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INDIVIDUAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REPORT

In Response to a Request for Technical Assistance

by the

Trinidad, Colorado, Police Department

August 16, 1973

37849

Prepared by:

Public Administration Service
1313 East 60th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637

(Per Contract J-LEAA-015-72)

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ACQUISITIONS

I. PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

- A. Consultant Assigned:
George D. Eastman
Director of the Institute of
Governmental Research and Service
Kent State University
Kent, Ohio
- B. Date Assignment Received:
July 6, 1973
- C. Date of Contact with LEAA Regional Coordinator:
July 6, 1973
- D. Dates of On-Site Consultation:
July 9-11, 1973
- E. Individuals Contacted:
See attached memorandum report.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

- A. Problem as per Request for Technical Assistance:
Review of the tentative plans of the City of Trinidad for a Department of
Public Safety with appropriate recommendations.
- B. Problem Actually Observed:
As stated.

III. FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

See attached memorandum report.

IV. DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION

See attached memorandum report.

V. RECOMMENDED COURSES OF ACTION

See attached memorandum report.

MEMORANDUM REPORT

July 12, 1973

TO: CITY COUNCIL AND CITY MANAGER, TRINIDAD, COLORADO
FROM: GEORGE D. EASTMAN
SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

The purpose of the study, on which this report is based, was to review tentative plans of the City of Trinidad for a Department of Public Safety and to make such recommendations as appear to be appropriate under local circumstances.

The study was not one conducted in depth; time limitations required it to be a reconnaissance or survey-type study restricted to only a few hours of plans review, observation of facilities and operations, and extensive interviewing. Consultant services were provided to the City without charge, under a technical assistance program of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, through arrangements made by the Division of Criminal Justice of the Colorado Department of Urban Affairs with Public Administration Service, Chicago, Illinois.

Perspective

Several factors and circumstances precipitated the City's interest in reorganizing the functions of public safety; principal among these was achieving higher levels of service on a sound cost/effectiveness basis.

Resignation of the Chief of Police

The present chief of police, brought to the City of Trinidad about two years ago on the basis of a nation wide screening of candidates, has resigned to assume a similar position in another state; his last active day will be July 27th. He has done a very commendable job during his tenure, and is concerned that appropriate arrangements be made to further improve police services in the City. Among his special concerns are partially federally funded programs he now has under way.

City Council & City Manager

General Economic Conditions and Budgetary Matters

There is a belief, widely held locally, and articulated by the City Manager, the Assistant City Manager, members of the City Council, and still others, that the City has too many employees in relation to services provided. The obvious implication is that the City should reorder its service priorities, reorganize where it is advantageous to do so, improve management and supervision wherever they may be weak, and improve employee performance. A plan of action, thoughtfully prepared and carefully and aggressively but humanely implemented, is essential to achieving reasonable or superior levels of service within present and anticipated financial constraints.

The City presently owns and manages power (electricity), gas, water, and sewer facilities and maintains, as well, a normal range of general fund operations, including public safety services for example. To support both utility and general fund operations, the City employs 162 persons full-time (not including councilmen) and still others on part time and temporary basis. One hundred three are in general fund departments and 59 are in the utilities. The general fund budget for 1973 is \$1,154,600 and is supported by locally generated revenues. In addition to this amount are utilities revenues, and approximately \$2,034,000 in federally-funded projects and programs. The City, with a population of about 10,000 has 10.3 general fund employees per thousand population at a per capita cost of \$115.46.

Terminology

The term department of public safety is used throughout the United States. Its use in one jurisdiction, however, may bear but little resemblance to its use elsewhere. Most typically, it is a department with two relatively autonomous divisions--Fire and Police. In some cases, there is a full time director of public safety, in others a part time person, and in still others the director's position is not filled. The latter situation may be said to pertain in Trinidad where there is ordinance provision for a director but neither an incumbent nor a line item in the budget for the position.

In some jurisdictions, the public safety departments may include divisions or units of fire, police, communications, civil defense, and even health. In some, there is total intergration of personnel in which no distinction is made between firemen and policemen and there is, in fact, a single unit or department of fire and police services. There are, of course, other organizational arrangements as well.

City Council & City Manager

A variety of local circumstances dictates actions which may be taken in regard to organization or reorganization for fire and police services. These include political and economic factors, as well as building codes, nature and conditions of structures, attitudes of public officials, average age of employees in the fire and police service, and many others.

A PROPOSED PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT IN TRINIDAD

Conditions generally are favorable in Trinidad for creation of a department of public safety. These include:

1. The resignation of the Chief of Police
2. Official interest in improvement of services within reorganized financial constraints.
3. A relatively low age level of personnel in both fire and police departments
4. Developing local talent, and
5. Absence of legal restrictions.

Organization, Management, and Operations

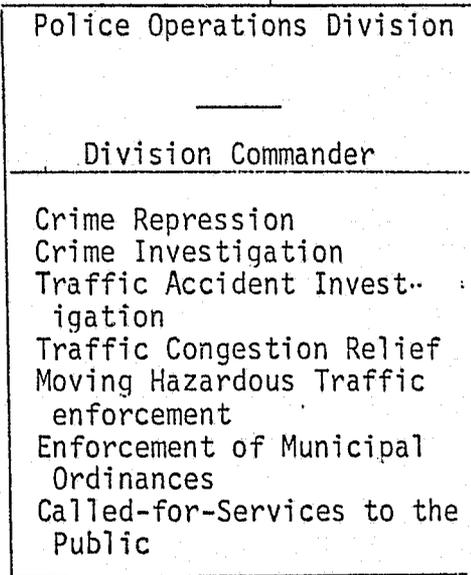
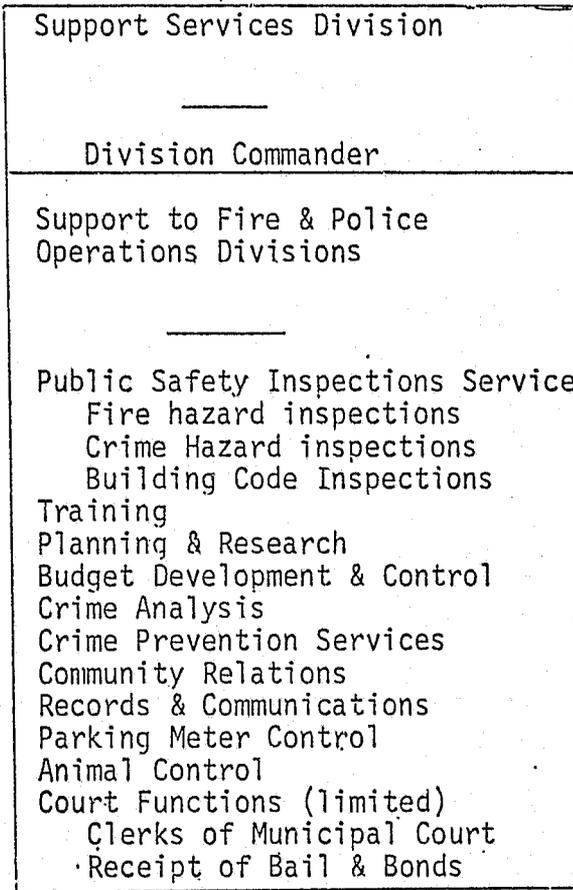
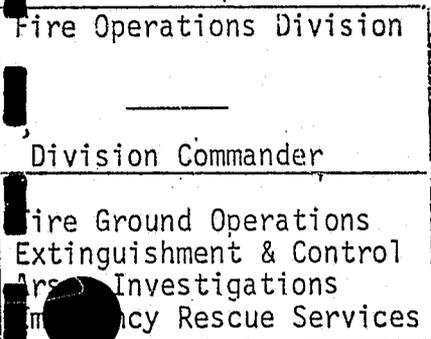
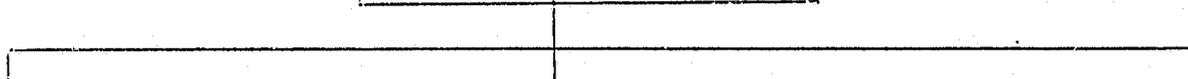
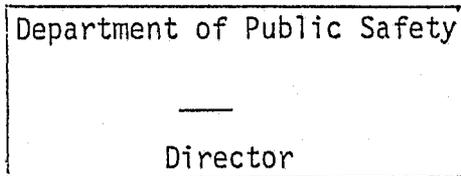
It is recommended that the proposed department of public Safety be structurally and functionally organized as shown in Figure 1 (following page). In the recommended organization, under the director, are three division -- Fire Operations, Support Services, and Police Operations.

Office of the Director. Creation of a directorship implements existing ordinance provision for it, but requires funding; it is, in fact, a new employee position. In keeping with Council policy, the position should be advertised and filled on a competitive basis. It should be noted, however, that a written examination is not appropriate to the position; but few people are

Figure 1

Basic Structural and Functional Organization
Recommended for the Proposed
Department of Public Safety

Trinidad, Colorado



experienced in both fire and police operations and management. Thus, the qualities to be sought in filling the position are those of integrity, imagination, skill in interpersonal relations, tempered aggressiveness, competence in organization and management and, hopefully, legal training. Evaluation of qualities can be achieved by an adequate background and experience review and by a good oral board. The director will need a skilled secretary who can be available on occasion to do work for division commanders.

Fire Operations Division. The short length of time on this study precluded data gathering adequate to lay the groundwork for significant recommendations on fire services. The Fire Department in Trinidad, as in most small communities, is almost totally action oriented and this, along with fairly rapid turnover of chiefs through retirement, has not encouraged development of supportive functions which can be provided for it by the proposed Support Services Division. The only functional and manpower change recommended immediately is transfer of fire hazard inspections, and the inspector or an alternate, to the services division. Here the function would be broadened to include crime hazard inspections, especially important in view of Trinidad's night time business burglary experience.

The department, commendably, is color-coding its hydrants for pressure identification and regularly tests hydrants, rolling stock, and other equipment to assure instant readiness. Its Station One lacks appropriate amenities and this, along with other factors, suggests that consideration should be given its relocation to the site of the new station about to be constructed.

Support Services Division. Creation of this division, along with the director's position, is the key to well planned and sustained programs of improvement of public safety services. A review of the functions assigned to it, identified in Figure 1, reveals its significance. It can broaden the inspection program to include crime as well as fire hazards, and will give purpose, direction, and control to the building inspection program. It can establish a more formal training program, responsive to needs of both operational divisions, and gradually initiate and maintain cross-training for policemen and firemen that will ultimately provide levels of mutual support and action not otherwise attainable. It can provide assuming, planning, and research to both operational divisions superior to that which is available to either at this time, or even possible under present circumstances, important among its functions are records and communications services; these would provide centralization of all public safety records, provide them in formats conducive to prompt retrieval and analysis, and aid in planning, training, and operations, for example. Assuming certain court-related functions could release personnel from the Municipal Court and provide conveniences to both the public and the Police Operations Division.

Police Operations Division. This division, as the Fire Operations Division, will be relieved of all direct responsibility for staff and auxiliary services and become strictly a line unit concerned with field operations.

Budget and Manpower Considerations. Earlier in this memorandum concern was expressed about the City's personnel employment supported by the general fund; similar but less severe concerns are expressed about employment outside the general fund area - as in utilities. It may be observed that manpower for the proposed Police Operations Division is adequate for the present; if the Support Services Division functions efficiently and effectively (see Figure 2 for distribution of personnel). The records system established over the past two years now provides a basis for analysis and considered decisions on police manpower as annual budgets and long range projects are developed; consideration should be given to additional personnel in the 1975 budget plan, however.

In contrast, it is observed that very careful, professional analysis of fire operations personnel needs should be undertaken before expansion of the force is considered seriously. Under the proposed reorganization, police operations will have 15 field trained personnel and fire operations 18 (assuming one is transferred to support services). On the basis of these figures, and considering the difference in work weeks between the two services, the Fire Division will have almost 2.5 times as many men on duty at any time as the Police Division.

These circumstances lead inevitably to certain conclusions:

1. Without question, in spite of recent decisions, the fireman's work week will be shortened--gradually it will be lowered to 40 hours per week in conformity with standards of business, industry, and government; and at this time firemen will work a five day week. Many years will be involved in the process, and at least initial time attrition can be absorbed by the division.
2. Carefully selected persons in the fire division, one or two at a time, may be released to the Support Services Division for temporary or longer-term assignments to provide their expertise activities especially relevant to the fire service--in the areas of training and planning and research, for example; indeed, some such work could be assigned to men in stations. Likewise the fire inspection program may be strengthened by such assignments.
3. It is in no way improper, and would significantly benefit the City, if certain maintenance responsibilities were assigned to the Fire Operations Division. One station, for example, could be assigned meter repair and other sign repainting.

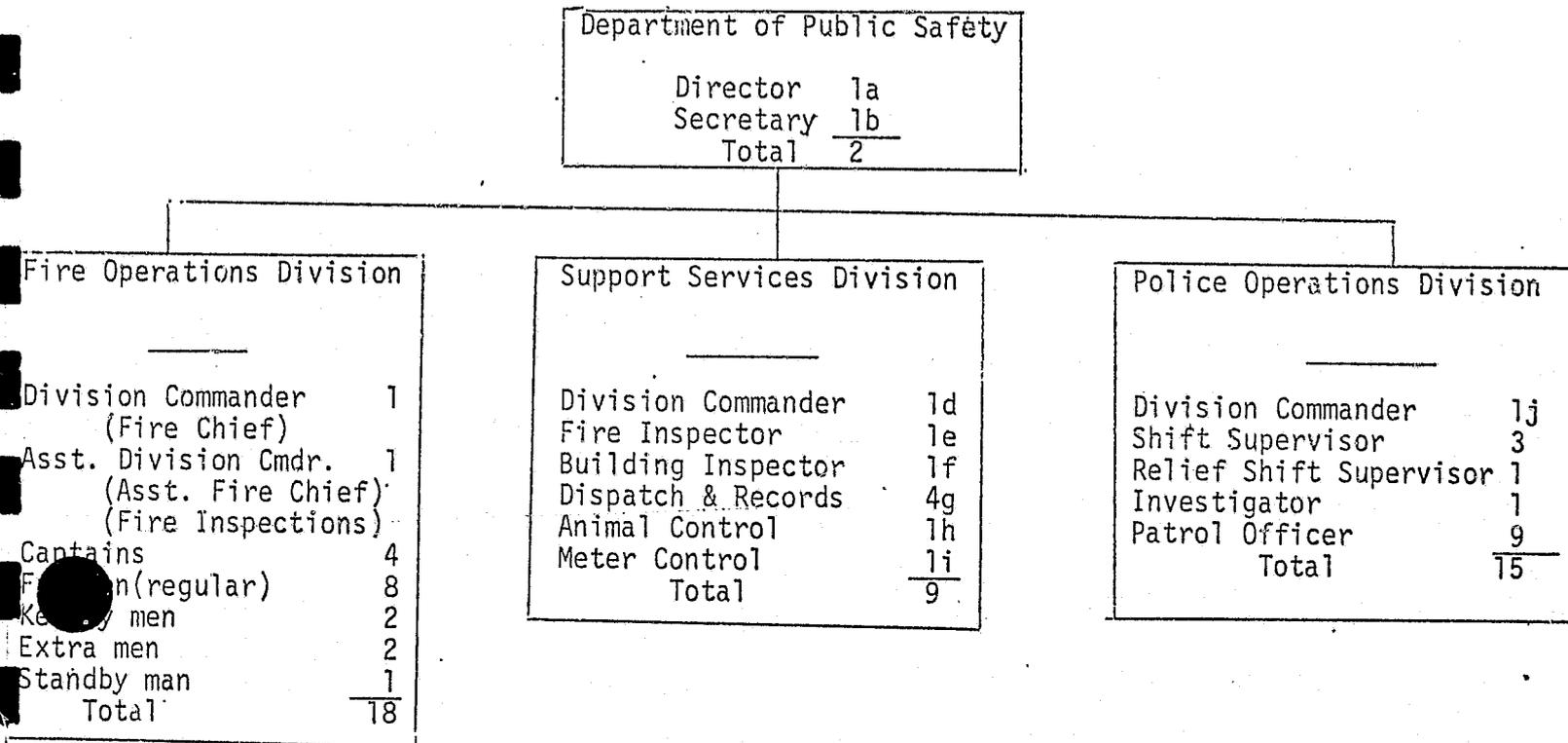
It is believed, except for the new and very the responsible position of Public Safety Director, that personnel requirements of the Department of Public Safety--beyond personnel presently available.

Figure 2

Manning Table

Proposed Department of Public Safety

Trinidad, Colorado



- a) New position required in creation of department
- b) Transfer from the Police Department
- c) Figures obtained from Fire Chief (9 July '73 (total is one less than he reports as shown by figures in column, because of transfer of Fire Inspector to Support Services Division)
- d) New position (person to be assigned on transfer from Police Department).
- e) Person to be assigned on transfer from Fire Department
- f) Transfer to this division
- g) New positions (can be obtained, however, from transfer from other departments)
- h) Transfer from Police Department
- i) Transfer from Police Department
- j) New position, but vacancy created by resignation of Chief of Police

in the Fire and Police Department--can be drawn from other departments of the City without loss of efficiency or effectiveness, once city-wide personnel requirements are carefully evaluated. Transfer of limited functions from the Municipal Court should permit reassignment of at least one and perhaps two persons, for example.

General. There is an underlying assumption in this memorandum that the City of Trinidad wants all its personnel fully and usefully employed. The recommendations of this document are based on this premise. In this regard, it is observed that the Support Services Division is not fully staffed and that the Public Safety Director must assume personally many of its functions, especially involving planning and research, training, and community relations, for example. In due course of time his services division will need some additional personnel -- but by that time their need and value can be demonstrated fully.

Conclusion

If the City follows the recommendations of this memorandum, many of which need much greater development of course, significantly greater effectiveness can be gained in field operations. The ground will be laid for concurrent economies; and cost/effectiveness measures can be developed which will control management, operations, and growth patterns. Although the proposed organization will remain sound for many years, effective and continuous cross training of fire and police personnel will gradually blur the present distinction existing between the two services and a true public safety service will emerge. As this occurs, consideration should be given to a single set of entrance requirements to the Department leading to development of public safety officers capable of serving well in either service.