PlateRanger records request 26-1242: first production review

Reviewed September 28, 2026. Source: county ZIP 26-1242_2026-09-28 18_52_11 -0400.zip (10 files). This is a partial response. Page numbers below refer to the pages of the named PDF, not the page numbers printed inside the contract.

WHAT THE RECORDS ESTABLISH

1. Two SoundThinking payments total $52,099. The account-detail ledger, account 10-43-4300-4310-0000-444100, shows $33,042 for invoice 14381 on April 23, 2026 (row 39; check 684042) and $19,057 for invoice 14542 with an effective date of June 30, 2026 (row 47; EFT reference 40905). The PO detail spreadsheet shows PO 20261726 entered for $38,114 (row 4) and liquidation entries of $33,042 and $5,072 (rows 3 and 2). The second invoice posted after the June 30 fiscal-year cutoff, according to the separate email chain. A ledger effective date is not necessarily the actual payment date.

2. The proposal and an earlier-produced vendor invoice explain the first payment. For 12 cameras, the proposal lists an annual subscription of $33,564 plus $4,550 to deliver and install seven cameras, totaling $38,114. It separately lists $13,985, described as the Year 1 fee for five cameras already installed, due at the conclusion of an evaluation period on November 28, 2025. Those figures add to $52,099 (contract PDF p. 65). The original SoundThinking invoice 14381, dated January 31, 2026 and reproduced in Supporting_Evidence_PO_and_SoundThinking_Invoice.pdf p. 4, itemizes $13,985 for the five cameras, $16,782 for 50% of the Year 1 subscription, and $2,275 for delivery/installation: $33,042. This original invoice was already in the investigation, although no vendor invoice is in this ZIP. The second $19,057 payment is arithmetically consistent with the other $16,782 plus $2,275, but invoice 14542's actual line items have not been verified. Ask for the precise service periods to clarify the relationship between the five-camera and 12-camera charges.

3. The original PO covered $38,114, while $52,099 was paid. Invoice 14381 expressly references PO 20261726 and includes the five-camera $13,985 item. The county booked that entire $33,042 invoice against the PO, leaving $5,072. The ledger then applied exactly $5,072 of the $19,057 second invoice to the PO. In a July 17–20 email chain, Accounts Payable told the sheriff's accountant that the invoice balance could be paid “out of line” and discussed full PO liquidation (G Gibson Email RE_ Sound Thinking Invoice -.pdf, pp. 1–2). The outside-PO amount equals $13,985, but because the first invoice was applied first, the ledger does not literally identify the out-of-line portion of invoice 14542 as the five-camera line item. This is an accounting and authorization question, not by itself proof of an unlawful expenditure. Request invoice 14542, AP vouchers, PO history, approval of the amount outside the PO, and the budget/preaudit record for the full obligation.

4. A $40,000 transfer explicitly named the ALPR system. The October 3, 2025 budget-transfer form moves $40,000 from the sheriff's Professional Services line to Contract Services and states the purpose is an automatic license plate reader system. Thomas Marshburn signed

October 3 and Sheriff Christopher Thomas signed October 6. The Finance Officer, County Manager, clerk, and posting fields on the provided form are blank (Budget Transfer Request Form.pdf, p. 1). The account ledger records a $40,000 budget adjustment on October 6 (row 16), so the blank form alone does not prove the transfer lacked approval. The FY26 budget ordinance, §15, delegates transfers between objects within a function to the County Manager; ask for the electronic approval/posting history.

5. The county identifies the expense as General Fund spending, with no traceable dedicated revenue. Its partial response says fund 10 is the General Fund, revenues are pooled, and no accounting record traces this contract to a particular unrestricted revenue stream. It says the contract is not grant-related and detention-contract revenues are not tied to individual expenditures. That supports a General Fund accounting description. It does not identify which detention contract the sheriff had in mind, establish that no detention revenue entered the General Fund, or complete the still-pending search for proposed grants and internal communications (Partial Response to Request 26-1242.pdf, sections B–D, G). The county should clarify whether specific underlying detention contracts and revenue records were searched, rather than treating every such record as “not applicable” solely because revenue is pooled.

6. The option-year clock is immediate. The initial term runs November 28, 2025 through November 27, 2026. Addendum One, §4(A), labeled page 4 of 6, says the county may exercise each of two one-year options by notifying SoundThinking at least 60 days before the current term ends (contract PDF p. 20). Sixty days before November 27, 2026 is September 28, 2026. The production contains no option notice; because it is partial, that absence does not show whether notice was or was not sent. The proposal lists $33,564 for each option year (p. 65), while the Master Services Agreement §4 separately says SoundThinking should provide a renewal notice approximately 90 days before expiration and that renewal terms can change (contract PDF p. 4). Request any option notice, vendor acknowledgment, FY27 requisition/PO, and renewal quote immediately.

7. Installation and licensure have a separate clock. Addendum One says SoundThinking will install and maintain the hardware and obtain installation permits (contract PDF p. 19); the proposal prices installation of seven cameras (pp. 65–66). The state licensing director wrote on September 18, 2026 that SoundThinking/PlateRanger was not licensed and appeared to require licensure; that was a preliminary view, not a final finding. The 2025 amendment to Chapter 74D took effect October 1, 2025, during the reported April–November evaluation. The actual installer/subcontractor, its license or exemption, first installation date, and subsequent work remain unestablished. The contract alone does not prove a licensing violation.

8. The ALPR policy date raises a distinct operational question. OCSO Administrative Order 4.6, previously obtained, carries an effective/revised date of April 24, 2026. Five cameras were reportedly installed and evaluated before the November 28, 2025 contract start. N.C. Gen. Stat. §20-183.31(a) requires a written use policy before an ALPR system is operational. Request any earlier or superseded policy and the first live date before drawing a compliance conclusion. The

new contract also describes a national Rekor sharing network with an opt-out (p. 19) and permitted uses of de-identified data, including sharing with commercial entities (p. 20), while Order 4.6 restricts sale or commercial use of ALPR data. The contract language is not evidence that sharing was enabled or captured plate data disclosed. Request network election, actual sharing and retention settings, and instructions implementing North Carolina restrictions.

WHAT REMAINS OUTSTANDING

• Original SoundThinking invoice 14542 and its line items, supporting service dates, AP vouchers/payment confirmations, complete PO history, and records explaining the $13,985 processed outside the PO. Invoice 14381 is already available in the earlier evidence packet.
• Electronic approval history for the October $40,000 transfer and documentation that the FY26 obligation was fully preaudited and encumbered under budget ordinance §16. The signed contract itself bears a preaudit certification and the County Manager's signature (contract PDF p. 17); the precise accounting authorization for the entire $52,099 is the narrower question.
• Any renewal/option notice and vendor acknowledgment, particularly in view of the September 28 notice date.
• The agreement and dates for the earlier five-camera evaluation, go-live/acceptance records for the remaining seven cameras, actual installer/subcontractor and applicable license/permit records.
• The still-pending communications and proposed-grant search identified in the county's response, plus a clearer answer on what detention contracts and receipt records were actually searched.
• Any ALPR policy that preceded the April 24, 2026 version, the first operational date, annual audit/reporting records, data-sharing election and restrictions, and retention configuration; request administrative records rather than captured plate data.

HANDLING NOTE

Pages 67–70 of the 70-page PDF labeled Onslow County - PlateRanger Contract Redacted.pdf appear to contain an unrelated reimbursement request and receipts with a private person's details. They are not part of the PlateRanger agreement. Do not publish or redistribute that PDF as-is. Ask the county for a corrected copy and note the apparent attachment error.

FOCUSED FOLLOW-UP FOR REQUEST 26-1242

Subject: Request 26-1242 — follow-up on partial PlateRanger production

Thank you for the partial production. I appreciate the native accounting exports. Please keep the request open for the searches your response says are still underway and provide an estimated date for the next production.

We already have SoundThinking invoice 14381, which itemizes the five-camera $13,985 charge. Please provide original invoice 14542 and its line-item and service-period detail, the full

PO 20261726 amendment/receiving/liquidation history, and records authorizing the $13,985 of invoice 14542 processed outside the remaining $5,072 PO balance. The signed proposal separately lists $13,985 for five cameras already installed and $38,114 for the 12-camera first year. Please provide existing records identifying the evaluation agreement, service periods, and activation/acceptance dates for those cameras.

The October 3 budget-transfer form expressly names an ALPR system and shows a $40,000 transfer into Contract Services. The provided copy leaves the Finance Officer, County Manager, and posting fields blank, although the ledger records the transfer on October 6. Please provide the electronic approval and posting history or other final approved copy.

The agreement's first term ends November 27, 2026, and Addendum One calls for option notice at least 60 days beforehand. Please provide any option-year notice to SoundThinking, vendor acknowledgment, renewal quote, and associated FY27 requisition or PO that exist as of your search date. If none exists, please say so for this category.

We have OCSO Administrative Order 4.6 with an effective/revised date of April 24, 2026. Please provide any earlier or superseded written ALPR use policy and the records showing when the first camera became operational. Please also provide records of the election to join or opt out of the Rekor Partner Sharing Network, current data-sharing and retention settings, and the actual installer or subcontractor and any licenses or permits relied upon for installation. I am not requesting captured plate data, vehicle images, queries, or sensitive camera locations.

Finally, pages 67–70 of the 70-page file labeled as the redacted PlateRanger contract appear unrelated and include a private person's reimbursement paperwork. Please provide a corrected contract file and confirm whether any other records were omitted or misattached. Thank you.

LEGAL AND POLICY REFERENCES CHECKED

• Budget Ordinance FY26.pdf, supplied in the ZIP, pp. 5–6, §§15–16.
• Onslow County Purchasing & Contracting Policy (May 2021), especially §§2.10–2.12 and 3.1–3.2. Service contracts from $30,000 to $249,999 fall under County Manager execution in its summary, so the amount alone does not imply Board approval was required.
• N.C. Gen. Stat. §159-28, appropriation, preaudit, and disbursement rules.
• N.C. Gen. Stat. §§20-183.31–.32, written ALPR policy, use, retention, and disclosure rules.