

GROSSE POINTE CIVIC NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
OF GROSSE POINTE TOWNSHIP

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TOWNSHIP SURVEY

Within a few days, the Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research, at the request of the Citizens' Association, will begin a survey of the principal governmental activities in Grosse Pointe Township.

The purpose of the survey is to give citizens a fuller knowledge of their local government, just as stockholders in a corporation, through an annual audit, are shown the progress of their company.

The Bureau is absolutely non-political and is solely interested in furthering efficiency and economy in government. Its work is pursued, as far as possible, by co-operation with the personnel elected and appointed to office.

The Bureau does not contemplate making an extensive study of the villages. There appears no necessity for this. It is proposed, however, to cover all of the principal activities, and to make detailed studies where existent conditions warrant the effort.

The report of the Bureau's survey will be submitted to the principal village officials concerned for agreement on facts, and to the Trustees of the Bureau for approval. It then will be made available to the public, through the Citizens' Association. The Bureau will make every endeavor to make the survey impartial and trustworthy.

The Bureau expresses particular pleasure in undertaking this survey because of its close relations with a number of Grosse Pointe residents. The Grosse Pointe villages enjoy unique advantages and there are many auspicious circumstances to afford ground for the hope that they may become models of efficient government to inspire and help other communities. The work of the Bureau will, it is hoped, contribute to this end.

HIGH SCHOOL SITE

The District School Board at their regular November meeting acted upon the resolution passed by the electors at a special school meeting, October 24, and selected the property on the corner of Fisher Road and Grosse Pointe Boulevard for the proposed High School. It will be remembered that this is the same site selected before, and vetoed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

TRANSPORTATION

Convenient rapid transportation is doubtless the most engaging of the vital problems facing the people of Grosse Pointe at the present time.

Every home in the community is concerned in obtaining direct transit to the heart of Detroit. We are interdependent with the metropolis. At least twenty-five per cent of our population is required to make a daily trip to the city. The transportation of this portion of our people to and fro represents a great amount of time. Assuming that even 50% of our commuters use automobiles, there would be approximately 1,000 citizens relying upon public conveyances. Under our present system these commuters are not only losing valuable time but are subject to unreasonable inconveniences.

Then there is an intangible loss to builders in getting workmen from the city, and to estates in getting servants. The greatest loss is in real estate values. In the past year 3 homes were built in Grosse Pointe Shores, 30 in Grosse Pointe Farms, 36 in the Village and 295 in the Park, where city transportation is without walking distance.

GROSSE POINTE FLOW ASSOCIATION

Friday evening, November 30, the Grosse Pointe Flow Association met and elected their officers for the ensuing year. John McNear was elected President, Julius W. Berns, V. Pres.; Jason Moore, 2nd Vice-Pres.; Edward Marty, Sec.; and W. R. Brown, Treas.

The Association was organized to promote the dredging of the Black Marsh Ditch and Fox Creek to a depth that will create a flow or current in the Creek.

To further the cause a sum of \$289 was raised at the meeting for the hiring of legal talent to represent the deepening project before the Probate Court.

KERCHEVAL AVENUE EXTENSION

The Village of Grosse Pointe Farms has authorized the opening of Kercheval Avenue from the Fisher Road to the Moross Road.

According to the action of the Council taken some months ago the street is to be a 66 foot extension of its present course, connecting with the Grosse Pointe Boulevard at the Moross Road.

As is usually the case in the opening of a street at a late period of development, established properties are encountered. The extension takes in one residence on the Moross Road, one on the Kirby Road and the Gymnasium on Oak Street.

The Village of Grosse Pointe Farms called a public meeting Monday evening, December 17 for the consideration of the matter. Special notices were sent out to the property holders concerned.

Grosse Pointe Civic News

Grosse Pointe, Mich.

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TRANSPORTATION

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This is a community problem. What is needed is unity of action towards the best permanent solution for obtaining a rapid transit system that would serve the entire community. We must remember in this problem that Grosse Pointe does not stop at the Fisher Road. The four villages will have to work together if we are to get results. For instance, an ordinance passed by one of the villages at the present time granting a charter or special privileges to a transportation company might check the development of a proper solution.

Temporary relief may be had by enforcing reasonable schedules of the trolleys and busses now running. Complaint is prevalent that busses wait to start in ahead of trolley cars, and jitneys run in ahead of busses, with the result that the three classes of conveyances are bunched and the public is the worse off for the competition.

However, the regulation of the present facilities will not solve the problem in a manner that will provide for the growth of the area to be served. Some of the numerous factors that enter into a permanent solution are: type of conveyance; ownership of equipment—private, D. U. R. or municipal; route to be taken—which brings up the matter of widening Lake Shore Drive and re-routing the car line from Weir Lane north; rates to be charged; franchises; and time schedule.

STATE AND COUNTY TAXES DUE

The state and county tax for Grosse Pointe will be payable to the township treasurer from December 10, 1923 to March 10, 1924.

Taxes will be collected at the Grosse Pointe Park Municipal Bldg., on Jefferson Avenue and Maryland Avenue, every day except for the following dates, when collection will be made at the places indicated:

Dec. 14 at Grosse Pointe Shores Municipal Bldg.

Dec. 21 at Grosse Pointe Farms Municipal Bldg.

Dec. 28 at Grosse Pointe Township Hall.

Jan. 11-18-25 and Feb. 1-8-15-22-29 at the county treasurer's office in the county building.

1924 dog tax can be paid to the township treasurer in the Grosse Pointe Park Municipal Bldg.

The tax rate this year is \$9.24 per \$1,000. The rate last year was \$9.55, or \$0.31 more than this year.

Ninety-four per cent of last year's taxes have been paid to the Township treasurer to date, amounting to \$508,000.00.

Regardless of the percentage of the taxes paid to the township by the taxpayers, the state requires the township to pay its state tax within a certain time. The township accordingly, often must borrow funds to meet this obligation, which means an unwarranted expense.

This is the first year that the township treasurer of Grosse Pointe has collected this tax on a salary basis and not on a commission.

The penalty for tardiness in payments is 4% after the first 30 days or Jan. 10. The county treasurer gets the tax roll after the township treasurer has made his return, and he adds ¾% per month for delinquency in addition to the 4%.

There is a collection fee of 1% on all taxes.

HELPING STUDENTS THRU COLLEGE

The increased attendance at our high school is already developing a need, which, it is hoped, public-spirited citizens will soon take steps to fill. Some high school students in every graduating class are ambitious to go to college, but cannot do so without financial assistance from the outside. To help such students by means of loans, the idea of scholarship fund associations has been developed, and many of these associations have for years functioned successfully.

In Detroit, for instance, scores of high school graduates have been enabled to attend the University of Michigan through loans made to them by the Detroit Scholarship Fund Association. Without this assistance these students would have been deprived of the benefit of a higher education.

Loans made to a student for college expenses are repaid by him or her as soon as possible after graduation from college. Thus the money constitutes a revolving fund and is of permanent usefulness. The original capital is secured through public subscriptions. It remains unimpaired since no salaries are paid, and expenses are but nominal. In most cases the loans are covered by notes which begin to bear interest one year after the student's graduation from college.

Awards of scholarship loans are made only to students who need financial assistance and whose character and scholastic standings are high.

The Citizens' Association is ready to help form an organization for the above purpose and will be glad to hear from any persons interested.

The installation of the huge drain by Detroit on the Cadieux Road and the subsequent filling over of what was once the ditch permits the paving of Cadieux Road up to Mack Avenue, and it is expected that this work will be started by the Villages of Grosse Pointe and Grosse Pointe Park.

The Sinking Funds of The Village of Grosse Pointe

Behind the substantial financial status of the Village of Grosse Pointe is an interesting story of how sinking funds are managed for the benefit of the tax payers.

Until the year 1919, the sinking funds underlying the bond issues of this Village were in the condition of many other municipalities of the State. That is to say, sinking funds were run somewhat true to name, and were sunk in a sea of more immediate demands for money, and bond issues were left to be paid by the taxpayers of a future day. This postponement of obligations was stopped by the council of 1919. D. M. Ferry, Jr., as chairman of the ways and means committee of the Village council, has been instrumental in instituting a schedule of payments, to be made from year to year from taxation, which will bring the sinking funds to their proper totals.

During the war years of 1917 and 1918, the Village purchased respectively \$7,000 and \$4,500 Liberty Bonds. This, with some cash, practically constituted the sum total of the sinking funds, at that time. Today the funds for every bond issue are completely up to date. Following is a brief outline of how the eight funds are managed under the present system:

Cash: \$21,700.11 (soon to be invested).

Municipal bonds:

\$2,000, City of Ford 5% (paving)
\$6,000, Ironwood 5% (water)

Government bonds:

\$35,450, Liberty loan and war savings stamps.

Grosse Pointe Village bonds:

\$ 5,000 Village sewer 4½%
31,500 Village paving 4¼%
10,000 Village dock 4½%
8,000 Village water 4¼%

The last four items are unique in that they show a municipality loaning money to itself and saving the expense of selling them

in the market. For example, when the dock bonds for \$10,000 were ready the Village bought them as an investment for one of the sinking funds.

Such a system of financing necessitates a definite policy of action. The Village books are kept up to date in accordance with an approved method established by an experienced accountant. Each department has an account and shows its annual expenditures. The tax levy each year is based on a budget system. When money is received from a bond issue, expenditures are charged against that account. Miscellaneous receipts are classified. Audits by certified accountants are rendered quarterly to the council.

It is illegal for a Village Treasurer to hold office more than two years, and just about the time a Treasurer acquires efficiency in handling funds, his successor takes over his duties, hence, the council thought it the better part of wisdom to establish connections with some fiscal agency of recognized standing to safeguard the continuity of management of its invested funds. The First National Company was appointed and now has in its possession as fiscal agents for the Village all its invested funds, for which it accounts to the Village annually.

The council has attempted to finance all permanent improvements by bond issues believing that such improvements as sewers, water mains, and paving, which are to be used not only by the present generation but by the next generation, should be partly paid for by future users. In these developments but one large improvement a year is made and the legal bonding limit is never exceeded. Sewer and water bonds are issued for 30 years, while paving bonds are for 15 or 20 years.

Such financing for the past few years has put the Village of Grosse Pointe in a very advan-

tageous position. One issue of bonds was sold about a year ago on a 4.16% basis. This was better than any similar issue of municipalities and about on a par with U. S. Government bonds. Further, the tax rates have been reduced from 16.10 in 1920 to 14.11 in 1923. The Village is often consulted by officials of other villages concerning its financial methods and system of book-keeping.

DETROIT AND BLACK MARSH DITCH

In the development of the territory northwest of Grosse Pointe Park, the City of Detroit has installed two storm sewers that run thru a portion of Grosse Pointe Park on their way to the Black Marsh Ditch.

One of the sewers enters the Ditch at Bedford Road and the other at the Cadieux Road. The Bedford Road sewer cost \$293,306 and is 8 feet 9 inches in diameter where it enters the Ditch. The Cadieux Road sewer cost \$51,330 and is 9 feet 3 inches wide. The tops of both sewers are within a few inches of the surface of the ground, and they are so huge that the bottom of them is below the surface of the water in the Black Marsh Ditch.

The City engineers' are not disconcerted over this condition. Experience has proven that the water will back up from the Ditch and no drainage will take place excepting in the spring when freshets move the water of the Ditch into the lake. Nevertheless such a drain is considered practical.

In connecting the two sewers to the Ditch, Detroit has availed itself of the first means of outlet for this storm water. The City is indifferent to the local controversy on the Black Marsh Ditch. Detroit engineers take the position that the Ditch is adequate as it stands for their purpose. If it is deepened or made into a sewer, it will serve their purpose all the more. If it is abandoned and filled up, the City will continue its sewers to Lake St. Clair.

WORK STARTED ON HANSTEIN SCHOOL

Ground has been broken for the much needed addition to the Hanstein School. The contracts for the building were let to the F. Cooper Co., general work at \$73,885; Jas. Partlind, plumbing, \$23,100; and Kechneau Co., electric work, \$3395. This makes the total cost of construction \$100,380. After deduction for architect fees there will be approximately \$9,000 left for furnishings. The bond issue on the addition was \$115,000.

BOND SALE IN GROSSE POINTE PARK

Grosse Pointe Park sold \$48,000 of bonds to the Detroit Trust Co., December 4, on a $4\frac{3}{4}$ per cent basis and a premium of \$1145. The bonds were authorized by the people as 5% bonds at a special election November 5, for the purpose of purchasing condemned

property adjacent to the village hall. At the same election a \$65,000 bond issue was authorized for laying water mains along Essex Drive, Mack and Kercheval avenues, and these bonds will be sold on the market in the spring a short time before the work is started.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

There are 1153 pupils attending the five schools in school district No. 1. Of these 270 are high school pupils and 883 elementary. The buildings are crowded beyond capacity with this enrollment. The Cadieux School has found it necessary to conduct the kindergarten class in a cottage loaned to the school by D. M. Ferry, Jr. The Hanstein addition will relieve conditions both at the Cadieux and the Hanstein Schools, as many pupils from the Mack Avenue district are now attending the Cadieux School.

THE LAW ABOUT DOG LICENSES

It is unlawful for any person to own any dog of four months or over, unless the dog is licensed and wears a collar with metal license tag attached.

Every dog shall at all times between sunset and sunrise be confined upon the premises of its owner or custodian, except where such dog is otherwise under the reasonable control of some person.

If any dog tag is lost, it shall be replaced without cost by the county treasurer, upon application by the owner of the dog, and upon production of such license and a sworn statement of the facts regarding the loss of the tag.

Dog licenses and tags can be obtained from the township treasurer, Alfred J. Garska, at the Grosse Pointe Park Municipal Bldg.

The dog tax for 1924 is \$3 for male and \$6 for female dogs.

Return Postage Guaranteed.

CITIZENS ASSOCIATION GROSSE POINTE, MICH.

Incidents ought not to govern policy,
but policy incidents.

—Napoleon.

Mr. Bernard B. Vogt,
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Detroit, Michigan
Permit No. 335