

GROSSE POINTE CIVIC NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
OF GROSSE POINTE TOWNSHIP

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JULY, 1925

Number 1

ADJOURNED ANNUAL MEETING OF SCHOOL ELECTORS WEDNESDAY, JULY 15th
at 8:00 P. M.
Cadieux School,
399 St. Claire Ave.

SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTS DR. L. E. MAIRE

The annual school election June 8th resulted in the election of Dr. L. E. Maire as a trustee over Dr. Walter G. Merdian, candidate for reelection. The question of voting bonds to the amount of \$255,000 for the purchase of a high school site also carried by a large majority.

A total of nine hundred and thirty-nine votes were cast for the candidates for trustee while eight hundred and twenty-four persons voted on the question of issuing bonds. Following are the returns by precincts.

For School Trustee (three year term). Dr. Lewis E. Maire, Precinct 1, 204; Precinct 2, 171; Precinct 3, 87; Precinct 4, 92; total 554.

Dr. Walter G. Merdian, Precinct 1, 61; Precinct 2, 239; Precinct 3, 63; Precinct 4, 22; total 385.

Precinct 4, (Grosse Pointe Shores) gave Dr. Maire a majority of better than four to one, while his majority in Precinct 1 (Grosse Pointe Village) approached that ratio. Dr. Merdian gained a substantial majority in Precinct 2, (Grosse Pointe Park.)

On the question of issuing bonds, all precincts made returns strongly in favor of the issue as shown by the following summary:

For the issue of \$255,000 School Site Bonds:

Precincts	Yes	No.
1	212	26
2	302	59
3	118	28
4	64	15
	696	128

Sale of the bonds voted June 8th was negotiated at the meeting of the trustees June 29th. Five bids were received, the best offer being made by the Detroit Trust Company and Watling, Lerchen & Company bidding jointly, who offered a premium of \$7,945.80 on \$255,000 bonds bearing 4¼% interest. The issue runs for a thirty year period and provision is made for a sinking fund to retire the bonds at maturity.

The annual meeting of the school electors held in Cadieux School at the conclusion of the voting was widely attended by voters of the district. However, little business was transacted. After a brief talk by the retiring president, Walter G. Merdian who outlined the work of the board during the year and the formal adoption of a resolution relative to opening a street adjoining the school site in Windmill Pointe, the meeting adjourned until Wednesday, July 15th.

The postponing of the business to come before the electors until the adjourned meeting is necessary because the fiscal year of the district does not end until July 1st and the business of the board cannot be closed until after that date. It is important that electors be present for the adjourned meeting. Questions of policy that may properly come before the electors will be considered and the audit now being prepared by Ernst and Ernst will be presented.

The meeting of the school electors as provided in the Michigan Statutes offers citizens an opportunity in guiding certain work of the school district. It is important that a representative and large group attend in order that the school trustees may have an expression of the electors' desires on questions of public interest. The adjourned annual meeting this year is Wednesday evening, July 15th, at the Cadieux School.

SPECIAL ELECTION Grosse Pointe Park

Monday, July 13th the voters of Grosse Pointe Park will ballot on the question of authorizing several bond issues for a number of local improvements. Each bond issue will be submitted as a separate question on the ballot, giving the voter an opportunity to vote on any or all of the issues.

Following are the amount and the purpose of the several issues:

For the widening of Mack Avenue to a width of sixty feet extending from the easterly to the westerly limits of the Village, \$350,000.

For the installation of street lighting equipment on Kercheval Avenue, \$90,000 is requested. The installation of fixtures on Kercheval Avenue will practically complete the street lighting system in Grosse Pointe Park.

For the extension of the police and fire signal system, a \$20,000 bond issue is requested.

For street resurfacing \$40,000 is asked.

The total bonds to be voted amount to a half million dollars. All bonds are to run for thirty years and to bear interest not exceeding 4¾ per cent.

Due to the comparatively large issues to be voted and the number of improvements to be undertaken, it is expected that a representative number of citizens will show their interest by voting July 13th. Polls in the basement of the Municipal Hall will be open from 8:00 A. M. to 8:00 P. M.

NOTICE TO WATER CONSUMERS

The following notice has been sent to all persons in the three villages receiving water from the Grosse Pointe Pumping Station:

As it has become impossible to maintain adequate water pressure to properly supply all demands during the period of excessive heat, you will not be permitted to use lawn and garden sprinkling systems between the hours of ten o'clock in the morning and seven o'clock in the evening during the months of June, July, and August.

Grosse Pointe Civic News

Grosse Pointe, Mich.

P. O. Address, 316 E. Jefferson, Detroit.

H. P. Breitenbach, Consulting Editor.

H. G. Fishack, Editor.

Printed once a month as the official publication of the Citizens Association of Grosse Pointe Township, under the authority of the following board of directors:

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Editor's Note. This article appeared in the June issue of the "Civic Searchlight" published by the Detroit Citizens' League.

"NOT GUILTY, BUT DON'T DO IT AGAIN"

In Grosse Pointe Park an issue growing out of the spring election was joined recently with reference to challengers serving in election booths in order to watch proceedings and be assured of accurate, honest voting.

The Citizens Association of Grosse Pointe Township, an organization similar to the Detroit Citizens League, and the Progressive Party, assigned challengers for the election. Two challengers, according to the evidence, were accepted as such during the day, but at eight o'clock in the evening were ejected by police officers when the counting of ballots began. Complaint was made that state law had been violated by the ejection. The case was heard, in two sessions of the Justice Court, by Justice Arthur E. Gordon.

Though the evidence was fairly clear and many essential points were admitted by both contending parties, the prosecution was weak in spots, due to technical failure to comply at all points with the letter of the law. It was not charged that there had been dishonesty in voting or in counting the ballots. The case hinged on ejection of the challengers from the booth.

Although the challengers had been accepted during the day, and ejected during the count, the case was dismissed by Justice Gordon because of certain law points involved. Naturally it attracted considerable interest, inasmuch as the Detroit suburb seeks to maintain honest elections on a plane similar to that which has prevailed in the City of Detroit for many years. The result of the court case, while not gratifying to the complaining organizations, no doubt will have a wholesome effect on future elections. The Citizens' Association is doing its utmost to develop a civic spirit in the Grosse Pointe communities. We are reminded of the Scotch verdict: "Guilty but not proven."

Our best wishes are extended to the Grosse Pointe citizens who are seeking to prevent even the appearance of evil or dishonesty in the exercise of the greatest privilege which any American citizen enjoys.

Village taxes are now payable at all village halls. Penalties will be added to all taxes paid after August 1st.

BOND SALE

May 21st bids on water extension bonds, to the amount of \$75,000, were received by Grosse Pointe Village. Eleven firms participated in the bidding, the best offer being made by the Detroit Trust Company.

The Detroit Trust Company offered to buy, at par, plus a premium of eight dollars, \$60,000 of the bonds, bearing 4 per cent interest, and \$15,000 bearing 4½ per cent. The average yield on the entire issue is 4.04 per cent. Members of the Ways and Means Committee of Grosse Pointe Village state in their report of the sale that the bonds brought the best price of any issue sold in Michigan during the last fifteen years.

Approximately \$60,000 of the issue will be used to finance water main extensions now under way. This work includes the laying of mains on Mack and Charlevoix Avenues, Cadieux, Lakeland, Neff and Fisher Roads.

SUMMER SESSION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Grosse Pointe Schools are holding a summer session in George Defer School for the eight weeks period from June 29th to August 21st. Instruction is offered in all subjects in grades five, six, seven, and eight and in two high school courses, Algebra I and History I. The fact that one hundred and fifty-three pupils were enrolled the first day indicates the interest of the district in the project. Seven teachers and A. H. Clark, principal, make up the summer school staff.

In addition to the subjects offered the board received a number of requests for other high school subjects. In many of these cases only one or two persons requested the same subject, making it impractical to give the courses. Pupils desiring courses not offered by Grosse Pointe Summer school are taking work in Detroit High Schools at the expense of the local board. Ten pupils of the high school have taken advantage of this arrangement to complete work in which they were deficient or to gain additional credits. It is expected the plan will prove less expensive than providing teachers to instruct in a wide range of subjects in the local summer school.

APPRAISAL OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Editor's Note—Following is a continuation of the article appearing in the June issue of the "Civic News" dealing with the progress made in the School Board's administration of the past year. Recommendations made by the Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research are used as standards to indicate the progress made.

Dual Holding of Office

The holding of office by school board members in either the villages or township was discussed in the Bureau report. With respect to the dual holding of township and school offices, it stated that such practice was

"Against the public interest in that the duties of the two are in some respects incompatible. An example of this lies in that 'the township Board is vested with the powers and duties formerly given to school inspectors.' (See page 250 Township Officers' Guide.) For the Township Board, acting as school inspectors, to pass on the work of certain of their own members who are on the School Board is largely to nullify the intent of this provision. Again the many specific provisions of the law relating to the duties of the Township Supervisor and the Township Clerk with relation to the school district are such as to make such dual holding of office against the public interest."

The dual holding of office by school board officials has been further complicated during the year by the appointment of the clerk of the school board, who is also clerk of the township, to the position of business manager for the school district.

No provision of Rural Agricultural School Act or amendments to it explicitly prohibits the dual holding of township and school offices or prevents elected school officials from drawing compensation for services performed in addition to those of the elected office.

However, Section 6 of Act 81 of the Public Acts of 1919, which amended the Rural Agricultural School Law of 1917, provides that

"any school district formed under the provisions of this act in township school districts shall be subject to all the provisions of the act under which said township district is organized not inconsistent with the provisions of this act. All other rural agricultural schools organized under the provisions of this act shall have the powers and privileges conferred upon graded school districts by the laws of this state, all the general provisions of which relating to primary schools shall apply and be in force in said district, except such as shall be inconsistent with the provisions of this act."

Both section 21 of Act 117 of 1909 under which township districts operate, and section 49 of the general school laws of the state (revision of 1923)

which affect primary and graded schools, provide that

"It shall be illegal for any member of the district board to perform any labor except as provided in this act, or furnish any material or supplies for the school district in which he is an officer and he shall not be personally interested in any way whatever, directly or indirectly, in any contract with the district in which he holds office."

It would appear that the sections quoted would make it illegal for any member of the school board to serve in any additional salaried capacity for the school district.

The legality of this procedure was raised by a member of the Citizens' Association, and at the direction of its Board of Directors, the question was submitted to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. His written opinion that the practice was illegal was communicated by the Association to the School Trustees at their meeting, June 22nd. A written opinion by the school district's attorney is now being prepared.

At the present time Grosse Pointe schools are the only ones operating under the Rural Agricultural School Act, and even in this district are not entitled to the benefit of state aid as provided by the law. The law was undoubtedly planned to encourage the teaching of agricultural and home economics in rural communities where pupils were not receiving the advantages of such training. To assist in the maintenance of such schools, provision was made for state aid amounting to one thousand dollars a year, in addition to four hundred dollars a year for each vehicle used for the transportation of pupils. However, the law provided that a district having within its limits a village of more than two thousand population was not entitled to state aid provided in the act.

Therefore Grosse Pointe schools do not receive this state aid and, it is believed, enjoy no advantages under the Rural Agricultural Act that are not procurable under the general school laws of the state. The fact that the only rural agricultural school district of the state exists in this community which is neither rural nor interested primarily in agriculture may be mentioned as unusual.

In conclusion, it is believed that progress in the administration of Grosse Pointe schools has been made during the past year and that in many cases, the present board has been conscientious in its efforts to improve existing conditions. The

fact that a thorough audit of school accounts and the development of an improved budget is under way may be cited as one example. However, other conditions as pointed out by the Bureau of Governmental Research have been overlooked and are set down here in order that the improvements suggested may be brought to the attention of the community and school board.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Graduation of the first class from Grosse Pointe High School was held in the Defer School, Wednesday evening, June 24th.

Dr. William D. Henderson, Director of Extension at the University of Michigan, gave the address which was preceded by a short group of vocal solos. Dr. Henderson's talk was filled with solid, well founded philosophy and advice to the class, and his keen humor and easy deliberate manner added greatly to his message.

At the conclusion of the address, A. H. Clark, Principal, introduced to the audience the class of twenty-four members, making special mention of those who had maintained a high scholastic record during their course. Diplomas were then presented by W. L. Walling, Superintendent of Schools.

The entire program was well received and set a high standard for subsequent graduating classes.

VILLAGE BUDGETS ADOPTED

At the June meetings of the villages' councils, budgets for the following year were adopted. A brief review of these financial documents is given here, but due to lack of space, no attempt is made to discuss the various budget policies that prevail.

Grosse Pointe Park

Following is the annual budget for Grosse Pointe Park as passed by the Council June 3, 1925 with a comparison of the budget of the previous year. No detail other than given here is shown in the minutes of Council proceedings.

	1924	1925
General Fund	\$157,000	\$180,500.00
Highway Fund	30,000	40,000.00
Interest Fund	28,000	38,000.00
Sinking Fund	10,000	10,000.00
	\$225,000	\$268,500.00

Because of lack of supporting data an effort to determine causes for the increase of \$43,500 was not made. However, the increase of \$23,500 in the general fund is in part due to the following salary increases:

	1924	1925
Chief of Police	\$3,300	\$3,600
Sergeant of Police	2,400	2,700
Highway Com.	2,500	2,800
Treasurer	3,000	3,200
Clerk	3,800	4,300
Assessor	1,100	1,200
Assistant Clerk		1,500
Asst. Water Com.		2,400

The total increases granted and the creating of the new positions of Assistant Clerk and Assistant Water Commissioner amounts to \$5,600 which is a comparatively small amount of the total increase.

Grosse Pointe Village

For Grosse Pointe Village the following budget has been approved:

Budget Divisions	Appropriations	
	1924-1925	1925-1926
Administration	\$ 36,355.00	\$ 19,745.00
Police	28,920.00	38,080.00
Fire	29,000.00	31,690.90
Public Works	10,490.00	9,840.00
Highway	33,193.53	58,061.74
Disposal Plant	14,938.00	18,210.00
Signal System	2,692.55	2,768.00
Water Cost		16,577.52
Int. & Sinking Fund.	56,449.66	61,689.89
St. Paul St. Opening	13,794.82	
Contingents	43,273.62	
Capital Expenditures		38,208.52
Total	\$269,112.18	\$294,870.17

Estimates of revenue from which the present year's activities will be financed, are:

Cash Balance (March 1, 1925)	\$ 35,104.98
General Tax	202,525.68
Special Assessment Tax	20,000.00
Due from County Treasurer (delinquent taxes)	7,710.20
Interest and Penalties	8,000.00
Permits and Licenses	1,000.00
Court Fines	1,600.00
Water Revenue	18,129.31
Misc. Revenue	800.00

The budget for 1925-1926 is higher by \$25,757.99 than the budget of the previous year. Increases have been allowed in several departments as follows: Police, \$8,160.00; Fire, \$2,690.00; Highway, \$24,863.21; Disposal Plant, \$3,272.00; Signal System, \$75.45; Interest and Sinking Fund, \$5,539.73. Reduction in administration from \$36,355.00 in 1924-25 to \$19,745.00 in this year's budget has

been made, as has a reduction of \$650.00 in the Department of Public Works appropriation.

The amount appropriated for capital expenditures, \$38,208.52, is planned to finance the following improvements: extension of fire and police signal system, \$3,938.64; municipal hall site, land contract, \$1,720.00; municipal building and site improvements, \$7,250; Rivard Boulevard storm sewer, \$3,726; St. Paul Street opening, \$16,937.18; ash and garbage truck, \$3,850.00; street signs and fixtures, \$786.70.

Grosse Pointe Farms

The total budget for Grosse Pointe Farms for the present fiscal year is \$236,828.87, divided as follows:

Interest and Sinking Fund	\$46,281.01
Highway Fund	
Salaries & Labor	14,000.00
Material for Roads	1,700.00
Road Oil	500.00
Repair of Roads & Misc.	8,000.00
Garbage Collection	4,000.00
Sewer Construction and Repair	3,000.00
Snow Removal	800.00
Total Highway Fund	\$32,000.00
General Fund	
Park	\$ 3,000.00
Street Lighting	14,500.00
Fire & Police	70,000.00

Building Inspector	2,500.00
Miscellaneous	24,000.00
Widening Grosse Pointe Boulevard	10,000.00
Kerby & Mack Avenue Property	7,459.03
Water Works Purchase	17,288.83
Municipal Site Improvements	1,800.00
Kercheval Avenue Opening	8,000.00

Total General Fund \$158,547.86
Total Budget 1925-26 \$236,828.87

Public improvements to be financed from taxes this year total \$44,547.86.

The figures for 1925-1926 are lower by \$5,607.00 than those of the previous year. The budget for 1924-1925 totaled \$242,435.87, totals for the various funds being Sinking & Interest Fund, \$37,295.29; Highway Fund, \$52,800.00; General Fund, \$152,340.58. The large amount in the Highway Fund last year was due to an item of \$20,000 to take care of a previous deficit.

The assessed valuation in Grosse Pointe Farms for the present year has been fixed at \$15,886,050, giving a tax rate of \$15.00 per \$1,000 assessed valuation as compared with a rate of \$16.00 per \$1,000 for 1924.

Grosse Pointe Shores

The amount of money to be raised from taxes in Grosse Pointe Shores

totals \$55,412.40, or, two percent of the assessed valuation of \$2,281,120, or a rate of \$20.00 per \$1,000 assessed value. No formal estimate or budget of proposed expenditures is compiled by Grosse Pointe Shores. The figure of two percent of the assessed valuation is appropriated in a lump sum after a review of department expenditures of the past year has been made to estimate the total funds needed. The policy of appropriating taxes in a lump sum may be justifiable in a municipal organization the size of Grosse Pointe Shores and where the operation of all departments are under the direction of a single individual, but even under these conditions, a segregated or detailed budget is considered by many as better municipal procedure.

The budgets of Grosse Pointe Park, Grosse Pointe Farms and the lump amount requested by Grosse Pointe Shores are not complete in that no estimate of revenues other than taxes is given. Miscellaneous revenues, fees, court fines, etc., are not estimated and considered as a part of funds to be available for operation of the village. In the strictest sense these estimates are not budgets of the funds to be spent by the village but are estimates of tax money to be spent in partial operation of the government.

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CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

GROSSE POINTE, MICH.

The most successful government is the one which is able to secure the most interested non-partisan service from its citizens.

O. E. CARR, City Manager,
Fort Worth, Texas.

Mr. Bernard B. Vogt,
696 Cadieux Rd.,
Grosse Pte. Village, Mich.

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Detroit, Michigan
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