



City of Chicago



R2021-991

Office of the City Clerk

Document Tracking Sheet

Meeting Date: 9/14/2021

Sponsor(s): Ramirez-Rosa (35)
Rodriguez Sanchez (33)
Hadden (49)
La Spata (1)
Moore (17)
Taylor (20)
Rodriguez (22)
Sigcho-Lopez (25)
Maldonado (26)
Vasquez, Jr. (40)
Martin (47)
Coleman (16)
Sadlowski Garza (10)
Dowell (3)
Osterman (48)
Smith (43)

Type: Resolution

Title: Call for subject matter hearing(s) to assess reliability of ShotSpotter and whether to extend, amend or discontinue contractual relationship with ShotSpotter, Inc.

Committee(s) Assignment: Committee on Committees and Rules

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The City of Chicago entered into a \$33 million dollar contract with ShotSpotter, Inc. on August 20, 2018 for an “area acoustic gunshot surveillance system;” and

WHEREAS, The City of Chicago’s contract with ShotSpotter, Inc. for “area acoustic gunshot surveillance system” was set to expire on August 19, 2021 but was extended by the City of Chicago - it appears that the contract was extended through 2023 without review from the Chicago City Council; and

WHEREAS, ShotSpotter blankets neighborhoods with microphones in order to attempt to detect and locate the source of gunfire and sends alerts of supposed gunfire immediately to local police; and

WHEREAS, ShotSpotter claims to be 97% accurate, but has not released any peer-reviewed nor scientifically-valid study to substantiate that figure; and

WHEREAS, There are also no studies testing whether ShotSpotter can reliably tell the difference between the sound of gunshots and other noises like fireworks, backfiring cars, construction noises, helicopters, and other loud, impulsive sounds; and

WHEREAS, A study released by the MacArthur Justice Center at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law on May 3, 2021 found that “the vast majority of alerts generated by [ShotSpotter] turn up no evidence of gunfire or any gun-related crime. Instead, the ShotSpotter system sends police on thousands of unfounded and high-intensity deployments, which are focused almost exclusively in Black and Latinx communities;” and

WHEREAS, The MacArthur Justice Center’s study also found that “89% of ShotSpotter deployments in Chicago turned up no gun-related crime, 86% led to no report of any crime at all, and during the 21.5 months [studied], there were more than 40,000 dead-end ShotSpotter deployments, and on an average day in Chicago, there are more than 61 ShotSpotter-initiated police deployments that turn up no evidence of any crime, let alone gun crime;” and

WHEREAS, A July 26, 2021 article in VICE News titled “Police Are Telling ShotSpotter to Alter Evidence From Gunshot-Detecting AI” reported that ShotSpotter’s reports could be easily altered, and that ShotSpotter evidence had to be withdrawn from a recent criminal case in Cook County; and

WHEREAS, On August 24, 2021 the City of Chicago’s Inspector General issued a report that found that “ShotSpotter alerts rarely lead to evidence of a gun-related crime and that presence of the technology changes police behavior;” and

WHEREAS, The Inspector General’s report found that from January 1, 2020 to May 31, 2021, only 9.1% of ShotSpotter alerts led to evidence of a gun-related criminal offense having been committed, confirming the findings of the earlier MacArthur Justice Center’s study; and

WHEREAS, the Inspector General’s report “further revealed that the presence of [ShotSpotter] is changing police behavior. Specifically, OIG reviewed instances in which CPD members rely, at least in part, on a perceived aggregate frequency of ShotSpotter alerts in an area to form the basis for an investigatory stop or as part of the rationale for a pat down once a stop has been initiated;” and

WHEREAS, A ShotSpotter alert led to the police-shooting death of 13-year-old Adam Toledo, a police shooting where suit has now been filed against the City of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, The City of Chicago can terminate its contract with ShotSpotter at any time, with no penalties or fees; and

WHEREAS, our Chicago City Council has a responsibility to assess the effectiveness and efficacy of contracts entered into by the City of Chicago; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the members of the Chicago City Council, do hereby call upon the Joint Committee on Budget and Government Operation and Committee on Public Safety to hold a subject matter hearing in the fall of 2021, before a final vote is taken on the FY2022 city budget, to assess the reliability of ShotSpotter and assess whether the City of Chicago should extend, amend, or discontinue its contractual relationship with ShotSpotter, Inc.; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the MacArthur Justice Center, Chicago Police Department, Office of Inspector General, and other subject matter experts be invited to provide testimony at the aforementioned subject matter hearing.



Carlos Ramirez-Rosa (35)
Rossana Rodriguez (33)
Maria Hadden (49)

Daniel La Spata (1)
David Moore (17)
Jeanette Taylor (20)
Michael Rodriguez (22)
Byron Sigcho (25)
Roberto Maldonado (26)
Andre Vasquez (40)
Matt Martin (47)

SHOT'S POTTER RESOLUTION

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CITY OF CHICAGO

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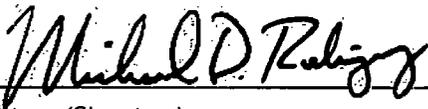
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Alderman _____ Ward
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SHOT-SPOTTER RESOLUTION

Pat Howell 3rd

~~Pat Howell~~ 48

Nicole L... 43

WARD

R E S O L U T I O N

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WHEREAS, ShotSpotter blankets neighborhoods with microphones in order to attempt to detect and locate the source of gunfire and sends alerts of supposed gunfire immediately to local police; and

WHEREAS, ShotSpotter claims to be 97% accurate, but has not released any peer-reviewed nor scientifically-valid study to substantiate that figure; and

WHEREAS, There are also no studies testing whether ShotSpotter can reliably tell the difference between the sound of gunshots and other noises like fireworks, backfiring cars, construction noises, helicopters, and other loud, impulsive sounds; and

WHEREAS, A study released by the MacArthur Justice Center at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law on May 3, 2021 found that “the vast majority of alerts generated by [ShotSpotter] turn up no evidence of gunfire or any gun-related crime. Instead, the ShotSpotter system sends police on thousands of unfounded and high-intensity deployments, which are focused almost exclusively in Black and Latinx communities;” and

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