



TO: The Honorable Stephanie Rawlings Blake
and Members of the Baltimore City Council
Room 400 City Hall,
100. N. Holiday Street
Attn: Karen Randle

FROM: Sheryl Goldstein, Director, Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice

DATE: October 31, 2008

RE: City Council Bill No. 08-0055R

City Council Bill No.: **08-0055R – Fiscal Year 2009 Budget - Release of Funds to City Agencies - Contingent Upon Performance (CUP)**

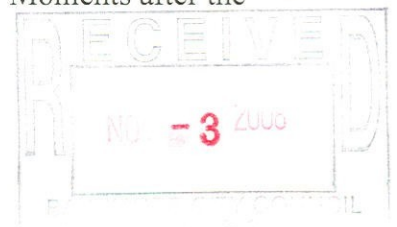
Baltimore's Crime Camera Program has grown quickly over the past several years. Baltimore currently has 480 CCTV cameras and 100 movable PODSS cameras. Most recently, the City installed 29 CCTV cameras in the Poplar Grove area at a cost of \$1.4 million. Since 2005, Baltimore City has made a significant investment in purchasing and installing cameras. MOCJ is collaborating with the Baltimore Police Department and the Mayor's Office of Information Technology to utilize current camera funding to provide the highest level of monitoring and maintenance possible.

The CCTV cameras have a live feed and are monitored at police districts, police headquarters and the Atrium. The Crime Camera Program has limited resources. This fiscal year, overall funding to support camera monitoring and maintenance was reduced by approximately \$550,000. The Crime Camera Program has an existing budget of \$1.35 million. MOCJ has worked with existing vendors to modify contracts in order to save and maximize the use of funds.

The cameras have been a critical tool in preventing and solving crime. In 2007, overall crime was reduced by 10% in the camera areas as compared to the previous year. In 2008, the cameras have been instrumental in solving and preventing shootings, robberies and assaults. Through Citiwatch at the Atrium alone, camera monitors have assisted police in making 436 arrests so far this year – an increase of 85% from last year at this time. For example:

- In July, a camera monitor observed a drug transaction involving four people – three in a car selling drugs and one who purchased the drugs. Moments after the

Comments



transaction, one of the three men in the car shot the man who purchased the drugs. The monitor immediately notified police who arrested all three suspects and recovered two handguns. All suspects have been convicted and sentenced to prison.

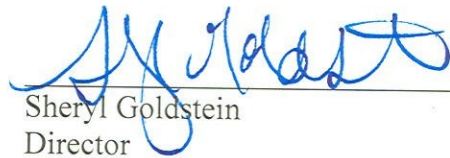
- In May, a camera monitor observed a group of men arguing outside a downtown nightclub at 2:00am. He observed one suspect distribute handguns to individuals and notified police who responded to the scene. When a foot chase ensued, the camera monitor directed police to the suspect and the location where he had hidden the gun. Two suspects were arrested and two guns were recovered.
- In May, a shooting in the Eastern District was captured on tape. The footage helped police investigate the incident and identify the suspect who was arrested and charged with three counts of attempted murder.
- In June, camera monitors observed an individual who grabbed a female victim and dragged her into a parking lot at knife point. Police immediately responded and observed the suspect in the process of assaulting the victim. The suspect was arrested after a brief pursuit and charged with armed robbery and attempted rape.
- Cameras helped solve a recent robbery at Provident Bank after the suspect was caught on tape. He later confessed to three other recent bank robberies in downtown Baltimore.

While the Crime Camera Program continues to have an important impact reducing and solving crime, it has struggled with quick growth and fragmented management. Prior to its consolidation under the Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice, the program's funding and control was divided between the Baltimore Police Department and the Mayor's Office of Information Technology. This resulted in the implementation of an uncoordinated operational and administrative strategy. For example, MOIT was responsible for the operations at the Atrium where 78 Central District, Downtown Cameras were monitored and was spending \$600,000 per year to have 2 people monitor these 78 cameras, 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. At the same time, the BPD had a total camera monitoring budget of \$360,000 -- which paid for 12 retired officers to monitor 272 cameras one shift per day. In addition, the working relationship between BPD and MOIT had not been well coordinated resulting in delays in repairs as well as a lack of a shared vision of a crime fighting strategy for the cameras. This fragmentation also prevented the City from maximizing the use of its camera funding through consolidating service contracts, monitoring staff and joint decision making on the use of limited resources.

MOCJ has been charged with managing the Crime Camera budget and collaboration between BPD and MOIT. Under MOCJ's management, the program has been restructured and has realized the following accomplishments:

- ***Clear Roles and Responsibilities:*** BPD is exclusively responsible for the crime-fighting, operational components of the cameras at all locations. BPD decides how to best deploy monitors, uses real time crime data to direct camera monitors to priority cameras, determines new camera locations and uses monitors for specialized camera initiatives. MOIT is responsible for the technical aspects of the camera program. MOIT is responsible for all camera maintenance and repairs, service contracts, etc. BPD and MOIT work together to identify new technologies that will improve the cameras (gun shot detection technology, CAD integration, etc.). Already, we have seen results. Camera monitors are proactively preventing and helping to solve violent crime as described above and MOIT has significantly reduced the time it takes to resolve camera problems and outages.
- ***Centralization:*** In order to maximize the use of financial resources and improve monitoring capacity, we are implementing a plan to centralize all camera monitoring at the Atrium. Police Districts and Headquarters will retain the ability to monitor cameras and run camera initiatives, but all dedicated camera monitors will work out of the Atrium under the supervision of the BPD. Using existing resources, the Atrium is being expanded to accommodate additional camera monitors. Through renegotiating existing contracts and issuing a new RFP for monitoring services, we were able to increase monitoring hours while reducing overall monitoring costs. The BPD has developed an operational plan that outlines the number of monitors required per shift and provides a daily monitoring plan for the monitors. As of November 8, 2008, all CCTV cameras, including the public housing cameras, will be monitored at the Atrium.
- ***Cost Savings:*** The Crime Camera Program has limited resources. This fiscal year, overall funding to support camera monitoring and maintenance was reduced by approximately \$550,000. Last fiscal year, MOIT spent approximately \$1 million in funding and MOCJ had \$900,000. This year, the Crime Camera Program has an existing budget of \$1.35 million. MOCJ is working with existing vendors to modify contracts in order to save and redirect funds. The goal is to reallocate existing resources to improve the Camera Program through streamlining service contracts and increasing monitoring capacity.

Baltimore's Crime Camera Program is a critical element of the City's public safety strategy. The \$1.35 million in the MOCJ budget is designated to pay for camera monitors and maintaining the camera system. Without this funding, Baltimore's crime cameras cannot be monitored at the Atrium and would not be repaired when damaged or taken offline by storms or electrical outages. Therefore, I respectfully request that the release of CUPS funding to ensure the continuation of Baltimore's Crime Camera Program.



Sheryl Goldstein

Director

Mayor's Office on Criminal Justice