am happy to answer any questions about my experience observing these meetings as a community member, please feel free to contact me any time.

Thank you for your consideration,
Bonnie Roe
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