

rdp 12/07

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AN EVALUATION  
OF THE  
TOWN OF MEREDITH  
"FULL-TIME INVESTIGATOR"

GRANT NUMBER

78-I-A1946 C03

PROJECT PERIOD

January 6, 1978 - January 31, 1979

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NEW HAMPSHIRE GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY

December 5, 1978

NCJRS

DEC 21 1978

ACQUISITION

53391

## BACKGROUND

The Governor's Commission on Crime and Delinquency at its regular meeting on January 6, 1978 approved the Town of Meredith's application for a "Full-Time Investigator" (grant number 78-I-A1946 C-03). The project period was from January 6, 1978 until January 31, 1979. The approved budget was as follows:

Personnel Services	\$10,500.00
Travel	1,200.00
Total Amount	<u>\$11,700.00</u>

The source of funding was:

Federal	90%	\$10,530.00
State	5%	585.00
Meredith	5%	585.00
Total		<u>\$11,700.00</u>

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Town of Meredith, with a permanent population of 4,000 and a seasonal population of 15,000, requested a full-time investigator to handle in-depth investigations and follow-up of major crimes, particularly burglaries, larcenies and major vandalism. He would be expected to work closely with juveniles when involved in those crimes and to educate the public in crime prevention methods. In 1976, 24 burglaries were reported, 5 were cleared by arrest. In 1977, 54 burglaries were reported, 9 were cleared by arrest. It was anticipated that by adding an investigator to the staff this would increase the clearance rate, even though it might not reduce the crime rate.

## PROJECT OPERATION

The grant application indicated that an officer would be promoted from within the department to fill the position of investigator. After the grant was approved, the Meredith Police Department began testing its officers. Mark Gallagher, a full-time officer with the Meredith Police for the past four years, was selected and began his duties on March 1, 1978. As investigator, he reports directly to the Chief and is scheduled to work 40 hours per week on a flex-time basis.

Since beginning his job, Detective Gallagher has had the following training:

2/27 - 3/3	Crime Prevention Course
3/27 - 5/5	Juvenile Officer Training Course (Police Standards and Training Council)
10/9 - 10/13	Criminal Investigative School taught by F.B.I.
10/30 - 11/1	Child Abuse Conference - sponsored jointly by Police Standards and Training Council and Division of Welfare - Protective Service
11/6 - 11/10	Drug Investigation School - taught by D.E.A.

Since he has assumed his position, there have been 43 reported burglaries and 21 have been cleared by arrest. This is a marked improvement over last year when there were 54 burglaries and only 9 were cleared. Similar results have been obtained with theft. Detective Gallagher states that approximately 50 percent of the reported burglaries and thefts in Meredith are committed by juveniles. In fact, a recent arrest of a juvenile resulted in the clearing of 19 cases.

This summer, Detective Gallagher was the prosecutor for those Meredith Police Department cases which were heard in the Laconia District Court. Appearance and preparation for those cases took approximately two days a week.

He was instrumental in coordinating a juvenile school for full and part-time officers that was given for local police at Plymouth State College

by the Police Standards and Training Council. This school was given on Wednesday nights for seven weeks. Detective Gallagher was the instructor for the class on child abuse.

Since assuming his duties, Detective Gallagher has experienced those difficulties that naturally occur with a new position. He still has not moved into his office. The necessary office equipment for this position (Desk - Typewriter) were not requested and he has had to borrow the necessary things. Added to those problems, the Meredith Department has experienced internal problems. In addition to a high turnover rate among the officers, the chief has resigned. It is expected that the problems will soon be solved with the selection of a new chief which should occur soon.

As Detective Gallagher is new to this position, and because of the necessary time spent in training and the time spent handling prosecution of cases this summer, operating procedures have not been completely formulated. This has led to some confusion and some victims of crimes in Meredith have felt they have not been adequately dealt with. Detective Gallagher has now started working on these problems and expects to develop procedures so that the regular officers on the force will know what to expect from the detective, thereby not leaving the victims confused over who will be in contact with them. Previously, some officers took reports from victims and some said the detective would contact them. Sometimes this information was passed on to the detective; sometimes it was not.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The statistics for reported crime and cases that were cleared shows a definite improvement over prior years. The other stated objectives of the application are also being met. Detective Gallagher is developing contacts

with juveniles which will hopefully lead to sources of information to meet future needs. The funding of this additional position has given the Town's Police Department the potential of increased effectiveness. The turnover in the force and problems they have experienced with their chief has left this potential unrealized. In spite of that, this position has proven to be very valuable and it is recommended that second year funding be approved in accordance with established Commission policy.

It is also recommended that a review be made by Mr. Thompson, the Planner-Coordinator for this region, and the new chief, to insure that the necessary equipment is available to make the project as effective as possible.



**END**