

City of Cambridge

IN CITY COUNCIL

June 9, 1980

The Committee on Public Safety, comprised of Vice Mayor Russell, Councillors David and Walter Sullivan, conducted a public hearing on Monday, May 19, 1980 at 6:15 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall. The purpose of the hearing was to discuss the apparent increase in crime and vandalism throughout the city.

Vice Mayor Russell, Chairman of the Committee, led the hearing off by making a series of inquiries to the Police Chief, Leo F. Davenport. Specifically, the Chief was asked whether or not the Police Department was properly staffed with a sufficient number of sworn personnel, whether or not the Department had enough motor vehicles and radio equipment.

Chief Davenport responded to these inquiries by stating he would like the additional funds necessary to appoint 25 patrol officers which would bring his department up to 311 sworn personnel. Relative to equipment, the Chief stated that currently the department did not have enough radio equipment for all personnel but that it was a long range goal he hoped to achieve.

Vice Mayor Russell questioned the Chief as to the number of night detectives which are working throughout the city.

Chief Davenport responded by stating there are two night detectives assigned to "S" units on a rotating basis usually allowing an individual 30 or 60 nights of detective work. He further stated these detectives conduct a variety of investigations and respond to all crimes which may happen in the evening or early morning hours.

At this time Councillor Danehy questioned the Chief regarding the public drinking and vandalism problem at Bergin Park and the Pemberton St./Rindge Avenue area. He stated that this has been going on for an extended period of time and would be a subject of a public hearing later in the evening.

Several people who were in the audience came forward and explained in detail the problems which existed in the neighborhood, particularly between the basketball games at Bergin Park and the various functions at the Rindge Teen Shelter.

The Chief did not specifically address the complaints discussed but did state he would speak with Night Commander Captain Breen relative to assigning a one man unit in this area on a temporary basis.

In summary, the Committee as well as other members of the City Council who were present felt the resolution of this problem was a top priority and urged the Chief to act at once. Furthermore the Committee, although satisfied that the public drunkenness problem within the Central Square area brought to attention of the full City Council at a previous meeting was resolved, feels that this general issue must be more adequately addressed by the Police Department.

Finally, in relation to the material distributed to the Committee by the Chief relative to his goals for FY 1981, the Committee agrees that this management theory is a positive step towards improving the efficiency of the Police Department and the Committee

will closely monitor the implementation of these goals to ensure that the entire Police Department is responsive to the safety needs of the residents of this City.

It is not the intent of the Committee to interfere with the day to day operations of the Police Department. However, the Committee will conduct future public hearings when it feels the safety of the residents is in jeopardy or when a particular neighborhood feels they lack adequate police protection.

For the Committee,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. Russell', written over a horizontal line.

Vice Mayor Leonard J. Russell
Chairman

S-289

Comm. from Vice Mayor Russell transmitting
a report of the Committee on Public Safety
for meeting held May 19, 1980.

In City Council;

June 9, 1980

- Placed on File -