

# RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL

No.

*Approved*

Resolved,

**That** the Board of Contract and Supply be requested to refrain from authorizing the purchase of compact cars, so called, for use by the Police Department.

IN CITY COUNCIL  
January 4, 1962  
Read and NOT Passed

*R. Everett Whelan*  
Clerk.

RESOLUTION  
OF THE  
CITY COUNCIL

IN CITY  
COUNCIL

DEC 7 - 1961

FIRST READING

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON  
~~COMMISSIONERS~~ *Public Safety*  
~~THOMAS W. KALAN~~ CLERK

*Mr. Jagan*

DEC 4 2 18 PM '61  
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE  
PROVIDENCE, R.I.

The City of Providence — Legislative Department  
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE—OFFICIAL MEMORANDUM

Providence, R. I., December 8, 1961

TO: Commissioner of Public Safety Francis A. Lennon

SUBJECT: Resolution re: Compact Cars.

CONSIDERED BY: City Council - December 7, 1961

ACTION TAKEN: To refer for study, report and recommendation attached copy of Resolution requesting the Board of Contract and Supply to refrain from authorizing the purchase of compact cars, so called, for use by the Police Department.

*Deborah W. Palan*

City Clerk

FRANCIS A. LENNON  
COMMISSIONER



ERIC PARKER  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
ASSISTANT

COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
209 FOUNTAIN ST., PROVIDENCE 3, RHODE ISLAND

December 29, 1961

To the Honorable the City Council of Providence

Honorable Gentlemen:

I have the honor to submit, in compliance with the wishes of your Honorable Body, a report of a study and my recommendations thereon, concerning a Resolution "requesting the Board of Contract and Supply to refrain from authorizing the purchase of compact cars, so called, for use by the Police Department."

It is assumed that the Resolution refers to the five compact sedans recently ordered for the Police Department. It is hoped that the motives for introducing this Resolution are based on sound technical knowledge of the facts and not on the recent news item reporting the Chicago department's intention to replace its six cylinder compacts with eight cylinder cars for use on its new high speed throughways. It is further hoped that this Resolution was introduced from a compelling sense of civic responsibility, and not from a capricious and frivolous desire to launch a pointless debate.

This Resolution departs considerably from the accepted principles of sound administration. It is hoped that the Honorable Council normally would not restrict the head of a hospital in determining what make of surgical equipment is required. It is also believed that the Honorable Council would not care to decide on the make or type of a revolver for the police department. The imposition of an "a priori" restriction of this sort can imply that the responsible administrators of the police department are not completely capable of making the operational decisions with which they are charged.

In the latter part of 1960, one of the compact manufacturers loaned the Police Department without cost two cars for comparison with other makes then in use. These cars performed quite satisfactorily. The department decided, after due consideration, to purchase a few pilot models for year 'round testing. The Providence Police are not by any means pioneers in this step. The department sincerely desires to operate its transport as economically as possible consistent with safety. Yet it must be borne in mind that the best way to determine whether these cars are suitable for the conditions peculiar to our city is to try them. It could be imprudent to impose a policy on the department without first determining a sound basis for such restriction. This determination cannot be reached by using a news item about Chicago as a basis for policy here in Providence.

There are several versions of the Chicago decision. One stated that the compact cars lacked the speed and horsepower for high speed thoroughways. Another stated that compact cars detracted from the image of the police officer as a figure of strength and authority. A third version was that these compact cars were not equipped with the heavy duty components so necessary for police work.

There are about one hundred police departments throughout the nation which use compact cars of the make being bought for Providence. They are being used in Los Angeles, St. Louis, Houston, Dallas, Jackson (Mich.), Fond-du-Lac, and Portsmouth, N. H. to name a few. In addition there are numerous departments using similar competitive compacts. The Providence Police have no preference among these and the make of compact being delivered just happened to be the low bidder.

The concept of size as the single critical factor in safety is not scientifically sound. It is by no means a rare occurrence in these United States for a small car to come out the winner against a large truck in a collision. The laws of mechanics and kinetics governing forces in motion determine in great part the degree of safety in vehicles. The speed of the vehicles, angle of impact, the engineering of the car, road conditions, and the human element - all these play important parts in the relative safety of the operators.

This report is not an argument for the universal use of compact cars in the department. The varied needs of the force are met by motorcycles, three-wheelers, passenger cars and several kinds of trucks. If size were the only criterion of safety, the department would have abandoned long ago the motorcycles, three-wheelers, and standard cars. It would have adopted, if funds were available, the largest cars built - Cadillacs for instance. Unhappily, such large cars would not suit the needs of the department.

"Automotive News" is the authority for the following comparisons of various sizes of interior space. The compact car being purchased ranges from 2.4" to 1.4" higher headroom than the three standard low priced cars now being used by the Providence Police Department. The legroom is 1½" shorter than the average of the three standard cars. The road clearance ranges from 0.4" to 1.3" more than the other three. The distance from the steering wheel to seat cushion is about 1" more than two of the standards. (No figure is available for the third.)

As for the dignity of the men of the department it must be remembered that a policeman's dignity is within himself and is enhanced by his uniform. It is not determined by the type of transportation he uses. His vehicle is only a means of carrying him from one place to another. Some departments - and excellent ones at that - still use bicycles for certain patrols. If the Honorable Councilman's published statement were true, our men who ride motorcycles and three-wheelers would be most undignified indeed.

From the standpoint of comfort, a reasonable degree is all that can be required. Even the most luxurious cars provide insufficient comfort for some people. Certainly the motorcycles - and even the standard cars - are not the most comfortable conveyances if a policeman were required to ride during his whole eight hour tour. Actually, members of the force are continuously dismounting for reasons of patrol, investigations, arrests, and traffic regulation. Furthermore, the mileage of any car during an eight hour tour seldom exceeds twenty-five miles. This charge is specious on its face.

City Council

December 29, 1961

-4-

The administration of the police department is seriously trying to improve the efficiency and economy of the department. Therefore, I recommend that this Resolution be disapproved.

Respectfully submitted,

*Francis A. Lennon*  
Commissioner of  
Public Safety

lr

IN CITY COUNCIL

JAN 4 - 1962

READ:

WHEREUPON IT IS ORDERED THAT  
THE SAME BE RECEIVED.

*D. Everett Whelan*  
CLERK



D. Everett Whelan  
City Clerk

## OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

CITY HALL

Vincent Vespia  
First Deputy  
William E. McWilliams  
Second Deputy

January 4, 1962

### COMMISSIONER OF THE ESTATE OF CHARLES H. SMITH

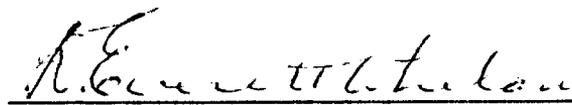
Mr. President Quigley calls for nominations for a Commissioner of the Estate of Charles H. Smith and Mr. Wexler nominates WALTER L. COSTELLO, of Providence; this nomination is seconded by Mr. O'Connor.

Mr. President Quigley calls for further nominations and there are none.

On motion of Mr. Wexler, seconded by Mr. O'Connor, it is voted that nominations be closed and that the Clerk be directed to cast one ballot for MR. COSTELLO as a Commissioner of the Estate of Charles H. Smith.

The Clerk casts one ballot for MR. COSTELLO as directed.

Mr. President Quigley thereupon declares WALTER L. COSTELLO duly elected as a Commissioner of the Estate of Charles H. Smith for the ensuing term of four years ending on the first Monday in January, 1966.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk



D. Everett Whelan  
City Clerk

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

CITY HALL

Vincent Vespia  
First Deputy  
William E. McWilliams  
Second Deputy

January 4, 1962

COMMISSIONER OF SINKING FUNDS

Mr. President Quigley calls for nominations for a Commissioner of Sinking Funds and Mr. Wexler nominates ROBERT H. GOFF of Providence; this nomination is seconded by Mr. O'Connor.

Mr. President Quigley calls for further nominations and there are none.

On motion of Mr. Wexler, seconded by Mr. O'Connor, it is voted that nominations be closed and the Clerk be directed to cast one ballot for MR. GOFF as a Commissioner of Sinking Funds.

The Clerk casts one ballot for MR. GOFF as directed.

Mr. President Quigley thereupon declares ROBERT H. GOFF duly elected a Commissioner of Sinking Funds for the ensuing term of three years ending on the first Monday in January, 1965.

D. Everett Whelan  
City Clerk



CITY OF PROVIDENCE  
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER  
PROVIDENCE, R.I.

WALTER H. REYNOLDS  
MAYOR

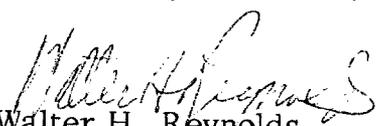
January 2, 1962

To the Honorable the City Council  
of the City of Providence

Gentlemen:

In accordance with the provisions of Section 111, Chapter 832 of the Public Laws of 1940, I have this day appointed Alex M. Burgess, M. D. of Providence, as a member of the Board of Hospital Commissioners for the ensuing term ending on the first Monday in January, 1965, and respectfully submit the same to you for your approval.

Respectfully submitted,

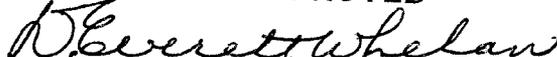
  
Walter H. Reynolds  
Mayor of Providence

WHR:JCS

IN CITY COUNCIL

JAN 4 - 1962

READ AND APPROVED

  
CLERK

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

THE CITY OF



PROVIDENCE

I, ALEX M. BURGESS, M.D., do

*solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States  
and of the State of Rhode Island and that I will faithfully discharge  
the duties of the office of*

Member - Board of Hospital Commissioners

*to the best of my ability.*

Alex. M. Burgess

*W*

I, Walter H. Reynolds, Mayor

*do hereby certify that on the* 14th *day of* March, *A. D.* 1962,

*I did administer unto* ALEX M. BURGESS, M.D.

*duly appointed to the office of*

Member - Board of Hospital Commissioners

*the above subscribed oath.*

Walter H. Reynolds



CITY OF PROVIDENCE  
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER  
PROVIDENCE, R.I.

WALTER H. REYNOLDS  
MAYOR

January 2, 1962

To the Honorable the City Council  
of the City of Providence

Gentlemen:

In accordance with the provisions of Section 121 of Chapter 832 of the Public Laws of 1940, I have this day appointed Mr. John A. Doherty of Providence as a member of the Water Supply Board for the ensuing term ending on the first Monday in January, 1966, and respectfully submit same to you for your approval.

Respectfully submitted,

Walter H. Reynolds  
Mayor of Providence

WHR:JCS

IN CITY COUNCIL

JAN 4 - 1962

READ AND APPROVED

  
CLERK

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

THE CITY OF



PROVIDENCE

I, JOHN A. DOHERTY, do

*solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States  
and of the State of Rhode Island and that I will faithfully discharge  
the duties of the office of*

Member - Water Supply Board

*to the best of my ability.*

*John A. Doherty*

I, Walter H. Reynolds, Mayor

do hereby certify that on the 9th day of January, A. D. 1962,

I did administer unto JOHN A. DOHERTY

*duly appointed to the office of*

Member - Water Supply Board

*the above-subscribed oath.*

*Walter H. Reynolds*