

1 Introduced by Council Member Dennis:
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4 **RESOLUTION 2020-325**

5 A RESOLUTION REGARDING THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND
6 SAFETY CONCERNS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE CITY
7 OF JACKSONVILLE; URGING SHERIFF MIKE WILLIAMS
8 TO WORK COOPERATIVELY WITH THE STATE
9 ATTORNEY'S OFFICE WITH PUBLIC INPUT IN ORDER
10 TO REFINE AND IMPROVE THE CURRENT POLICY
11 REGARDING THE RELEASE OF BODY CAMERA FOOTAGE
12 RELATED TO CLAIMS OF POLICE VIOLENCE OR
13 MISCONDUCT, AS PERMITTED BY LAW; REQUESTING
14 THAT SHERIFF MIKE WILLIAMS AND THE STATE
15 ATTORNEY'S OFFICE PROVIDE THE PUBLIC WITH
16 ACCESS TO BODY CAMERA FOOTAGE, WHERE PERMITTED
17 BY LAW AND WHERE THE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE
18 AS A PUBLIC RECORD; DIRECTING UPON ADOPTION
19 THE LEGISLATIVE SERVICES DIVISION TO FORWARD
20 COPIES OF THIS RESOLUTION TO THE SHERIFF AND
21 THE STATE ATTORNEY, MELISSA NELSON; PROVIDING
22 AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
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24 **WHEREAS**, the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (JSO) began
25 implementing a body camera program in the fall of 2018; and

26 **WHEREAS**, the release of body camera footage where police
27 violence or misconduct is alleged can be beneficial to the public
28 to help build transparency and trust in the community; and

29 **WHEREAS**, recent events of alleged police misconduct have
30 renewed calls from the public for release of body camera video of
31 police shootings in Jacksonville and in other communities

1 throughout the nation; and

2 **WHEREAS**, while the Council appreciates that body camera
3 footage should not and cannot be released by JSO or the State
4 Attorney's Office while a criminal investigation is underway, the
5 Council believes that body camera footage should be released timely
6 as a public record after all investigations and internal review by
7 JSO has been completed and the investigations closed; and

8 **WHEREAS**, there remains some uncertainty of the public at large
9 as to the current JSO policy regarding the release of body camera
10 footage and the Council believes that the public would benefit from
11 the transparency of understanding the JSO policy on release of body
12 camera footage; and

13 **WHEREAS**, Sheriff Mike Williams, at a news conference held on
14 Tuesday, June 2, 2020 indicated that he was open to changing the
15 body camera video release policy, if it's legally allowable, and
16 that he would communicate further with State Attorney Melissa
17 Nelson's Office regarding formulation of the policy; and

18 **WHEREAS**, the Council encourages Sheriff Williams and State
19 Attorney Nelson to continue their ongoing discussions to promote
20 transparency in the release of body camera footage, where allowed
21 by law; and

22 **WHEREAS**, the Council recognizes that the release of body
23 camera footage involves a balance between protecting the integrity
24 of the investigation and determining at what point the video is a
25 public record to which the public can view it; and

26 **WHEREAS**, for the above reasons, the City of Jacksonville
27 supports the Sheriff and the State Attorney in working to improve
28 upon the current policy regarding the release of body camera
29 footage to allow for the utmost transparency in the process, as
30 permitted by law, and following the closure of all relevant
31 investigative measures by JSO and the State Attorney's Office; and

1 **WHEREAS**, the City Council desires to express these sentiments
2 to Sheriff Williams, State Attorney Nelson and to the citizens of
3 Jacksonville; now therefore

4 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Jacksonville:

5 **Section 1. Encouraging cooperation by the Sheriff and the**
6 **State Attorney's Office, with public input where possible, to**
7 **refine and improve the current policy.** The Council of the City of
8 Jacksonville hereby encourages Sheriff Williams and State Attorney
9 Nelson to refine and improve the current policy regarding the
10 release of body camera footage, to the extent permissible by law,
11 to allow for the utmost transparency to the public when all
12 investigations have been concluded and the video is deemed a public
13 record. The Council also urges the Sheriff and State Attorney
14 Nelson, to the extent possible, to take input from the public prior
15 to modifying the policy so that interested citizens may provide
16 input in the process and as to the policy.

17 **Section 2. Urging the Sheriff and State Attorney to**
18 **provide access to body camera footage policy and related**
19 **information to the public.** The Council also urges the Sheriff and
20 State Attorney Nelson that once the policy has been refined, that
21 JSO and State Attorney's Office inform the public of the final
22 iteration of the policy and provide a copy of the policy on their
23 respective websites, and direct the public to additional
24 information so that the public has access to the policy and may
25 make requests for information consistent with the policy.

26 **Section 3. Direction to Circulate upon Adoption.** The
27 Council hereby directs, upon adoption, the Legislative Services
28 Division to forward copies of this resolution to Sheriff Mike
29 Williams and State Attorney Melissa Nelson.

30 **Section 4. Effective Date.** This Resolution shall become
31 effective upon signature by the Mayor or upon becoming effective

1 without the Mayor's signature.

2 Form Approved:

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4 /s/ Paige H. Johnston

5 Office of General Counsel

6 Legislation Prepared By: Paige H. Johnston

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