

# GROSSE POINTE CIVIC NEWS N

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF CITIZENS ASSOCIATION  
OF GROSSE POINTE TOWNSHIP

Vol. 5

FEBRUARY, 1928

Number 8

## Does Grosse Pointe Park Want a Charter That Encourages Political Meddling?

### If Not, the Voters Must Say "No" on February 13th

UNLESS the charter proposed for Grosse Pointe Park is radically changed between now and election day, voters of that village will be asked to ballot "Yes" or "No" on a pseudo manager-type charter, at the polls on Monday, February 13th.

As was pointed out in the January issue of Civic News, this charter poses as a manager system but is really only an optional manager type, which gives the president and commissioners wide administrative and appointive authority, a situation which breeds unlimited political mischief in public affairs.

#### Authority Diffused

Briefly, the charter proposed for Grosse Pointe Park provides for election of a president and six commissioners, each of whom would be the administrative head of a department. In this interlocking of legislative and administrative duties lies the mischief-making possibilities. Authority is diffused among six commissioners. A seventh person, the president, functions without a department but is given a large authority. The clerk, attorney, assessor and treasurer are selected from outside the commission, further decentralizing responsibility. A village manager may be appointed if the commission sees fit to appoint one. Such a manager need not have had experience; he need not have any knowledge of this field; his only requirement is that he become a resident of the village within 30 days after appointment. In view of the appointing power given the president, by and with the approval of the commission, and the wide diffusion of authority among the commissioners, a village manager, whether qualified for his job or not, would have almost insurmountable

obstacles to overcome before he could function as a real manager under this charter. Without giving an officer proper authority, it is idle to demand that he accept responsibility.

#### Not Genuine Manager-Type

Under the modern village or city manager type of charter—which this charter pretends to imitate—the people elect a Council or Commission whose duties are to determine the policies of administration of the community and also to appoint a village manager. The manager's job is to see that the policies established by the commission are carried out as efficiently as possible. The manager's term is indefinite, but he may be dismissed at any time by majority vote of the commission. As long as the manager satisfies the commission that he is efficient he remains on the job.

Thus, under a real manager charter, such as is now enjoyed by 368 American cities, including 40 municipalities in Michigan, the job of administering public business is squarely up to the manager; he cannot sidestep responsibility. The charter gives him, and him alone, the proper authority, and therefore the people and the commission rightly hold him responsible for efficiency. Having no bothersome questions of policy to thrash out or individual citizens to placate, the manager is free to devote all his energies to administrative matters.

On questions of policy the commission deliberates and decides. The commission, not the manager, is responsible for policies. If voters disagree with policies, they may at election time secure new commissioners pledged to other policies, without disturbing the machinery of government one particle. Thus the

village manager and the village employes, who are appointed by the manager and responsible to him alone, cannot be made the football of political battles. The elected officials, having no power to reward supporters with jobs after election, in payment of political debts, must obviously seek votes solely on the basis of what they promise to do for the community as a whole, and not what they will do for themselves or their supporters directly.

This clear-cut division of authority and responsibility under the real manager plan encourages service on municipal commissions by men of affairs who are always willing and glad to aid their community with advice made valuable by years of successful experience, but whose time and energies are too valuable to be absorbed by details of administration. Complete separation of legislative and executive powers is a fundamental of the manager plan.

When membership in a purely legislative body becomes a coveted honor that seeks the man—instead of being a well-paid "job" with widespread appointive and administrative power, the public is assured of better government. Such a public office, with its clear-cut responsibility, appeals to a better type of citizen. That is a principle with which the manager plan works hand in hand. The legislators' salaries are made to fit the time consumed in legislative duties. The power to interfere in administration and filling of village jobs is taken away from the legislative body and placed under a qualified manager responsible to that body, but vested with absolute authority to run his job without interference. This situation discourages selfish men who habitually seek public office for the sake of making money.

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## Grosse Pointe Civic News

Grosse Pointe, Mich.

P. O. Address, 51 Warren Ave., W., Detroit

H. P. Breitenbach, Consulting Editor

B. E. Meyers, 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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### THAT MINORITY APPOINTMENT

IN the January issue of Civic News attention was called to the illegal manner in which the School Board and special building committee decided upon the appointment of an architect for the proposed Lochmoor School, at a secret session on November 29th.

It now appears that this illegal decision may have been made binding by a subsequent motion directing the president and secretary to sign a contract with Mr. Haas, this despite the fact that the details of the proposed contract had not even been talked over, let alone put in writing and submitted to the Board for reading and approval. That this motion to approve a contract sight unseen was entirely unnecessary and uncalled for on November 29th is readily apparent. Its intent apparently was to rush the Board into completing an agreement with Mr. Haas at the secret session and let the dear public howl all it wanted to after the deed had been done.

At the Board's request, its attorney has given his opinion on the matter, to the effect that the appointment made November 29th is legal, though he, too, stated that the special building committee had no legal authority to vote on the selection of an architect.

#### Majority of Board Opposed to Haas

The "decisive" vote taken in secret November 29th resulted as follows:

For Haas: Messrs. Muir, Berns, Poupard, Beaufait and Trowbridge.

For Smith, Hinchman & Grylls: Messrs. Maire and Parcels.

Not voting: Mr. Bradley.

Thus, only two of the five members of the Board voted for Mr. Haas. A majority of the Board then and subsequently has expressed a desire to have some architect other than Mr. Haas. Trustees Bradley,

Maire and Parcels have not hesitated to make known their opposition to Mr. Haas. That Mr. Haas should, nevertheless, be considered appointed is clearly due to the illegal voting of Messrs. Muir, Trowbridge and Beaufait. To insist, because this illegal vote was perhaps legalized by a subsequent motion, that Grosse Pointe should quietly swallow defeat of the principle of majority rule, especially when such defeat means, in this case, the retention of an allegedly expensive and unsatisfactory architect's services, is hardly reasonable.

Whether the November 29th appointment was technically legal or not probably cannot be definitely decided except by a lawsuit. To protect itself the Board has requested the Attorney-General for an opinion on the legality, and, should that official concur in the views of the Board's attorney, the Board now seems willing to let the minority appointment stand. That the majority on the Board should be so ready and willing to quit fighting for what they know and believe to be the best interests of the taxpayers of Grosse Pointe Township is, of course, unfortunate. The majority's plain duty, it would seem, is to vote to reconsider the action of the November 29th meeting and agree upon appointment of any one of a dozen or more capable school architects.

#### Open Letter on Page Three

In view of the failure of the School Board to consider the unfavorable items of its previous experience with Mr. Haas, the Citizens' Association of Grosse Pointe Township—as spokesman at least for the taxpayers and citizens in its membership—is publishing in this issue of Civic News an open letter to the Board of Education on the subject of Mr. Haas' new appointment.

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The true manager system is endorsed by eminent students of public administration, including Prof. Thomas H. Reed of the University of Michigan, Dr. Lent D. Upson, director of the Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research, Inc., and William P. Lovett, executive secretary of the Detroit Citizens' League, to mention only a few whose names and records are likely to be most familiar to residents of Grosse Pointe.

Two of the authorities mentioned above have already examined the pseudo-manager charter proposed for Grosse Pointe Park and have condemned it in no uncertain terms, declaring that the form of government organization proposed is about 20 years behind the times. The real manager plan, these experts declared, has been so successful in smaller American communities that it is obviously the type of government that ought to be adopted by Grosse Pointe Park.

#### Model Plan Available

A model manager plan charter, easily changed in details to fit various needs, has been drawn up and printed by the National Municipal League. A copy may be obtained at most public libraries and by application to the Citizens' Association of Grosse Pointe Township at its office, 51 W. Warren, Detroit.

At the election on Monday, February 13th, the voters of Grosse Pointe Park will have no choice except to approve or reject the proposed charter. That this charter is designed to encourage political meddling in government administration, such as could be avoided under the village manager plan, is the opinion of unbiased experts. Grosse Pointe Park is entitled to a much better charter but can only get a better one by voting "No" on February 13th.

Space does not permit pointing out certain ridiculous and unworkable elements in the charter. For instance, the paragraph, giving blanket authorization to refund bonds is illegal. Act No. 273 P. A. 1925 as amended by Act 332 P. A. 1927 definitely states when refunding bonds may be sold.

#### Why the Secrecy?

Because the greatest secrecy has surrounded the work on the charter, few citizens know that an election of officers under the proposed charter is to be held on the very day the charter is voted upon. In addition to being quite unusual, this procedure makes the charter liable to secondary consideration in the voters' minds.

That there has been every attempt made to railroad this charter through without adequate time for voters to discuss its provisions, is another reason why voters should say "No." No good reason has been advanced for special haste in getting a new charter.

# Vote "YES" on the New Charter February 13th

TO THE VOTERS OF GROSSE POINTE PARK:

The Charter Commission, created by the citizens of Grosse Pointe Park, at the election of September 8th, 1927, has finished the preparation of the new Charter. The undersigned believe that the proposed charter constitutes a decided improvement over our present charter, although some critics have objected to it on the ground that it does not set up definitely and immediately the City Manager form of government instead of the Commission type. Among its benefits may be mentioned:

Direct non-partisan Primary replaces the old-fashioned caucus system.

Fixing responsibility for each Department in the Commissioner who heads such Department.

A City Manager form of administration may be established at any time by the Village President with the consent of the Commission.

The routine work of the Council or Commission is greatly simplified.

At any time it is desirable to amend or revise the charter this may be done under Act 278 of Public Acts of 1909.

We feel that the proposed charter is not only a step in advance but that it contains within itself the means for further improvement in the affairs of the Village.

On February 13th the New Charter will be voted upon and candidates will be nominated for the offices of Village President, Village Clerk and Village Commissioners. The following present officers, namely, Alfred J. Garska, President; Waldo J. Berns, Clerk and William P. Shoemaker and Samuel Bastien, Councilmen, are candidates for re-election.

The undersigned, members of the Grosse Pointe Park Protective Association, urge the adoption of the New Charter and endorse the above candidates.

Respectfully submitted,

Armin Rickel  
C. J. Spitzley  
Mrs. Morse Rohnert  
C. S. Cole  
Fred Sutter  
Mrs. L. N. Hilsendegen  
W. W. Hannan  
L. J. Bulkley

Dr. Louis J. Hirschman  
Edwin Krieghoff  
F. M. Simbley  
H. E. Beyster  
Matthew N. Millenbach  
Stark Hickey  
Jas. H. Flinn  
Chas. Stinchfield, Jr.

M. J. Cosgrove  
Fred W. Dalby  
Ray L. Martin  
Fred W. Rinshed  
George Harrison Phelps  
William D. Laurie  
Frederick J. Freeman

### PUBLICATION DELAYED

A copy of the open letter to the Board of Education stating the reason why the Citizens Association of Grosse Pointe Township is opposed to the appointment of Mr. George J. Haas as architect for the Lochmoor School was sent to Mr. Haas with the request that he correct any misstatements before publication in Civic News. Instead of doing so, Mr. Haas went to court and asked for an order to show cause why publication of the letter should not be enjoined. As soon as it is possible to obtain dissolution of the court action, Civic News will print the letter.

### THE COTTAGE HOSPITAL

Plans of the Cottage Hospital trustees for the use of the new building, now under construction, were described in January by Mrs. Frank W. Brooks, Jr., chairman of the women's building committee, in the following communication to Civic News:

The new Cottage Hospital of Grosse Pointe is under construction at the head of Mapleton Avenue, Grosse Pointe Farms, on property extending back from Kercheval to Ridge Road. The new building has been made possible by bequests of friends of the hospital and generous donations during 1926 and 1927. Stevens & Lee, of Boston, hospital architects, have drawn the plans for this structure. Corrick Brothers are general contractors.

It is to be a modern institution in every way with an extensive out-patient department, laboratory, X-ray and two operating rooms. The children's wing, a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Murray W. Sales, will contain four private rooms and a four-bed cubicle ward with a sunny playroom in the end of the corridor. The accommodations for adults include 27 cubicle ward beds and 10 private rooms, with an isolation ward and a maternity suite having 13 infant's cribs in the nursery. Facilities are also provided for accident and emergency work.

The medical executive committee will consist of Dr. Charles G. Jennings as chief of staff, Dr. J. Stewart Hudson, Dr. J. W. Vaughan, Dr. J. W. MacKenzie and Dr. George F. Kamperman.

The Board of Trustees of the Cottage Hospital has deemed it advisable not to go out into an extensive campaign for the remaining funds which must be raised. Donations are being received, however, and Mrs. John G. Rumney is taking charge of these. Anyone who is interested in donating special units of the hospital, such as private rooms, beds, cribs, etc., may obtain a list of the prices of these units by applying to Mrs. Rumney.

At present the building has progressed up to the attic floor. It is thoroughly

fireproof, built of brick on hollow tile and stone and of steel and concrete construction throughout, and should be ready for occupancy by next December.

Prices for the care of patients will not differ greatly from those in effect in our present hospital on Oak Street. Maintenance will be provided as at present by fees for services with the Community Fund making up the deficit. It is the aim of the Board of Trustees to make this a hospital for the benefit of all living in the neighborhood who need medical and surgical care. With the expert services of all those on the medical staff, residents and employes of the Grosse Pointe villages and surrounding townships may expect the very finest in modern hospital methods.

### FEBRUARY GRADUATION

Ten graduates, two boys and eight girls, received their diplomas from Grosse Pointe High School at appropriate exercises in the Robert Trombly School on Thursday evening, January 26th, at 8 P. M. The principal address was made by Charles T. Grawn, formerly president of the Central Michigan Normal School at Mt. Pleasant. This is the first time that February graduates have held exercises separate from the June classes.

The graduates, practically all of whom plan to continue their educational work at college, are: Helen Angela Gamble, Sophia Berry Radlow, Jean Elizabeth Balfour, Mary Louise White, L. A. Chapoton, Jr., Edward E. Pritchard, Lois Louise Breitenbach, Helen M. Carver, Mary Ann Stock and Dorothy Grace L. Damerow.

Officers of the class are Lois Breitenbach, president; Mary White, vice-president; Dorothy Damerow, secretary; and Edward Pritchard, treasurer. The class held a banquet at the Detroit Yacht Club on January 14th, followed by a theater party at the Bonstelle Theater.

### FOUR NEW TEACHERS

Four new high school teachers were appointed in January by Dr. S. M. Brownell, superintendent of schools, with the approval of the Board of Education. Of this number, three are men, one a woman. The new teachers and their records:

Arnold R. Verduin, English and mathematics, graduate of University of Michigan, has taught three years, at Western State Normal, Kalamazoo, junior high school in South Haven, Michigan and Hobart College.

Anne Sima, commercial subjects, graduate of Western State Normal, Kalamazoo, pursued graduate work at University of Chicago, has taught 13 years, elementary and high school, in Coopersville and Kalamazoo schools.

Frank Banach, physical education, graduate of Western State Normal, Kalamazoo, captain of normal football team in 1926, specialized in physical education, prepared to teach basketball and swimming as well as football.

John D. Staffeld, English, University of Michigan graduate, has been teaching the last year and a half in Hazel Park.

### YACHT CLUB EXPECTS TO BE IN OWN HOME THANKSGIVING

At its annual meeting in January the Grosse Pointe Yacht Club elected a board of thirty directors and received reports on the progress of the harbor fill in Lake St. Clair at the foot of Vernier Road, where the club is making a fill adjacent to that of the Village of Grosse Pointe Shores.

The harbor fill and retaining walls have all been completed in preparation for the erection of the yacht club's proposed building. Henry & Richmond, architects of Boston, Mass., have completed plans for the clubhouse, and bids for its construction were expected to be submitted to the Board of Directors before the end of January. Completion of the building is expected in time to permit occupancy next Thanksgiving.

The Board of Directors of the Grosse Pointe Yacht Club are:

|                        |                  |
|------------------------|------------------|
| John H. French         | Paul H. Deming   |
| Dr. H. N. Torrey       | Ross W. Judson   |
| John T. Hurley         | Oscar Webber     |
| C. J. Edwards          | B. F. Stephenson |
| Albert A. Albrecht     | John M. Tigchon  |
| Clarence L. Ayres      | Walter F. Tant   |
| George R. Fink         | Conrad H. Smith  |
| Lawrence P. Fisher     | Fred W. Dalby    |
| Charles F. Becker      | John A. Bryant   |
| Arthur J. Scully       | Charles T. Bush  |
| Harry M. Jewett        | Thomas E. Currie |
| George Osius           | John P. Scallon  |
| William M. Mertz       | Mark R. Hanna    |
| Dr. George L. Renaud   |                  |
| William G. Fitzpatrick |                  |
| C. Hayward Murphy      |                  |
| Harrington E. Walker   |                  |

Officers of the club are: John H. French, commodore; Edward J. Hickey, vice-commodore; Dr. H. N. Torrey, vice-commodore; Ford Ballantyne, rear-commodore; Clarence L. Ayres, secretary; Joseph L. Hickey, treasurer.

### NEIGHBORHOOD CLUB OUTLINES IDEALS

**A**N organization ever ready to help when and where help is needed—a spirit simple and friendly—a place where rich and poor alike may meet together as brothers and where no one will be barred who needs what the club can give, are the ideals which the Neighborhood Club should strive to maintain, Jessie Carter Sales, retiring president, declared in her report at the sixteenth annual meeting of the club's trustees in the new club house on January 12th.

The meeting signalized the separation of Neighborhood Club and Cottage Hospital, the work of both up to January having been directed by a single board of trustees. Expansion of the work of each organization necessitated the change. (On January 19th the Cottage Hospital Association, whose new building is under construction on Mapleton Avenue, met at the Neighborhood Club and elected its own officers.)

#### Contributors Thanked

Mrs. Sales' report paid tribute to the building committees, headed by Mrs. R. A. Alger and Mr. W. P. Stevens, upon the successful completion last November of the club's beautiful, new, practical and well-furnished \$175,000 building on the site donated by Mr. Dexter M. Ferry, Jr., at Neff, St. Clair and Waterloo. Appreciation was also expressed for the financing by Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Whitcomb of the

remodeling and equipping of a house adjacent to the Neighborhood Club building for a library—the only public one in Grosse Pointe Township—which is in charge of the Wayne County Library Association. Contributors to the club building fund were also thanked by the president.

The report of W. George Elworthy, director, showed an attendance of 32,445 at 726 meetings of 14 clubs and nine outside organizations which made use of the Neighborhood Club's facilities in 1927. A total of 8,327 volumes were drawn from the library, while 91 athletic events, 178 educational meetings and 19 social events were held during the year.

Last year's achievement of a new building marks a high point in the history of the social and welfare work carried on by the Neighborhood Club the last 16 years, according to Mr. Elworthy. The club, he recalled, started as a settlement in a rented house 16 years ago, giving such public services as health nursing, domestic science teaching and the like. When the Grosse Pointe villages organized a public health service and the Board of Education established domestic science and manual training classes in the schools, the Neighborhood Club concentrated its efforts on supplying other social needs. For many years the Club's gymnasium on Oak Street was the only recreational center in Grosse Pointe.

Activity in every sport, in its season, is sponsored by the Neighborhood Club. Basketball, boxing and winter outdoor sports are enjoyed early in the year by both girls and boys. An annual skating meet was started in 1927. In the spring, marble tournaments, kite contests and various exhibits of needlework by junior sewing clubs claim attention. Later, basketball and supervised recreation and handicraft work at the playground draw their devotees. Camp life, with swimming, life-saving, first aid, and canoe-handling instruction at Lake Ore, is made available each summer for Boy Scouts and VVV girls of Grosse Pointe.

#### New Officers Elected

Officers elected for 1928 included Mrs. R. A. Alger, president; Mrs. D. M. Ferry, Jr., Mrs. William Spicer and Mrs. William P. Stevens, vice-presidents; Mrs. William Ledyard Mitchell, recording secretary; Mrs. Percival Dodge, corresponding secretary; Mrs. H. S. Finkenstaedt, treasurer. Three new trustees were elected, Mrs. E. B. Whitcomb, Mrs. E. K. Butler and Mrs. Raymond K. Dykema. Retiring trustees were Mesdames F. W. Brooks, Jr., James S. Holden and R. P. Joy.

**Correction.**—In the zoning map of Grosse Pointe Village, printed in the January issue of Civic News, reverse the symbols for "B" and "C" districts.

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## CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

GROSSE POINTE, MICH.

Good government is the greatest and best of all philanthropies because it touches one hundred per cent of the people.

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

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