

IN BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1980

Present: Chairman John E. Murray, Anne W. Donald, and William J. Cossart.

The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, the special meeting was called to order by Chairman Murray at 5:00 p.m. in the Loring Parsonage.

Auxiliary Police

Present: Police Chief Nicholas Lombardi and Lt. Anthony J. Sorrenti and John S. Sklenak, members of the Auxiliary Police.

The Board met with Police Chief Nicholas Lombardi and Lt. Anthony J. Sorrenti and John S. Sklenak of the Auxiliary Police to discuss possible means of strengthening the Auxiliary force.

Officer Sorrenti and Sklenak expressed their concern that the investment of approximately \$400-500 by each new Auxiliary Officer, required for uniforms and equipment, is a major deterrent to recruiting new members. The Town issues the pants, shirt, belt, tie, hat, badge, and nightstick, but the individual must furnish his own gun, leather goods, and outerwear.

The Police Chief noted for the Board's information that when the Auxiliary was originally organized, it was agreed members would buy their own uniforms with the exception that the Chief would supplement as best he could from his own budget. He further reviewed past budget allocations for the Auxiliary and how they had managed to-date with very little support from Town boards and voters. Chief Lombardi stated his opinion that, in order to "beef up" the Auxiliary, it will be necessary to appropriate sufficient monies for Auxiliary uniforms, equipment and training.

It was also noted that the Auxiliary is donating its time and money to maintain the vehicle acquired approximately a year ago. Selectman Cossart suggested that the arrangements with the High School could include the Auxiliary vehicle, and this was noted as a possibility for routine maintenance.

Selectman Cossart indicated he would like to have a budget prepared to meet the requirements of the Auxiliary and indicated his support of the same.

Officer Sklenak reported that the force had lost three members (John Stearns, Carol Stearns, and Barry Real) and was now down to seven. He stated his belief that the force could be doubled, and perhaps increased to 18-24 men.

Officer Sklenak presented a proposed 1981-82 budget for the Auxiliary Police totaling \$4264 and stated that the figures were on the conservative side according to their estimates. The Board reviewed each item in the proposed budget and, based upon a projected force of fourteen men, recommended the following increases, creating a total budget of \$6619:

Cruiser fuel - increase from \$100 to \$1200
Cruiser reserve for repairs - increase from \$200 to \$300

Uniforms: for new members - increase from \$560 to \$2100
replacements - increase from \$595 to \$700
winter coats - increase from \$1000 to \$1400

It was further agreed that the Police budget should allow for acquiring a new Auxiliary vehicle, due to the condition of the current one. The Police Chief stated that, of the cars ready to be traded in, only the best cruiser would be worthwhile to keep for this purpose, and he concurred with this procedure. It was suggested that investigation should also be made to see if any other town vehicle would be suitable. In addition, Selectman Cossart suggested that it might be possible to use a Town vehicle from another department for an additional Auxiliary vehicle (making two) in order to increase patrolling. It was agreed that this was a possibility when the force is large enough to staff two vehicles or perhaps for use as a back-up vehicle if the regular vehicle is being repaired. Chairman Murray volunteered to check with other departments for availability of a vehicle.

Selectman Cossart inquired regarding the definitions and powers of Special Police Officers and Special Constables and whether Auxiliaries should hold another appointment. Chairman Murray referenced Town Counsel Paul L. Kenny's opinion of October 14, 1977, that the Police Chief, in the course of his regular duties when not able to adequately meet a situation with regular or reserve forces, may activate the auxiliaries, and once the Chief has declared the necessity, they would then have all of the powers and liability of regular police officers, when the procedure under G.L.c.33, section 11, is followed. Chief Lombardi stated his own opinion that this holds true only when activated under an emergency (Civil Defense) situation, and normal weekend duties are designated as "training" assignments. The Chief further stated that some towns do appoint auxiliaries as special police as well, and it would be helpful to have additional special police on call.

The Board expressed agreement with the idea of dual appointment of Auxiliaries as Special Police Officers, which would provide additional manpower for special details when regular staff is not available and also an incentive to Auxiliary members.

Various ways of promoting the Auxiliaries were discussed and Chairman Murray encouraged Auxiliary members to attend the citizens meeting of October 6 at the High School regarding traffic fatalities and make a pitch for joining the Auxiliaries. Also discussed was the possibility of setting up an advertisement in the High School lobby that night. Selectman Donald suggested the possibility of soliciting the help of the League of Women Voters and interested citizens to raise funds for the Auxiliary.

Officer Sklenak inquired about the possibility of a town businss(es) donating a vehicle, such as Digital did for the Council on Aging. The Board agreed to check on this idea.

It was noted by Officers Sklenak and Sorrenti that they were still without a liaison officer on the regular police force, and they and the Chief concurred with the need for the same. The Police Chief is working on the matter.

Officer Sklenak questioned whether the Auxiliaries should be empowered to issue tickets in order to do a more thorough job and to curtail violations, such as parking, speeding, improper use of conservation lands, etc. Discussion followed on court appearance requirements of the issuing officer. Also discussed was the question of procedure and legality of a person performing the duties of a Special Police Officer simultaneously while serving as an Auxiliary Officer. It was agreed that the question should be directed to Town Counsel.

In summary, the following action was agreed upon by those present:

- 1) Prepare an increased Auxiliary budget, (Chief Lombardi to contact the Finance Committee to apprise them of budgetary plans).
- 2) Appoint Special Police Officers from ranks of existing Auxiliary force. (Provide additional training for ticketing, etc.)
- 3) Investigate replacing Auxiliary vehicle.
- 4) Create more interest by public in Auxiliary and promote new recruitment.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Attest: _____

Janet Silva
Executive SEcretary Pro Tem