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[Lull in negotiations with Redflex contract could cost nearly \\$50,000 in revenue \(http://www.johnsoncitypress.com/article/124818/lull-in-negotiations-with-redflex-contract-could-cost-nearly-50-000-in-revenue\)](http://www.johnsoncitypress.com/article/124818/lull-in-negotiations-with-redflex-contract-could-cost-nearly-50-000-in-revenue)

March 1st, 2015 9:39 pm by GARY B. GRAY

Johnson City officials have not revealed details regarding the renegotiation of a contract with Australia-based Redflex Traffic Systems, a lull that could mean a missed opportunity for an estimated \$48,000 from red light camera revenues.

Three months after the original contract expired, the city remains locked into a three-year extension with Redflex in which the company pulls in 70 percent of the take.

Commissioner Clayton Stout has been the lone City Commission voice to pronounce his concern that the empirical evidence for the city's six intersections affixed with red light cameras "just don't show me that this is an effective tool."

"The last discussion we had was a while back, and (Police) Chief Sirois and (City Manager Pete Peterson) were going to talk to Redflex," Stout said Wednesday. "To be honest with you, it hasn't been on the burner. That's not to say it's not important, but it's really in the hands of city

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staff now.”

Sirois said he was still working with the company, but he also said there has been no specific direction given to him by the commission as to what they want to see happen.

“We’ve looked at the fee structure, and they’ve noted to us they’d like to put in some higher-definition equipment, which they would pay for,” Sirois said. “We’ll go back to commissioners with a proposal from the company, perhaps in a few weeks.”

Peterson was not immediately available for comment.

The contract to install up to 12 red light traffic cameras was inked on Nov. 12, 2009. The city had 60 days before the 5-year contract’s expiration date to choose an option for two 3-year extensions or exercise its option to terminate the agreement.

Either choice required the city to notify Redflex, which it did not — a revelation in late November that surprised a few commissioners when they were informed by Sirois.

When that date came and passed, the company automatically retained the right to its original rates. And that financial agreement, as well as legislation in 2011 that limited camera enforcement, has caused a severe drop in revenue for the



Redflex Red Light camara on Roan Street in North Johnson City. (Johnson City Press/file photo)

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city.

[Highwayrobbery.net bolded the three paragraphs above.]

In 2014, the city netted \$26,230; Redflex pulled in \$82,047.

In December of last year — a date in which a new contract could have been in place — the city collected \$4,665, while Redflex netted \$13,554.

In December, Sirois told commissioners the company had agreed to two alternatives. The first, to continue with cameras at six intersections with Redflex receiving 70 percent of the take, and the city 30 percent. The other, to keep the six intersections and add at least two speed cameras in selected school zones at a 50/50 split.

The 70/30 split would give Redflex an estimated \$170,000 a year with the city getting about \$72,500. The 50/50 split would give both the company and city an estimated \$120,988.

Commissioners decided at that time to forego a decision on the two offers, which would have continued the company's digital red-light enforcement offerings at slightly reduced rates.

Johnson City would make \$48,488 more in 2015 if it had agreed to the 50/50 split, according to estimates.

"I've heard nothing — nothing recent," said Finance Director Janet Jennings. "I was at a City



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Commission agenda meeting when they were discussing it, but I haven't heard anything. Usually they bring us in when they're trying to figure the financial implications."

At the December commission meeting, Sirois recommended the cameras at the six intersection be kept in place, that an independent traffic study be conducted, which state law requires, that Redflex be allowed to place two speed cameras in school zones and that commissioners choose the 50/50 split.

He said the company has agreed to these terms once the study is done, but there still has been no public announcement of how the city plans to proceed.

Sirois also said 30,711 notices were mailed during the term of the original agreement. However, there has been a net increase of three crashes since the cameras first went live in March 2010.

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