TOWN OF CENTRAL

SPECIAL CALLED MEETING OF TOWN COUNCIL

MARCH 12, 1980

The Council meeting was called to order at 6:30 P. M. with all members present.

The Mayor briefed the Counciled that the meeting was called for the purpose of going into executive session to discuss personnel matters on advice of Legal Council.

Councilman Frank Chalka then moved to go into executive session which was seconded by Councilman Hopkins. The vote was unanimous. Mr Barney D. Jones and Police Chief Arthur D. Besser, Sr was present. Mr Jones was asked to read a prepared statement which he did. See copy attached. Mr Jones' statement was all that was read, although he referred to other statments.

The Mayor then asked Police Chief Besser if he had any statement to offer relative to what Mr Jones had read. He said he would like to comment on each of the points Mr Jones had brought out. His comments were as follows:

School Crossing:	A-1	He stated that he had always contacted the School Prinicipal, School Secretary, or Catherine (Town Clerk) when he was unable to attend the crossing
Summons Books:	A-2	That he had called Columbia recently in order to see how to report these back cases.
Activity Log:	A-3	This was oversight on his part.
Town Park:	A-4	" "
Attendance	B-1	He had a problem with the Clemson dispatcher. Further he had never falisfied a report
Sick leave	B-2	No Comment
Town Vehicle	C-1	He said he had done this in bad judgement
Ducket Furneral Home	C-2	No Comment
Indebtedness	D-1	He had made arrangements to take care of these accounts.
Activity Report	E-1	He stated he was never over 5 to 10 minutes late. If he was he gave a full 8 hours by leaving later.

March 12 Minutes Continued

Beginning Work E-2 No Statement

The Mayor then ask if he had anything further to say, to which he replied, "That Police work was his first love, he had over 20 years service, and he hoped that the Council would understand.

The Mayor then excused Chief Besser and Mr Jones, while Council deliberated.

Mr Jones was called back to explain why he had placed Chief Besser on Administrative leave with pay. He was excused while the Council completed it's deliberation.

Mr Chalka moved that Chief Besser service be terminated. Mr Hopkins seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Mr Jones and Chief Besser was called back to the Council Room.

The Mayor stated. He appreciated what Chief Besser had done for the Police Department and appreciated him as a man. That The Council had voted unanimous for his dismissal. He ask the Chief if he had anything else to say. With nothing else to say the Council offered him the opportunity to resign, which he did and it was accepted. Copy of resignation attached.

The Council then entertained a motion from Mr Chalka to make Mr Frank Cantrell the new Police Chief. This was seconded by Mr. Porter. The vote was unanimous

Mr Jones was ask to call Mr Cantrell to see if he would accept. He reported back to council that he would and appreciated the Council's confidence in him.

Mr Jones ask that Council act upon the situation created by Lt Smith. He stated that Chief Besser and talked with him and explained the problem he had created. That he had offered to resign or do what Council suggested. In the meantime Lt Smith had gone back to his wife.

A motion was made by Mr Chalka to place Lt Smith on probation for a period of 45 days for conduct not becoming an officer. This was seconded by Mr Hopkins. The vote was unanimous. Mr Jones instructed to write Lt Smith to this.

No further business to come before Council it was moved to adjourn.

Respectively submitted

W. Herbert Thompson

Herbert Thompson, Councilman

STATEMENT OF BARNEY D. JONES, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

In the case of Arthur D. Besser, Sr., the Town records reveal the following:

A. As pertaining to his performance of duties:

1. Attendance at the school crossing, indicates that the first shift manned by Chief Besser was logged three (3) times in December, zero (0) in January, and three (3) times in February. He did not resume the watches in February until it was called to his attention, that Council wanted to know why it was not being manned. Upon hiring the Council had impressed upon him the importance of that part of the duties pertaining to this shift.

2. In checking the summons books of the patrolman, it was noted that Chief Besser had failed to have the Clerk of Court sign off on cases which had been tried as far back as October 23, 1978; November 30, 1978; January 5, 1979 and March 20, 1979. My understanding all cases were guilty cases, however, since the Clerk of Court has not signed off on the book, a copy of the ticket has not been forwarded as required to be entered on individual's records.

3. Activity log of patrolman have contained information as to road signs knocked down and needed to be put back. These were not reported to the Town Clerk for a work order. Only when a patrolman came by the clerk's office, making inquiry when the signs were going to be put back up, was a work order prepared. The Chief had apparently failed to ask for a work order upon review of the Patrols daily report.

4. The Town park was not locked for several months. This is one of the duties of the police department to lock and to open. Upon inquiry to the Chief, he stated that some had left the lock open and the lock as well as the chain had disappeared. We immediately obtained another chain and lock. It is now being locked. This was again failure to report something that needed taken care of.

B. As pertaining to attendance

1. Police Department records indicate there was no Activity report for the first shift on Sunday March 2, 1980. The Clemson Dispatcher has no record of Chief Besser reporting. Lt. Smith re-

ported to Chief Besser at 7 A. M. and chief Besser told him to secure. Chief Besser was assigned duty for that day.

2. Further, Chief Besser has had excessive sick days due to his major illness in January and September, 1979. He has taken all of his sick leave and annual leave as it accumulates. He called in on the 28th that he had red rash due to a reaction to medicine the Doctor had changed him to. Since he did not report to work on the 29th, Mayor Hollsday and I visited him in his home. The rash had cleared up and he stated he would be to work the next day. A check was made of his doctors since we wanted to verify his physical condition. The doctors stated that he had not been to see them. (see Town Clerk$ statement of his visiting the doctor on February 11. This could not be confirmed by the Doctors.)

C. As pertaining to misuse of a Town Vehicle.

1. Chief Besser admitted to the Police Committee with the Mayor present that he had purchased beer on several occassion and placed in the Police Vehicle on his way home. This was not placed in a sack, but carried out in plain sight, even though the personnel policy prohibits alcholic beverages being brought on to Town property.

2. At the Duckett Funeral home, Chief Besser appeared in Civilian Clothes and driving the Police Car assigned to him. His condition as reported by several person there and at the Burgermeister afterwards was such that it was not becoming an officer of his rank. Several parties, whom were present at both places are willing to testify if it comes to that. (see attached statement of Patrolman Cantrell in this regard.)

D. As pertaining to personal indebtedness:

1. On more than one occasion, the Town Clerk or myself has received inquiries as to how to collect an outstanding account from the Chief. We have referred them to the Chief. The statement given in return was that he had ignored all request for payment. Such inattention to personal finances in the position he holds with the Town, reflects on the Town.

E. As pertaining to activity reports containing erroneous information.

1. The activity report for March 1, 1980 indicates the

Chief reported in at 7. A. M., however, he did not check into the office until 9. A. M. Mr Ghalka, Mayor Holladay and myself were here at the time. The Mayor had check the town for him prior that time and was unable to locate. The third shift patrolman was relieved by the Chief calling him.

2. On other occasions he has relieved the third shift officer by telephone or radio, yet the logs show him assuming duty here at 7. A. M. See Officer Stephens statement to this effect.

In Summarizing, I would like to say that Chief Besser has shown his capablity to be a good officer. However, continued actions as enumerated herein are not reflective of the type of an individual which is need to fill this sensitive position. Such actions are demoralizing to those that look to him for leadership, as well as cause the citizens of the Town to lose confidence in their Police Department.

3/12/80
Date

Barney D. Jones
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