

No Council Vote on Conyers' \$6.86 Million Flock Deal, Chief Confirms. City Rules Require Council Approval for Cooperative Purchases.

By CJ Lester | CJ Lester Investigates

Update: This story has been updated with responses from City Manager Kameron Kelley, an October 12 interview with Police Chief R. Scott Freeman, and written answers from Freeman on October 13.

I have 160 pages of records for you to look at, and they're all free. Download them at the bottom of this story.

The City of Conyers says its 10-year, \$6.86 million agreement with Flock Safety was bought through a state cooperative contract. The city's own purchasing policy says that kind of purchase requires prior approval from the City Council.

Police Chief R. Scott Freeman has now confirmed in writing that the agreement did not go to the City Council for a formal vote.

Chief R. Scott Freeman signed the Flock agreement on September 30, 2025. Through the Georgia Open Records Act, I have been asking how a deal that size was approved. Here is what the records and the city's responses show. The records are below for you to look at.

What the City Says

In response to my latest records request, the city wrote that the Flock agreement "was not utilized through sole source. Instead, the contract was entered into as a cooperative purchasing contract through the state" (Records Response CH-290-2026). The records are below for you to look at.

In a cooperative purchase, a local government buys through an agreement another government has already set up, instead of running its own bidding process. Georgia allows local governments to buy through many state contracts. Conyers' own policy sets an additional requirement for doing so.

What the City's Rules Require

The City of Conyers Procurement Policy, in effect since March 18, 2020, lists the duties of the Chief Financial Officer. One is joining cooperative purchasing plans with other governments, but only "with prior approval from the Conyers' City Council" (page 6).

The policy sets two other requirements that apply here:

- **Multi-year contracts:** Before using a contract that runs for more than one term, the city must determine in writing that its cost projections or escalation terms are "reasonably firm" and that it will serve the city's best interest (page 29).
- **Cost analysis:** Any contract not awarded through competitive sealed bidding requires a written cost or price analysis in the file (page 37).

For comparison, competitively bid contracts and those awarded through requests for proposals also need City Council approval (pages 16 and 18). Sole source purchases, which the city says this was not, require a written determination and sign-off by the Chief Financial Officer or City Manager (page 36).

I found no provision in the policy giving the Chief of Police authority to sign contracts on the city's behalf.

What Records Exist, and What Don't

I asked for six specific records, including the name or number of any cooperative contract used and any council approval to participate in it.

The city answered the first five items together: because the agreement was not a sole source purchase, "no records exist responsive to this request."

That answer covered more than sole source paperwork. It also covered the multi-year determination, the cost or price analysis, the cooperative contract, and the council approval. I am asking the city to confirm whether the cooperative purchasing item was searched separately, and I have filed a new request for the state contract name and number and any council approval.

I will update this story when the city responds.

What Has Been Paid

The city did provide its payment records. The records are below for you to look at.

Flock billed \$296,403 for the first year on October 8, 2025, describing the charge as "Year 1 of 120 Month Term." After a prorated credit of \$63,668.09 for the city's earlier Flock agreements, the balance was \$232,734.91.

The city paid by electronic transfer on October 14, 2025, six days after the invoice date and more than three weeks before it was due. The invoice's purchase order line is blank.

A handwritten account number on the invoice shows where the payment was charged: 20-50-930-54-000-5210. That account differs from the "Police Technology" line in the city's General Fund budget, which carries the prefix 10-10-030 and was budgeted at \$492,401 for FY2026. I have asked the city what the account represents. The word "DRONE" is also handwritten beneath the invoice's single line item, "Flock Safety - Safe City."

The records also include a \$500 pole replacement invoice from January 2026. No invoice for the second year, \$447,758, was included.

What Council Did Vote On

The City Council votes on the budget each year. On June 17, 2026, it adopted the FY2027 budget through Ordinance 1475, setting spending totals by department, including \$11,891,284 for Police, \$2,741,515 for Technology, and \$101,052 for the Real-Time Crime Center. Section 4 grants authority "to the City Manager and/or their designee" to approve spending within those totals.

That is a vote on department budgets, not on the Flock agreement itself.

Other city agreements show a different signing process. The School Resource Officer agreement with the Rockdale County School District, which the city produced when I asked for any Flock school camera agreement, was signed by the Mayor, attested by the City Clerk, and approved as to form by the City Attorney. The Flock agreement bears only Chief Freeman's signature for the city.

The City's Response

After this story was first published, City Manager Kameron Kelley responded to written questions.

Asked which procurement path the agreement followed, Kelley wrote: "The Flock agreement is considered cooperative purchasing."

Asked whether the Mayor and City Council voted on the agreement, he wrote that they "were informed of this agreement and the intent to consolidate the existing agreements, which helped streamline annual budget planning."

Asked what authority allowed the Chief of Police to sign it, he wrote that the chief "has signed the Flock agreements for the City after speaking with the Mayor, Council, and City Manager due to the agreements being within the operational expertise of the Police Department."

Asked which budget line pays for Flock, he wrote: "Flock is funded using the Public safety portion of SPLOST."

He did not identify the cooperative contract used.

What Chief Freeman Said

In an in-person, on-the-record interview at the Conyers Police Department on October 12, Freeman explained how the agreement came together.

He said the council approves his department's spending through the annual budget. "Nothing is ever purchased without going through some approval process," he said.

He said the Safe City agreement combined separate contracts for license plate readers, drones, gunshot detection, and Flock's 911 software into one. "I signed all of those," he said of the earlier agreements. Records show Freeman signed the original 2020 agreement as deputy chief and the 2025 agreement as chief. A 2021 expansion was handled through a city purchase order, and a 2022 expansion was approved by City Council vote.

Combining the contracts into a 10-year term brought discounts totaling about \$2.5 million, according to the agreement. "The more you sign, the more of a discount you can get," Freeman said.

He said the agreement was written so the Mayor and Council can end it for budget reasons, and that he briefs the council on the department's technology plans at its annual retreats. "I don't ever do anything in a vacuum," he said.

Freeman said a cooperative agreement and a state contract are "essentially one and the same" in his experience. He said Flock has a cooperative agreement but that he could not remember which organization it is through, and that the City Manager had that information.

Freeman also said the agreement was funded by his recommendation to freeze six police officer positions. Kelley said Flock is funded through the public safety portion of SPLOST. CJ Lester Investigates is asking the city how the two fit together.

The Chief's Written Answers

After the interview, Freeman sent written answers and documents on October 13. The records are below for you to look at.

Asked whether the Safe Cities agreement went to the City Council for a formal vote, Freeman wrote: "No."

He wrote that the agreement "combined a series of Flock contracts and agreements that I executed on behalf of the Conyers Police Department from 2020 through 2025," replaced them with one agreement, and applied credits and discounts based on its 10-year length.

Freeman wrote that, beginning in 2019, he presented public safety technology plans to the Mayor and City Council at their annual retreats. "As Deputy Chief of Police, and now as Chief of Police, I have signed all related agreements after those technology presentations, consultation with the Chief Financial Officer, and approval by former City Manager Tony Lucas and current City Manager Kameron Kelley," he wrote.

He added that Flock costs were included in the police department's annual budget requests. "Each year, the Mayor and City Council voted to approve the Police Department budget, which included funding for all requested police technology," he wrote.

Freeman also provided the department's cost estimate for the six officer positions, which he described as "frozen (not cut)." Using an annual cost of \$77,328.20 per officer, including pay and benefits, with a 4.5% yearly increase, the department estimates the 10-year cost of six officers at \$5,701,350.67. That is about \$1.16 million less than the \$6,857,386 Flock agreement. CJ Lester Investigates is asking how the difference is covered.

What's Next

I am asking the city to identify the cooperative contract used, to explain which SPLOST referendum covers the payments, and to explain how the frozen officer positions and SPLOST funding fit together. I am also requesting the police department's technology presentations from City Council retreats, 2019 through 2026. I will update this story when the city responds.

The documents referenced in this story are posted below so you can read them yourself.

If you have information about this agreement or any City of Conyers matter, contact me at cj@cjlesterinvestigates.com.

Sources

- Interview with Conyers Police Chief R. Scott Freeman, Conyers Police Department, Oct. 12, 2026 (audio and video recorded)

- Email from Chief R. Scott Freeman to CJ Lester Investigates, Oct. 13, 2026, with attached "CPD Data" document (Flock billing schedule and personnel cost projections)
- Email from City Manager Kameron Kelley to CJ Lester Investigates, October 2026
- City of Conyers Open Records Response CH-290-2026: city's written response; Flock Invoice INV-76257; bank transfer record dated Oct. 14, 2025; Flock Invoice INV-84301
- City of Conyers Open Records Response CH-283-2026: City of Conyers Procurement Policy (No. 10-02-07, effective March 18, 2020); FY2026 budget (Technology, page 167); Ordinance No. 1475 (FY2027 budget, adopted June 17, 2026); School Resource Officer Agreement with the Rockdale County School District
- City of Conyers Open Records Response CH-277-2026: Flock Group, Inc. Amendment Order Form and signature page (Sept. 30, 2025)

Documents

- [Conyers Police Department "CPD Data": Billing Schedule and Personnel Cost Projections, provided by Chief Freeman, Oct. 13, 2026] [\[LINK\]](#)
- [Flock Year 1 Invoice and Payment Records, Records Response CH-290-2026] [\[LINK\]](#)
- [City of Conyers Procurement Policy, Records Response CH-283-2026] [\[LINK\]](#)
- [FY2026 Technology Budget and FY2027 Budget Ordinance 1475, Records Response CH-283-2026] [\[LINK\]](#)
- [School Resource Officer Agreement, Records Response CH-283-2026] [\[LINK\]](#)
- [Flock Amendment Order Form, Records Response CH-277-2026] [\[LINK\]](#)