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Office of the Mayor

May 1, 2015

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City to Apply for Body-Worn Camera Pilot Program

STAMFORD, CT – Mayor David Martin announced today that the City will be applying to the federal Body-Worn Camera (BWC) Pilot Partnership Program, announced by the Department of Justice earlier today. Administered by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) under the Justice Department’s Office of Justice Programs (OJP), the BWC pilot program will provide support to help law enforcement agencies develop, implement and evaluate body-worn camera programs across the United States. An initial pool of \$17 million will be awarded in competitive grants.

“The City of Stamford is a growing, diverse community with a leading Police Department. The Department is best-in-class as a result of the progressive leadership of our Chief and the dedication of the men and women on the front lines. Body cameras are a tool that I support and I believe will improve the safety not only of our police, but the community as a whole,” said Mayor David Martin. “We will be applying for this grant as soon as possible.”

“Recent events have highlighted the importance of strong, collaborative relationships between police and the communities served. The Stamford Police Department is a group of dedicated professionals who provide exceptional services to the community. Moving forward with this grant shows our commitment to further enhance our relationship with the community as body cameras have been shown to reduce crime, improve public safety and enhance the safety for the Police Officer,” stated Ted Jankowski, Director of Public Safety.

“The trust between law enforcement agencies and the people we protect and serve is essential to the stability of our community. Body-worn cameras will enhance the safe and effective delivery of policing services and will provide the necessary transparency to clear up conflicts and questions,” said Jonathan Fontneau, Chief of Police.

Jack Bryant, President of the Stamford NAACP, supported the City’s decision to apply for the grant, stating “I agree with my other NAACP colleagues on the Local, State, and National Level across the country that this is one way that might help clarify and eliminate some of the racial profiling. I applaud Mayor Martin, our Director of Public Safety Ted Jankowski and our Police Chief Jonathan Fontneau for continuing the effort

to equip our Stamford Police Officers with body cameras. A device that will not only address concerns about racial profiling and excessive force, but provide the transparency to help foster the trust between the police and the community. During my time as President of the Stamford NAACP we have always had a great 'open door policy' with Mayor Martin, Director Jankowski, and Chief Fontneau and we look forward to continuing this conversation going forward to work to make Stamford a safe place to work and live.”

According to the Justice Department’s announcement, the Department expects to provide 50 awards to law enforcement agencies. The grants, which require a 50/50 in-kind or cash match, can be used to purchase equipment but applicants must establish a strong plan for implementation of body-worn cameras and a robust training policy before purchasing cameras. The long term costs associated with storing this information will be the financial responsibility of each local agency.

The announcement from the Department of Justice can be found here:

<http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-announces-20-million-funding-support-body-worn-camera-pilot-program>.

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