

GROSSE POINTE CIVIC NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
OF GROSSE POINTE TOWNSHIP

Vol. 3

MAY, 1926

Number 11

NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS PLANNED

First units of two new schools will be erected in Grosse Pointe immediately, if plans formulated by the present school board are carried forward. One unit will be erected on the Windmill Pointe site at Essex Drive and Beaconsfield Avenue, the other at Kercheval Avenue and Cadieux Road. According to present plans, the buildings are to be completed and in operation by February, 1927.

In order that the new buildings may fit the needs of the areas they will serve, the school board will employ an expert in school design to develop the educational plan and otherwise advise the board in matters relating to the new schools. His work will include a comprehensive study of the population and area to be served, in order to determine the capacity of the building. The educational program and the educational plan will also be thoroughly worked out.

These phases of school planning were not considered in building the George Defer School. As a result, the building was not properly planned to serve the district's needs and was filled to more than its capacity soon after it was opened. Such planning was done on the new high school only after the original plans for the building had been seriously criticized by the State Department of Public Instruction and by Detroit school officials.

The buildings to be erected this year will be first units of complete buildings. Provision will be made so that increased population in the school area can be served by building other units of the complete plan.

A delegation of parents interested in the school at Windmill Pointe attended the school board meeting on April 14th. They learned of the plans already under way and were told that everything was being done to construct a properly planned building within the shortest time possible.

SCHOOL ELECTIONS

An important date in the election calendar of Grosse Pointe is Monday, June 14th, the date set at the annual meeting of school electors last July for the election of school trustees. Two members will be elected to the school board at that time.

That our school board should be composed of men of sound integrity and business ability is self evident. The problems confronting Grosse Pointe schools have grown to such proportions as to demand the best talent of the community to serve in determining school policies. For this reason, the attention of all qualified voters of the district should be given to the selection of the best candidates available.

To qualify as a school elector a person must be twenty-one years old, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of the school district for at least three months; and, further, must be the parent or legal guardian of a child of school age (age 5 to 20) or a property owner who pays taxes for school purposes.

A list of candidates and their qualifications for office will appear in the June issue of the "Civic News."

GROSSE POINTE SHORES ELECTION

Election of village officials in Grosse Pointe Shores will be held Tuesday, May 18th. The following candidates for re-election are without opposition:

President (one-year term)—George Osius.

Clerk (one-year term)—William C. Roney.

Trustees (two-year term, three to be elected)—C. J. Chandler, H. M. Jewett, Wm. E. Roney.

Mr. Benjamin S. Warren has been elected a member of the Executive Board of the Citizens' Association to fill the vacancy due to the resignation of Mrs. H. H. Sanger. Mr. Warren has also accepted the chairmanship of the finance committee.

HIGH SCHOOL ELEVATIONS ADOPTED

Sketches of two proposed elevations for the Grosse Pointe High School were presented at a joint meeting of the School Board and Building Committee, April 14th.

Two distinct types of architecture were considered in developing the elevations, Gothic and Colonial. Members of the School Board and Building Committee agreed unanimously upon the Colonial elevation.

The elevation chosen is very pleasing, and the building it forecasts should be a credit to Grosse Pointe. The building will be placed diagonally across the lower corner of the site facing the intersection of Fisher Road and Grosse Pointe Boulevard. It will be two stories high, the roof of the center portion raised somewhat above the roof line of the adjoining wings. A stately portico extending the full height of the center portion and a well proportioned Colonial belfry are the dominating architectural features. Wings extend from the center portion at an angle of approximately forty-five degrees. Their ends face on Grosse Pointe Boulevard and Fisher Road and have been so treated as to give each facade a pleasing architectural effect. The center portion will be set well back from the street intersection.

As a result of the work already done, Grosse Pointe may look forward to a high school equal to the best. Because of severe criticism of the original plan for the building as developed by the architect, the school board employed an expert in educational planning to study the high school needs and advise the board on the educational plan of the building. A new plan was developed by the expert, who specified the room requirements and general layout. As a result of this work and the architect's skillful co-operation, the district is promised an architecturally beautiful structure correctly planned to serve the educational needs of Grosse Pointe.

Grosse Pointe Civic News

Grosse Pointe, Mich.

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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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Benjamin S. Warren

A GOOD BEGINNING

A committee composed of representatives of three Grosse Pointe villages and Grosse Pointe Township was organized recently to consider the problem of improving Black Marsh Ditch. The important fact is not that the committee has been making progress with the work at hand, but that officials of the several villages have recognized a common problem and are jointly working for the benefit of all concerned.

Perhaps because Black Marsh Ditch offered a real menace to the health of the community, or perhaps because it has been an eyesore to residents of all Grosse Pointe, it became the most obvious community problem for correction through common effort. Other community problems exist that might be solved through the combined effort of all Grosse Pointe municipalities.

The need of standard traffic regulations has been pointed out from time to time in the columns of "Civic News." Grosse Pointe municipalities are identical in character and could be best served by a uniform traffic code. Co-operation of all villages in developing such a code would no doubt result in a traffic law that would be a distinct advantage to all.

Recently a uniform traffic ordinance was drawn up and approved by representatives of leading municipalities of the state. One Grosse Pointe municipality has already put this ordinance in effect. The other villages of the township might properly consider its adoption.

Zoning and community planning are other problems that easily lend

themselves to co-operative effort, the solutions of which might best be reached through the efforts of a joint committee. The fact that the several Grosse Pointe villages are contiguous would seem to make joint action on these questions imperative. No single Grosse Pointe municipality can plan for the future without giving attention to adjoining territory. Streets must necessarily be planned to accommodate the traffic of the entire community. Street extensions and improvements must be considered in relation to the existing streets of other villages if any degree of uniformity is to prevail.

With respect to the type, size, and placement of private buildings, the villages are in need of adequate zoning regulations. The investment in homes in Grosse Pointe is undoubtedly greater than in any other locality in the state, and no doubt would rank below only a few places in the entire county. To protect this investment, it would seem advisable to provide adequate zoning regulations that would assure the orderly development of the community and be a protection to investments already made.

Zoning does not necessarily bar all types of buildings that would be considered undesirable in a residential community. It does, however, regulate the location of various buildings within certain districts or zones, thus assuring that a residential section will not be crowded with apartments, garages, or commercial structures.

Adequate zoning regulations and comprehensive planning of public improvements, streets, parks, etc., are only a few of the problems facing the community that can be best solved through co-operation of all the Grosse Pointe municipalities. However, the problems raised here would seem to demand first consideration if Grosse Pointe is to grow in an orderly manner.

The work already done to better conditions in Black Marsh Ditch is an encouraging sign that our public officials recognize the benefit of co-operative effort. It may be hoped that their combined efforts may be extended to other problems which they may have in common, and that in the near future they give attention to the important community problems outlined here.

THE CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION

With the June issue of the "Civic News," the Citizens' Association concludes its third year of work in Grosse Pointe Township. Its fiscal year ends May 31st. When the association was organized in May, 1923, a group of citizens subscribed varying amounts for its support. These pledges with a few exceptions have been paid in full and with additional subscriptions since obtained have financed the association for three years. An accounting of all pledges and a report of work accomplished will be given at the annual meeting of the association, to be held in June.

At the present time the association faces the possibility of a cash deficit at the end of the fiscal year. Pledges that are past due but have not as yet been paid are sufficient to avoid this condition, and it is hoped will be paid before May 31st. A notice to all members now in arrears will be mailed within a few days. The Executive Board hopes for a prompt response.

A QUESTIONABLE IMPROVEMENT

Plans are being considered by the newly elected township board to improve the present township hall at the corner of Roosevelt Place and Maumee Avenue. This building is in a very dilapidated condition and its appearance is a detriment to the community. However, the spending of any considerable sum to improve it hardly seems the proper solution. The building is used occasionally for meetings of the township board, the justice court, etc. It also serves as the voting booth for Grosse Pointe Village elections and as the precinct voting booth for township and school elections. During the greater part of the time it is unoccupied.

SPECIAL ELECTION RESULTS

Electors of Grosse Pointe Park at a special election May 10th approved the issuing of \$50,000 for street re-surfacing bonds, and \$20,000 bonds for extension of the police and fire signal system. A proposition to issue \$50,000 street lighting bonds failed of the necessary two-thirds majority. An advisory vote to widen Waterloo Avenue to 120 feet, making it a part of the Dix-High-Waterloo highway, lost by seventy-six votes. Five hundred and forty-two ballots were cast.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT GROSSE POINTE TOWNSHIP, 1925

The annual report of Grosse Pointe Township as compiled by the township clerk and distributed to those who voted in the recent election should be of more than passing interest to taxpayers of the community. An analysis of the report is given here in order that information regarding the township may be placed before more than the relatively small proportion of taxpayers who went to the polls and there received copies.

In general, the township report as distributed, is not an informative document. Receipts from various sources for each of the several funds are shown, as are disbursements from each fund. Opening and closing balances are given. But as in the case of other reports issued by the township and by at least one of the villages, no classification within the funds is maintained. Thus it is impossible to tell the cost of any phase of work. Neither is a consolidated statement of receipts or disbursements given, making it difficult to know the total received and spent for operation of the township.

No information is given about the work performed by the township. However, an analysis of the report for the fiscal year just ended, and for 1924, indicates that disbursements increased and that the increase in the salaries and fees of public officials was very marked. The report does not show the reason for such substantial increases.

The statement given below is a consolidation of funds used for operation of the township government. Comparison of figures for 1924 and for 1925 is shown:

	1924	1925	In- crease or *Decrease
Opening balance.....	\$ 43,159.18	\$ 73,153.14	....
RECEIPTS			
Current Taxes.....	\$ 49,203.80	\$ 73,879.28	50.
Delinquent Taxes.....	31,101.45	27,514.62	*11.5
Interest on Bank Balance....	3,252.30	3,893.56	19.7
Interest from City of Detroit..	2,750.58	1,552.12	*43.5
Interest on Sinking Fund Se- curities.....	1,000.00	1,000.00	....
Interest on Liberty Bonds.....	21.24	.....	....
Public Welfare from County..	86.02	.....	....
War Savings Stamps.....	1,000.00	.....	....
Collection, Fees and Taxes....	6,822.04	8,687.59	27.3
Miscellaneous	103.14	52.10	*50.
Total Receipts.....	<u>\$ 95,340.57</u>	<u>\$116,579.27</u>	22.2
Total to be Accounted for.....	<u>\$137,499.75</u>	<u>\$189,232.41</u>	....

DISBURSEMENTS

	1924	1925	In- crease or *Decrease
Supervisor and Assistant.....	\$ 3,334.55	\$ 4,180.83	25.3
Clerk	1,218.00	1,504.00	23.4
Justice of Peace.....	220.00	192.00	*12.7
Highway Commissioner.....	1,250.00	1,777.00	42.
Treasurer and Assistant.....	4,000.00	4,500.00	....
Asst. Treasurer, 1924.....	.....	500.00	....
Election Clerks and Inspectors) (see foot note).....	.....	1,976.00	....
Police Department Services...	4,676.90	5,502.00	17.5
Highway Labor, Material and Supplies.....	13,679.66	7,655.87	*44.
Poor Relief Orders.....	5,815.72	10,987.66	89.
Street and Hall Lighting.....	2,700.39	4,424.87	63.8
Interest on Bonds.....	7,725.00	8,850.00	14.5

Clerk Travel Expense.....	50.00	....
Postage	154.30	80.00
Refunds .....	.....	576.80
Transfer to Health Fund.....	.....	3,000.00
Various Other Purposes.....	8,098.84	10,325.71
Transfer to Sinking Fund.....	10,000.00	51,000.00
Total.....	<u>\$ 62,873.36</u>	<u>\$117,082.74</u>
		84.6

Election clerks and inspectors for 1924 are included under "various other expenses" for that year.

The statement of receipts and disbursements given above is a consolidation of the general fund, the highway fund, the poor fund, the contingent fund and the sinking fund as set forth in the township report. It will be noted that the cost of township government in Grosse Pointe almost doubled during the year, while township area was actually decreased by annexations to the City of Detroit.

In only three items was there a decrease over expenditures of the previous year. Highway labor, material and supplies decreased \$5,023.79; justice fees, \$28.00, and postage, \$74.30. All other items show substantial increases. Disbursements for the year exceeded receipts by \$503.47.

Of even greater interest is the cost of operation of the township government exclusive of interest on debt, sinking fund provisions and an item of \$3,000 transferred to the health fund. These items, totaling \$63,353.00, can not be considered as strictly operating costs. Interest and sinking funds are annual charges, but are not expended for direct work performed by the township. After deducting these items, \$54,232.74 remains as the cost of operation or for direct services performed by the township. This figure includes salaries, materials, supplies and contractual services, such as street lighting. Of the total, \$12,461.83, or 23%, was disbursed in fees and salaries to four elected officers and two appointed assistants as follows: Supervisor and assistant, \$4,180.83; clerk, \$1,504.00; highway commissioner, \$1,777.00; treasurer, \$4,000.00; assistant treasurer, \$1,000, one-half of which was for services performed the preceding year. Election clerks and inspectors were paid \$1,976.00. Included with other items under the caption, "Various Other Expenses," is \$2,200 for attorney. Justice fees amounted to \$192.00. The total of all salaries and fees listed above is \$16,829.83, or 31% of the total cost of operating the township government. The total omits police salaries, highway labor, etc., and includes only the cost of personal services for administrative or supervising officers.

The highway commission's fees in 1924 totaled \$1,250; in 1925, \$1,777.00, or 42% more than the previous year. However, the actual work performed on the highways appears to have decreased. Direct labor, material and supplies for highways in 1924 was \$13,679.66; in 1925, \$7,655.87, a decrease of 44%.

Poor relief, which in 1924 was \$5,815.72, in 1925 was \$10,987.66, an increase of 89%. It is difficult to see why poor relief granted by the township should nearly double within a single year. Residents moving to Grosse Pointe surely are not demanding poor fund grants. The purpose of such grants is generally understood to be for temporary relief. If it is used

for more than temporary relief it encourages indolence and dependence.

Expressed in terms of per capita costs, funds spent by the township amounted to \$9.67 for each resident living in Grosse Point Township. The cost for actual operation of the township, including salaries, fees, labor, material and supplies, but excluding sinking fund, interest charges and the \$3,000 item transferred to the health fund, amounts to \$5.50 per capita. These figures are based on an estimated population of 12,000 for the entire township. Direct service, such as street lighting, highway improvements, etc., performed by the township is confined to a small area of approximately $3\frac{1}{2}$ square miles, containing approximately 1,000 population. If costs were calculated on the basis of this area served by the township or could be placed on the basis of work actually performed, more exact and no doubt much higher figures would result.

Elected officers of Grosse Point Township, with the exception of the treasurer, do not receive salaries, but are on a fee basis for services performed. This plan of paying public officials permits the large increase for personal service already mentioned; further, it encourages spreading any work to be performed over as long a period as possible, in order to increase the fee for services. At least one township in Wayne County is abandoning the fee basis and paying its township officials a fixed salary. The policy might very properly be adopted in Grosse Pointe. Such salaries should, of course, be in keeping with the services performed.

The balance of Grosse Pointe Township outside of the present Grosse Pointe Villages will soon become the Village of Lockmoor, and no portion of the town-

ship will remain, outside of an incorporated village. Street lighting, street repair and other direct services will be under control of the villages and the township will remain chiefly as the tax-raising organization, electing and maintaining officers with broad powers, but actually limited in duties. For example, no section of the community will need township highway work, yet a highway commissioner will no doubt be elected to serve as such and draw such fees as the law allows. Other township officers may find themselves elected to places that have no actual duties other than filling an office provided by law and drawing legal fees for possible service in such capacity.

In view of the rather limited service performed by the township government, the cost of maintaining it in Grosse Pointe seems abnormally high. The percentage of money expended in fees for elected officers and the salaries of their appointees comprise a large part of the total expense. Inasmuch as the activities of the township will be further limited by the incorporation of Lockmoor, it would seem that township expenditures should be correspondingly reduced. This reduction should properly apply to the fees paid officers as well as amounts paid for materials and supplies. Definite salaries in keeping with the duties actually performed should appeal to taxpayers and conscientious officials alike. A proper budget of the money to be spent by the township, an intelligent classification of expenditures to reflect the cost of different services performed and a complete annual report of work accomplished and its cost to taxpayers appear to be important and necessary improvements. Such thorough business methods would not permit the lumping of \$10,000, a fifth of the operating expenses, under the indefinite heading of "Expended for Other Purposes."

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CITIZENS ASSOCIATION GROSSE POINTE, MICH.

City planning has for its object the overcoming of evils of haphazard growth. Its aim is to co-ordinate community development.

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1½c Paid Detroit, Michigan Permit No. 335
