

## 110 Years of Change – and Still Changing

In January 1904, Ordinance #2 was passed by the town council of Granite Falls, creating the position of "Town Marshal" (Ordinance #1 had created the Town Clerk position), along with a whopping compensation package of \$60/month. The Marshal would "... hold office during the pleasure of the Mayor, as provided by the Laws of the State of Washington". **(Some things haven't changed, after all ... the pleasure of the Mayor still governs the employment of our police chief!).**

Ordinance No. 2.

An ordinance providing for the appointment and confirmation of a Town Marshal and for filling vacancies in said office: defining the duties and fixing the compensation of said Marshal of the Town of Granite Falls

Be it ordained by the Council of the Town of Granite Falls Wash.

Sec 1 The Mayor shall appoint, subject to confirmation by the Town Council, a Town Marshal who shall hold office during the pleasure of the Mayor as provided by the Laws of the State of Washington

Granite Falls wasn't a large city, so it's not surprising that within two years, Ordinance #29 was passed to extend the Marshal's responsibilities to include those of ex-officio Health Officer who, should he "hear of the existence of any malignant, contagious, or pestilential disease" should "investigate the same and adopt measures to arrest its progress". Those duties carried with it the right and the duty to investigate sick people and animals, going so far as to visit any store, home, or stable during daylight hours and even raise floors for inspection, to ensure public safety from dread disease. Two years later, in June 1907, the compensation package was improved to \$75/month (Ord #41)

but the duties of Health Officer were removed from the Marshal's responsibilities (Ord #42). The following March, compensation was reduced back to the original \$60/month (Ord #46). **(So, after five years, the salary was the same as it had started).**

But Granite Falls was growing rapidly, and in Oct 1909, police services doubled, with the addition of a Deputy Marshal, also paid \$60/month, who was to serve as Marshal between the hours of 7 PM and 7 AM. **(Round-the-clock protection!)** The city was also modernizing throughout the 'teens, installing public water systems and paving streets. These systems required planning and management, so the position of Water Superintendent and Street Superintendent (part of the 1902 definition of the Marshal's job) were needed, and often ascribed to a single person . . . the Marshal! Of course, the compensation packages had to change to meet the times, so we find that in 1942, it was stipulated (multiple ordinances) that the Marshal would receive \$40/month for his duties as Marshal, plus \$25/month for his duties as Street Superintendent, while the Night Marshal would receive \$90/month for his duties. Fortunately, the Water Superintendent was entitled to \$60/month, so when one person was Marshal, Street Super, and Water Super, his total salary was \$125/month.

**(These jobs carry more-than-normal risk!)**

Marshal Fred Ivey was involved in a downtown daylight shootout with bank bandits as early as 1914. Mrs. Florence Carpenter, wife of the Postmaster, shot it out with bandits attempting to burglarize the Post Office in 1923, but then-Marshal Gilbert missed the excitement. It was 1932, however, when Marshal Clyde Tissue succumbed to duty-related trauma. He contracted pneumonia while working on the city water system, and died within four days, at the early age of 50. He was succeeded by Guy Terhune as both Marshal and Water Superintendent. Marshal Terhune's closest call came when he was called upon to shoot a vicious stray dog. According to the local newspaper, "The 'crack' of the gun was followed by a vicious hollow sound as the bullet bounced back and hit Guy on the head after going clear through the dog and hitting a rock. The bullet hit an inch from his eye, but did not injure him, although the eye has turned a vivid purple." In a more serious situation, the newspaper reported that shortly after a man ran amuck, shooting and stabbing a woman in Granite Falls, Marshal Terhune "jumped from an automobile, stuck a gun in [his] ribs, and captured him without a struggle. [He] still had his loaded revolver on him."

**(Honest lawmen weren't going to get rich at their jobs)** None of our local lawmen filled their roles with the hopes of getting rich. They've all been dedicated to our community. That is as true today as it was back in the early days. We long ago moved to a City organization that has professional law officers who no longer hold the duty of Street Superintendent or Water Superintendent (thank goodness, we have other professionals in those jobs!). By the 1950s, the City dedicated about 18% of its annual budget directly to law enforcement (Marshal, Night Marshal, Police Court). But the City has grown significantly, the law enforcement task has grown in both size and



Officer Fred Ivey was killed in a Seattle shootout after leaving GF



Guy Terhune and his family in 1922  
Pearl and four daughters, Marie, Mabel, Helen, and Maxine

complexity, and property taxes (the main source of income the City uses to pay for everything) grew in much the same way. In 2013, even after all the belt-tightening, the City will finish the year having dedicated about **57%** of its General Fund directly to Police Department expenditure.

**(So why are we making another huge change in how we structure our law enforcement?)** Well, the Great Recession is to blame. Granite Falls has in general spent conservatively (well, maybe we spent a little

aggressively when times really were really great, developers were building, and a new school brought a significant “bubble” in tax revenues . . . but it wasn’t done with ill intent). Still, we didn’t build a big enough cash reserve, and when the recession resulted in a 25% drop in property values, our City income (taxes) dropped by 25%. Unfortunately, the water we buy didn’t drop, the road maintenance required didn’t drop, the sewers didn’t become less expensive to maintain, so the fundamental expenses of operating the City infrastructure didn’t drop, and extreme cost-cutting measures were taken. With overall law-enforcement (including County-related law enforcement costs) approaching **69%** of the total budget, the remaining portions therefore being relatively small (and somewhat inflexible, if City services were to continue), something really had to change . . . or be changed.



Clyde Tissue served as a motorman on a light rail line before coming to Granite Falls. He died in the line of duty as Water Superintendent and Marshal of Granite Falls – from pneumonia, after working on the water lines!

**(The 21<sup>st</sup> Century version of the Marshal/Streets/Water assignment)** No longer embodied in a single individual, the task of multi-year financing planning fell primarily to Police Chief Taylor and Public Works Supervisor Brent Kirk. They developed and refined tools to allow for robust planning and risk management. The City tried everything at its disposal, using money that would normally be put aside for capital improvements to water and sewer systems by “taxing” the revenue coming in from those systems, borrowing money from other funds . . . but nothing could make up for a 25% drop in

income (property taxes). Even now when we are seeing some recovery, initiatives passed during the boom times (stipulating that taxes could increase no more than 1%

per year, never dreaming that taxes would plummet) now mean that it would take us over 20 years to get back to the old level of revenue! We simply cannot continue to starve all City functions to make a balanced budget possible, and the largest “lever to pull” is the one that constitutes the majority of the City budget – law enforcement.

**(But we’ll lose our identity!)** We sincerely hope not! Our local law enforcement officers have always been dedicated to the health and well-being of our community. But the same is going to continue to be true as we move into an entirely new organizational alignment, with Snohomish County providing law enforcement for the City. We won’t get getting deputies who are “assigned” to Granite Falls – we’ll be getting deputies who **want** to serve in Granite Falls. We’ll have a police station that is always open during business hours (have you noticed how often lately the doors have been locked while the officers on duty are busy outside the office?). You’ll be able to conduct business at the station that you couldn’t previously get done without going to Everett. The uniforms will be a different color, but the logos on the cars are logos we’ve always seen around town, day and night. And the deputies will be as professional as any officers we’ve had, trained for the protection of our community.

**(Back to the Future!)** The local law enforcement structure in 2014 will not look like the one in 1904, or 1924, or 1954. It will be different. We should be equally confident it will be different in 2034 . . . we just have no idea in what way it will be different. We have not lost our community identity, but we have changed our financial model for paying for law enforcement. We’re taking advantage of the size of the County organization to get a fixed-price contract. If a car gets damaged, or an officer temporarily disabled, or any bizarre liability situation arises . . . it’s covered in our contract. We can focus on getting healthier financially as a City, paying off loans, reducing the internal “taxes” on water and sewer utilities to re-build their reserves for capital improvement, and in a couple years, hopefully, be arguing about how to spend money on community improvements rather than on how to shave pennies from an already over-strained budget.