



Ravenna City Council
Public Health and Safety Committee Meeting Minutes
September 14, 2026

The public meeting was held in person in City Council Chambers.

Council present: Council President Rob Kairis, Amy Michael, Paul Moskun, Tyler Marovich, Tim Calfee, Christina West, Carmen Laudato

Also attending the meeting: Mayor Frank Seman; Police Chief; Jake Smallfield; Fire Chief, Mark Chapple; Service Director, Tim Contant; City Engineer; Bob Finney; Finance Director, Tami Lorence; Council Clerk, Chelsea Gregor; Captain Dustin Svab; Administrative Assistant, Ron Fields; Larry Silenius, Barbara Niemiller, Cynthia Miller, Larry Selinius, Rod Flauhaus, William Barber, Trisha Schun, Steven Farhat, Heidi Timmers, Cathy Klein

The Public Health and Safety Committee Meeting was called to order at 7:17 P.M. by Chairperson, Amy Michael.

The first item was a discussion on FLOCK cameras.

Ms. Michael called the meeting to order and introduced Police Chief Jake Smallfield, Ron Fields, and Captain Dustin Svab to provide information regarding the City's Flock automated license plate reader (ALPR) cameras, including their use, effectiveness, safeguards, and data retention.

Ron Fields explained that the Flock cameras capture images of vehicles and license plates, along with basic vehicle characteristics, but do not identify or photograph occupants. The information is stored in the cloud for up to 30 days and is used to locate vehicles associated with investigations. Mr. Fields reported that, since January 1, 2024, 126 police reports referenced Flock, resulting in 38 arrests and involving 35 named crime victims. He cited several examples involving stolen vehicles, domestic violence, a stabbing, and arrests on active warrants, including a federal warrant.

Ms. Michael noted additional cases in which Flock assisted with investigations involving shootings and a rape. She also explained that searches are subject to checks and balances and are required to be associated with a police report or other legitimate law enforcement purpose. Chief Smallfield explained that Flock information alone is not sufficient to initiate a traffic stop. Officers must locate the vehicle, run and confirm the license plate, verify the warrant or other information, and confirm the identity of the driver before taking enforcement action. He also noted that warrant information is received from the State and updated daily, with alerts sent directly to officers assigned to the system.

Captain Svab explained that Ravenna has eight ALPR cameras and two live-view Condor PTZ cameras located downtown. He provided an example of a recent vehicle-pedestrian accident in which live camera footage helped officers determine what occurred. Captain Svab stated that Flock data contains vehicle information only and that the City's current retention period is 30 days, although it can be adjusted.

Captain Svab described safeguards governing access and searches, explaining that each search is retrievable and subject to audit, and officers are required to use the system for legitimate investigative purposes. He reported that more than 10 million images had been captured during the calendar year, but officers had accessed fewer than one percent of those images, with approximately 750 searches reviewed through audits and determined to be legitimate. Captain Svab also stated that no misuse of Ravenna's system had been identified. He explained that officers receive required training and that misuse of Flock, like misuse of other restricted law enforcement databases, could result in serious disciplinary or criminal consequences. Captain Svab stated that Ravenna shares data with approximately 500 law enforcement agencies but does not share its Flock data with ICE. The City has one federal sharing partner, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, and controls the level of access provided to other agencies.

The committee discussed false alerts and plate-reading accuracy.

Captain Svab explained that the system allows officers to adjust confidence levels and search by full or partial plate, state, vehicle make, model, color, and other characteristics. Officers are still required to independently verify the vehicle before taking enforcement action. He also explained that the system uses cloud-based security measures and industry-standard security frameworks. Mr. Marovich confirmed that the listed security standards are generally consistent with industry standards when properly implemented.

Ms. Laudato raised concerns regarding privacy, constitutional protections, the use of artificial intelligence, continuous vehicle surveillance, and the terms and conditions of the Flock contract. She questioned the City's ability to control future changes to the company's terms and conditions and noted that the original 2024 terms and conditions referenced in the City's agreement had not yet been located.

Chief Smallfield stated that the Police Department had contacted Flock to obtain the original terms and conditions.

Mr. Kairis stated that the City's legal counsel should determine whether future changes to Flock's terms and conditions are permissible under the existing agreement and ordinance. He also noted that the City's agreement automatically renews and that Council has a 30-day window before renewal to terminate the contract. The next renewal was identified as occurring in April 2027.

Ms. Lorence confirmed that the Flock expenditure was already included in the City's budget.

Ms. Michael explained that the meeting was primarily informational and that the Police Department had requested an opportunity to explain how the system operates and the safeguards being used. She also noted that Flock had been specifically addressed in the City's information technology ordinance.

Public comments included questions from Barbara Niemiller regarding prior Flock searches.

Chief Smallfield explained that one unusually high number of searches resulted from an officer repeatedly refreshing the system during training.

Captain Svab stated that the department is continuing to refine its procedures and plans to require a case number or other designation for searches to improve accountability.

Additional questions concerned where Flock data is stored and who can access it.

Mr. Marovich explained that the data is stored through the Flock cloud infrastructure, with potential access limited by roles and permissions.

Chief Smallfield stated that centralized cloud storage is necessary to allow participating agencies to search shared information.

Mr. Moskun commented that he had previously observed the system at the Police Department and found the clarity of the license plate images and the system's investigative capabilities impressive.

Ms. Michael reiterated that Flock had assisted with significant investigations and thanked the Police Department for providing information on its use and safeguards.

Ms. Laudato requested that Council members be given an opportunity to meet with Police Department personnel outside regular business hours to further review the system and address constitutional and contractual concerns.

Chief Smallfield agreed to coordinate meetings with small groups of Council members, including possible weekend meetings.

Ms. Michael encouraged Council members and residents with questions to contact the Police Department directly.

The discussion concluded with Ms. Michael thanking the Police Department personnel and residents for their participation.

- The item was for discussion only.

The second item was authorization to donate 2- Life Pak 15's.

Chief Chapple requested authorization to donate two LifePak 15 cardiac monitors. He explained that the Fire Department recently replaced LifePak 15s with LifePak 35s. One LifePak 15 will be donated back to University Hospital for training and education, and the other will be donated to the Hiram Township Fire Department, which is in need of equipment. The City will retain one LifePak 15.

Chief Chapple explained that the LifePak 15s are cardiac monitors used for blood pressure, pulse oximetry, and 12-lead EKGs. The equipment is approximately 20 years old, has a limited remaining life expectancy, and has an estimated trade-in value of approximately \$1,000.

Ms. Michael supported moving the donation forward, noting that the equipment is no longer of significant value to the City and could benefit other organizations.

- The item was moved forward.

The third item was becoming an Age Friendly Community.

Ms. Michael then provided an update on the proposed Age-Friendly Ravenna initiative. She explained that she had reconnected with Matt Reed regarding the process for Ravenna to become designated as an age-friendly community through AARP. There is no cost to participate, and Ravenna would be the first city in Portage County to pursue the designation, which would build upon work and resources already available through Portage County.

Ms. Michael explained that the initiative would focus on transportation and mobility, social connection, safety and affordable housing, access to information and services, health and wellness, civic participation, employment, and an age-friendly built environment. The process would include a community assessment, community listening sessions, identification of existing resources and gaps, and the formation of an Age-Friendly Ravenna advisory group.

Ms. Michael emphasized that the initiative would focus on coordinating existing community resources rather than creating an entirely new system of services. The goal would be to develop a community-driven, data-informed, financially realistic, and sustainable action plan. She noted

that the process could help identify barriers affecting Ravenna's senior population, including housing, transportation, sidewalks, safety, and access to available resources.

Mr. Kairis stated that Council action would likely be needed for a resolution and letter of commitment authorizing the Mayor to begin the process.

Ms. Michael requested that the matter be moved forward for the Mayor's signature.

Mr. Marovich confirmed that the recommendation would proceed as a resolution.

Ms. Laudato expressed strong support for the initiative and noted that its objectives align with recent multifamily housing efforts concerning accessibility and housing opportunities.

Ms. Michael agreed that the initiatives could complement one another and also discussed the possibility of a future senior recreation area or park.

The committee agreed to move the Age-Friendly Ravenna initiative forward.

- The item was moved forward.

Management Update

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 8:28 P.M.

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

**Amy Michael, Chairperson
Public Health and Safety Committee**