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Rocky Mount City Council supports police chief's crime-fighting proposals

Rocky Mount, N.C. – City Council members voiced support during a work session Monday for two crime-fighting proposals presented by Police Chief Robert Hassell.

Hassell said he wants to ask businesses to voluntarily link their security cameras to the Police Department's intelligence-gathering platform. He also outlined plans to install 16 additional license plate readers throughout Rocky Mount.

The Police Department currently uses 67 city-owned cameras, 19 police-installed cameras and 39 housing authority cameras to help solve crimes. Hassell said expanding this system to include security cameras from businesses would further enhance his department's ability to respond and investigate criminal activity on a real-time basis.

Businesses that participate will have their cameras connected to the city's platform through a video core that the Police Department will install at no charge. The sharing of cameras is 100% voluntary and businesses can choose to share some or all their cameras. The Police Department's primary goal is to have access to cameras facing public parking lots and roads.

"I think it is a great idea," Mayor Sandy Roberson said during Monday's work session.

The city now has four license plate readers. The 16 new readers would be placed in high-crime areas, neighborhoods that have seen an increase in crime and on some of the city's major thoroughfares. The cost of installing the new license plate readers will be \$46,500.

Hassell said license plate readers are an essential tool in identifying vehicles that have been involved in crimes.

About Rocky Mount

The city of Rocky Mount, located in the Coastal Plains of North Carolina, was incorporated in 1867 and lies in Edgecombe and Nash Counties. Rocky Mount is a two-time All-America City on the Tar River. The city was recognized as one of 10 winners nationwide of the 2020-21 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Prize. Serving as the Gateway to Eastern North Carolina, the city's 875 employees serve approximately 58,000 residents daily.

The city's mission is to advance community well-being, safety and quality of life by delivering excellent public services and actively collaborating with the community toward a fulfilling and inspired future for its citizens. As a publicly owned utility, the city of Rocky Mount is committed to safe, reliable service for its customers and operates in Nash and Edgecombe counties, providing customers with electricity, natural gas, water, wastewater (sewer), refuse, recycling and/or stormwater services. To learn more, visit www.rockymountnc.gov for news and updates.

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