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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Body cameras become part of Murphy PD uniforms *Video and audio recordings aid in investigations*

MURPHY (October 14, 2015) If there's a way to make one of the safest cities in the state even more secure, the Murphy City Council has taken steps to get there, says Police Chief Arthur "Trey" Cotten.

"The City Council has authorized the use of body cameras for our detectives, patrol officers and sergeants," he said. "Taking that step virtually ensures that the accuracy of our investigations increases exponentially."

While the vast majority of interactions between the police and the public are peaceful and passive, if a dispute arises over what exactly transpired during a traffic stop or a domestic encounter or use of force situation, body cameras can substantially reduce the uncertainty.

"These recording devices are worn at chest level, and are capable of recording both audio and video input," he added. "They are not equipped with editing or deleting capability in the field."

The recorded files are downloaded to a storage device at the police station. If necessary, the files can be reviewed by supervisors and the footage can be maintained for use in investigations and court proceedings.

"Body cameras, while still limited, are better suited for recording evidence at crime scenes than dashboard cameras," said the Chief. "A dashboard camera can record audio, but a person's body language, gestures and non-verbal actions are important, and body cameras give us the capability to record these."

In addition to recording interactions between the police and the public, body cameras can also be used to record eyewitness accounts at the scene of crimes or accidents. "Our officers often deal with stressful situations," he said. "These types of recording devices can make a significant difference in the investigation once we get passed the stress of the moment. They can be very effective in separating fact from fiction."

Officers wearing the new cameras were briefed on their use by supervisory personnel and underwent an extensive orientation session on their use. Officers will be fully cognizant of privacy concerns while wearing the devices, and will collectively contribute to a review of their efficiency after a six-month period.

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ABOUT MURPHY -- Murphy is a fast-growing community located in Collin County. The population is approximately 18,020, generally characterized as highly educated with a median household income above the state average. With more than 70 percent of the land developed, the community is dominated by single-family residences. City planners strive to preserve a country feel while exhibiting an aggressive economic development stance. The centrally-located municipal complex includes four buildings that house Fire, Police, City Administration and Public Works. Money Magazine has dubbed Murphy as the 27th Best Place to Live in America for small cities, and D Magazine placed Murphy as the fifth best suburb in the 2014 list, where it has consistently ranked in the top 10.