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AN EVALUATION
OF THE
TOWN OF SANBORNTON
"INCREASED SERVICES -- POLICE DEPARTMENT"

GRANT NUMBERS

77-I-A1553 C03
78-I-A2074 C03

PROJECT PERIOD

December 3, 1976 - April 30, 1979

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EVALUATION SPECIALIST

December 7, 1978

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ADMINISTRATIVE

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BACKGROUND

On December 3, 1976, the Town of Sanbornton was awarded first year funding from this agency for the purpose of hiring an additional full-time police officer. The grant, 77-I-A1553 C03, was originally scheduled to terminate on December 31, 1977, but due to a delay in approval of the project expenditures by officials of the town, the project period was adjusted to extend to May 31, 1978. Funding under the original grant was as follows:

<u>77-I-A1553 C03</u>	
LEAA	\$7,852
GCCD	436
Subgrantee	<u>436</u>
TOTAL	\$8,724

Ms. McConnell of this office monitored the original project in October, 1977.

In December, 1977, Sanbornton submitted to this agency a request for renewal funding of the project, noting a significant decrease in the crime rate in the town subsequent to the appointment of the officer under the grant. Mr. Mason favorably evaluated the project in January of this year, and shortly thereafter, the executive committee approved the application, establishing grant 78-I-A2074 C03. A total of \$9,129 was awarded to carry the project on for another year, apportioned as follows:

<u>78-I-A2074 C03</u>	
<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Budget</u>
LEAA	Salary
\$4,323	\$7,600
GCCD	Benefits
241	1,429
Subgrantee	Uniform Allotment
<u>4,565</u>	<u>100</u>
TOTAL	TOTAL
\$9,129	\$9,129

One adjustment was made to this grant in April of this year, which extended the implementation date of the grant to May 31, 1978 to coincide with the termination of the prior grant. The termination date for the project is scheduled for April 30, 1979.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Prior to the award of the original grant, the Sanbornton Police Department had two full-time officers including the Chief, two part-time officers, and a part-time clerk. Chief Louis Nielsen was customarily on duty between 10 AM and 6 PM on weekdays, and the second full-time officer covered from 6 PM to 2 AM on weeknights. Weekend coverage and emergency coverage was provided by the Chief as needed. Altogether, the Chief's work week amounted to fifty hours or more. The two part-time officers were used primarily as patrolmen covering sick days and days off for the full-time officers.

Sanbornton has a resident population of approximately 1,600 and a yearly influx of approximately 2,000 seasonal residents and vacationers. These figures represent a population growth of greater than 65% since 1970, and in the last two years, significant development of land and residential property has accompanied the population growth. The town covers an area of 49.5 square miles and is responsible for 89 miles of roadway. A police workload that has grown as steadily as the population prompted the town to increase its police force to ensure twenty-four hour coverage rather than the sixteen hour coverage that was being provided by the Chief and the one other full-time officer. It was decided to replace the two part-time special officers with one full-time officer, and the purpose of this grant is to continue the employment of that officer

for a second year.

William Joseph was hired under the original grant in May, 1977. He was replaced in February, 1978 by Robert Welch, who had had previous experience with the police departments of Waterville Valley and Holderness.

Chief Nielsen's duty schedule is 10 AM to 6 PM on weekdays, as it was before the addition of the third officer. The additional officer, as well as the other full-time officer, work the 6 PM to 2 AM and the 2 AM to 10 AM shifts, alternating each month. The Chief still provides weekend coverage as needed. In each one-month shift cycle, the two officers work three 40-hour weeks and one 42-hour week.

PROJECT OPERATION

Town approval of the original grant took place at the Sanbornton Town Meeting in March, 1977, whereupon the position was advertised in four area newspapers. William Joseph was selected from a list of sixteen applicants. He holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Southeastern Massachusetts University and prior to coming to work for the Sanbornton Police Department, he held a position in the Sales Department of International Correspondence Schools in Nashua. Upon assuming his duties, he underwent a sixty-day training period under the supervision of Chief Nielsen, and was subsequently assigned patrol duties. Officer Joseph completed training at the New Hampshire Police Academy in November, 1977, and he served until February of this year, when he resigned and took a position with the Tilton Police Department.

Chief Nielsen again undertook the required procurement procedures and shortly thereafter succeeded in hiring Officer Robert Welch from a group of four applicants. Officer Welch underwent a sixty-day orientation

period, as did Officer Joseph, but was exempt from the requirement of attendance at the Police Academy by virtue of his prior service as a certified policeman in Holderness and Waterville Valley. Officer Welch is about to complete two law enforcement courses at Saint Anselm's College under the Law Enforcement Education Program (LEEP) and has registered for two courses for the upcoming semester. He has completed an investigative training program conducted by the New Hampshire Police Standards and Training Council, is a certified breathalyzer operator, and a certified Emergency Medical Training (EMT) medic.

The writer noted that Officer Joseph had demonstrated an interest in juvenile matters and had effectively handled juvenile cases for the department. When questioned whether Officer Welch had demonstrated any special area of skill, Chief Nielsen replied that he had adapted very well to the department routine and that he excels at all tasks that he undertakes. The Chief attributes Officer Welch's ability to his long experience as a policeman, and notes that he is particularly well-suited to work in a rural town for precisely that reason. This experience, commented the Chief, was lacking in Officer Joseph.

Officer Welch has developed an inventory system and appropriate forms to keep track of evidence in the custody of the department. This system is expected to prove useful in documenting chain of custody, an evidentiary element which the state must prove in certain cases as a part of its prosecutorial burden. Finally, Officer Welch has built up a good rapport with the townspeople, and he executes official responsibilities reliably and with need of only minimum supervision.

In both Ms. McConnell's and Mr. Mason's reports on this project, it was noted that the major crime problems in the town arose from burglaries, larcenies, and criminal mischief. Subsequent to the hiring of

Officer Joseph, a decrease in the incidence of burglaries and larcenies was reported. However, to date in 1978, there have been increases in the incidence of burglary and larceny in the town:

<u>Reported Crimes</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>
Burglaries	42	20	30
Larcenies	34	28	55

The statistical significance of these figures is discussed below.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is difficult to evaluate a project such as this by comparing stated objectives and isolated accomplishments in a particular time period. The objective of this project is a broad one: to strengthen police services in the Town of Sanbornton. This objective embraces many duties and responsibilities. If the issue is narrowed to whether the officer under the grant is doing his job competently and efficiently, then it is clear that this project is meeting its objectives in a proper fashion.

Comparison of numbers of incident reports in 1976 and succeeding years is not a conclusive measure of the effectiveness of the officer working under this grant, and it is a misleading measure for two reasons. First, the sample size of incidents is small, and even slight increases or decreases would appear substantial against yearly totals. Secondly, there is no clear systematic link between the size of the Sanbornton Police Department and the town's crime rate. Hence, what might be viewed by the reader as an increase in crime may in fact be an improvement in the department's ability to detect crimes previously unknown or unreported.

As noted above, Sanbornton's population is growing rapidly. Chief Nielsen has been keeping track of population changes and of the numbers and types of building permits issued for the past several years in San-

bornton and the surrounding towns, and two phenomena have become apparent to him. First, the growth rate in Sanbornton surpasses that of any surrounding town, and in fact surpasses that expected by Chief Nielsen when he began recording population growth and property development. Chief Nielsen had originally thought that it would become necessary in 1981 to add another officer to the force, bringing the number of full-time officers, including himself, to four. The more recent boost in growth indicates that this addition will become necessary no later than 1980. Secondly, Sanbornton is a residential community, and there have been recent significant increases in vacation home construction and improvement. Houses of this type are usually unoccupied for long periods of time, and they become attractive targets for burglary and property damage, the recognized problems in the town's crime picture. It is not reasonable to assign an unfavorable significance to an apparent increase in crime rate since this time last year, but it is reasonable to conclude that all members of the department have faced substantial increases in workload and greater demands upon their skills. Indeed, work records examined by the writer show that Officer Welch often works in excess of the hours scheduled for him, and has on occasion assisted the Chief on weekend matters, in neither circumstance being guaranteed payment for the extra hours.

Chief Nielsen expects that the town will be able to include the full cost of the third officer in its next budget, as the town had originally planned. However, Chief Nielsen expects that the town

will seek funding for a fourth officer in 1980, when the town's population should make this addition necessary. Chief Nielsen hopes at that time to continue twenty-four hour coverage of the town and to initiate an overlapping shift, to step up coverage on weekends or when special occasions make it necessary, and to be able to free himself from patrol duties more easily for investigative work, court appearances, and other department matters.

The writer concludes that the demonstrated success of this project supports favorable future consideration in accordance with Commission policy.