

# GROSSE POINTE CIVIC NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF CITIZENS ASSOCIATION  
OF GROSSE POINTE TOWNSHIP

Vol. 7

JULY, 1929

No. 1

## SCHOOL BOARD'S 10-YEAR PROGRAM

### Superintendent Predicts Average Increase in Building Tax Rate of 39 Cents

THE school buildings that will be needed in Grosse Pointe by 1940, an orderly procedure for their erection, the year-by-year cost of the suggested procedure and the relation of that cost to the total cost of government both in Grosse Pointe and other Michigan municipalities are subjects treated at length and in detail in a preliminary report of a ten-year building program made by Dr. S. M. Brownell, Superintendent, to the Board of Education in June.

Enrollment data for the last five years are used in the report to estimate enrollment by schools up to June 30, 1940. Based on these estimates—which indicate that the equivalent of a 425 to 450-pupil building must be provided every year to house additional pupils—the building program outlined below is proposed to care for increased enrollment.

Should growth in the district increase more rapidly than predicted, this schedule could be accelerated, the report points out. Should the district grow less rapidly than predicted, the building schedule can be slackened accordingly. Total public school enrollment.

(Concluded on Page 4, Col. 1)

## VILLAGE TAXES DUE

Annual village taxes are now due and payable at the several village halls. Collection without penalty ends in August, the date and amount of penalty being determined by the respective Councils and Commissions. Penalties range from one to four per cent. On the third Monday in October unpaid taxes become delinquent and are turned over to the county treasurer for collection.

Grosse Pointe Park's tax roll this summer calls for collection of \$455,323.20 to meet appropriations of the budget totaling \$545,646.38. The remainder of the budget will be met by an estimated \$42,725 in offsets and credits, while surplus from the \$795,000 Fox Creek Sewer bond issue will meet the 1929-30 sinking fund requirement of \$47,598.18.

It is estimated that \$140,000 of the sewer bond money will be left over after the job is completely paid for. Sixty-five thousand dollars of this surplus has already been used to buy back a portion of the issue. The remainder is to be devoted to sinking fund requirements unless the opportunity arises to buy back more of the sewer bonds.

The Park's tax rate is \$12.13 per thousand on a total assessed valuation of \$37,541,288. A year ago the rate was \$11.47 on \$35,972,382 to raise \$412,530.91 toward a total budget of \$455,902.99. Expenses of government

(Concluded on Page 3, Col. 2)

## SCHOOL DISTRICT ELECTS WATKINS AND PARCELLS

The annual school election on Monday, June 10th, resulted in the election of John R. Watkins and the re-election of Charles A. Parcels for three-year terms as trustees of the Board of Education of Rural Agricultural School District No. 1, Grosse Pointe Township; the approval of a \$120,000 bond issue for an addition to the Trombly School; and approval of a change in maximum interest rate on the previously authorized \$360,000 Richard School bonds from 4½ to 4¾ per cent.

Total ballots cast for candidates were 1,563, compared with 855 three years ago. Mr. Watkins with 776 votes and Mr. Parcels with 771 led the nearest losing candidate by a narrow margin. Mr. John R. Kerby, sticker candidate, received 742 votes and Mr. J. Lawrence Hibbard 646 votes.

The bond issue was approved 841 to 507, with 113 spoiled ballots in a total of 1,461. Vote on the interest rate change was 779 for, 556 against, 126 spoiled. Most of the ballots reported as spoiled had not been marked.

### Library Budget Approved

At the annual meeting, a resolution was adopted establishing a school district library, followed by passage of another resolution authorizing \$15,585 to finance the budget for library activities.

(Concluded on Page 2, Col. 2)

## THE 10-YEAR SCHOOL BUILDING PROGRAM

Location	Capacity Added	Total Cost Each School	Have Ready To Use	Aggregate Bldg. Costs to be Raised in Taxes for Int. and Sink. Funds	Number Pupils Enrolled	Per Pupil Bldg. Costs *
1. Richard Elementary (McMillan-Kercheval)	690	\$360,000	1930			
2. Trombly Addition (Essex-Beaconsfield)	480	120,000	1930	\$315,125.00	3,080	\$102.31
3. Junior High School No. 1 (St. Paul-Audubon)	700	600,000	1931	358,569.50	3,530	101.57
4. New Cadieux Elem. (Cadieux-Kercheval)	50	300,000	1932	372,885.00	3,955	94.40
5. New Kerby Elementary (Beaupre-Kerby)	250	300,000	1933	391,907.00	4,400	89.00
6. Junior High School No. 2 (Charlevoix-Lothrop)	700	600,000	1934	433,822.00	4,850	89.40
7. Defer Addition (Kercheval-Nottingham)	240	99,000	1935	435,277.50	5,295	82.20
8. Roslyn Road Elem. (Roslyn-W Street)	205	276,000	1936	439,186.50	5,740	76.50
9. Junior High School No. 3 (Fairway-Vernier)	700	600,000	1937	479,324.00	6,175	77.70
10. Mason Addition (Vernier-Goethe)	350	99,000	1938	479,021.50	6,615	72.50
11. Richard Addition (McMillan-Kercheval)	525	201,000	1939	486,520.50	7,050	69.00
12. Junior H. S. No. 1 Add. (St. Paul-Audubon)	450	150,000	1940	489,637.48	7,480	65.40

\*The per pupil cost at present on \$262,744 building debt service is \$100.40.

## Grosse Pointe Civic News

Grosse Pointe, Mich.

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

Lincoln Maire, President.  
James E. Morrison, Vice-President.  
George Porter McMahon, Secretary.  
Charles H. L'Honmedieu, Treasurer.  
John F. Keys. LeRoy W. Forrester.  
Frank H. Dewey

Circulation of Civic News is 4,835

### CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION PAYS TRIBUTE TO LEADER

**I**N appreciation of "six years of distinguished public service without pay," the Citizens' Association of Grosse Pointe Township at its seventh annual meeting in the Grosse Pointe High School on June 25th adopted a resolution thanking Mr. Harry P. Breitenbach, its retiring president, and proclaiming him President-Emeritus, *magna cum laude*. "This community," the resolution said in part, "has been immeasurably benefited both now and for years to come by his constructive, far-sighted and successful leadership in the Association's non-partisan work."

Though hampered somewhat by lack of sufficient funds to carry out many desirable and useful items of service that were projected at the beginning, the Association, Mr. Breitenbach reported, has been able to focus public attention upon civic matters with gratifying results as attested by the few mistakes which voters have made during the six years that the Association has been reporting on government affairs.

It was suggested by Mr. Ralph H. Booth that more frequent general meetings of the Association, or a public forum, might provide valuable community discussion of controversial subjects and other subjects of vital public concern that arise in Grosse Pointe from time to time.

#### New President Chosen

Directors chosen for three-year terms at the annual meeting were: Charles H. L'Honmedieu, 44 Kenwood Road, attorney-at-law of the firm of Campbell, Bulkley & Ledyard; James E. Morrison, engineer, 667 Washington Road, of the National Stamping Company; and George Porter McMahon, 110 Lewiston Road, general real estate.

At its organization meeting, the new Executive Board elected Lincoln Maire president and Mr. McMahon secretary; and re-elected Mr. Morrison vice-president and Mr. L'Honmedieu treasurer. Mr. B. E. Meyers, executive secretary and editor of Civic News for the past two years, was re-elected.

Mr. Maire, a landscape architect and son of Dr. L. E. Maire, pioneer resident and civic leader, has been familiar with the Association's public-spirited activities from the beginning. He served as the Association's first executive secretary from June, 1923, to September, 1924. Mr. Maire was elected to the Board of Directors for a three-year term on June 6, 1928, at the expiration of the three-year term of Mr. Benjamin S. Warren.

#### Twenty-five Directors in Six Years

One woman and twenty-four men have given freely of their services for various periods as members of the Association's Board of Directors during the six years of its existence, including, in addition to the present Directors: Mrs. H. H. Sanger, and Messrs. Harry P. Breitenbach, Raymond K. Dykema, Joseph L. Hickey, Oscar Webber, J. J. Crowley, Richard P. Joy, William M. Mertz, Charles A. Parcels, Benjamin S. Warren, John V. Redfield, C. C. Wormer, Jr., L. E. Maire, Robert M. Allan, C. A. Dean, Jr., John H. Tigchon, E. J. Hickey, and Charles A. Palms, Jr.

Directors of the Association are prevented by its by-laws from holding any elective public office in the township of Grosse Pointe. Any member of the Executive Board automatically resigns from the Board who becomes a candidate for any such public office.

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ties from July 1, 1929, to June 30, 1930.

At its first meeting following the election, the Board of Education on June 13th appointed Mr. Watkins to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Mr. P. Hudson Bradley so that the trustee-elect might participate in Board work prior to the beginning of his term on July 1st. Mr. Watkins celebrated his first meeting on June 27th by saving the taxpayers several hundred dollars in the letting of coal contracts. Some members of the Board expressed themselves in favor of passing out the contracts hit-or-miss to several bidders as long as local residents were not missed. Mr. Wat-

kins declared himself in favor of giving the contracts to the lowest responsible bidder and made a motion to that effect. It was supported by Trustees Sutter and Parcels and opposed by Trustees Poupard and Berns.

On July 1st, the Board re-organized and elected officers for the year: Fred Sutter, president; Julius L. Berns, vice-president; Charles A. Parcels, secretary; Charles A. Poupard, treasurer. The junior high school sites were formally designated in the localities recommended by the Strayer-Engelhardt report and surveys and appraisals ordered preliminary to negotiating for purchase or condemnation of the properties and determining the amount of money that will be required through bond issues.

#### Location of Sites

The sites designated included approximately seven acres in Grosse Pointe Park in the northern half of the block bounded by St. Paul, Audubon, Whittier and Jefferson; eleven acres of unsubdivided land in Grosse Pointe Farms in the vicinity of the intersection of Charlevoix and Lothrop Avenues; and twenty acres in Lochmoor west of Vernier Road at Fairway Drive. The vote was not unanimous on the Charlevoix-Lothrop and the St. Paul-Audubon sites on each of which Trustee Berns alone voted "No." An amendment to the motion which would have switched the western site to the Fry property, St. Paul and Balfour Road, was defeated three to two: Trustee Berns and Watkins, for; Trustees Sutter, Parcels and Poupard, against.

Specifications for the new Gabriel Richard School were approved July 8th. Bids are to be received at the first meeting in August, with completion scheduled for August, 1930. A budget of \$764,578.00 for 1929-30 was also approved at the July 8th meeting and certified to the Grosse Pointe and Gratiot township boards for collection of \$592,269.09 in taxes next December. The rate, based on the new assessed valuation of Grosse Pointe Township personal and real estate, \$129,079,586, will be \$4.59 compared with \$4.37 a year ago.

A total of 2,112 children and adults patronized the play facilities of the Board of Education during the first week of this summer's recreation supervision at the High School, Defer, Trombly and Mason school grounds.

**GROSSE POINTE VILLAGE TO END FLOOD MENACE**

Upon the advice of Metcalf & Eddy, nationally-known consulting engineers in sewerage matters, and its own engineers, Mason L. Brown & Son, the Council of Grosse Pointe Village recently decided to proceed this year not only with the project of constructing a high-level closed sewer in the Black Marsh Ditch but also with construction of a combined interceptor to serve the village storm and sanitary flow and a pumping station at Neff and Charlevoix that will permit discontinuance of the present pumping station and disposal plant.

The present disposal plant and pumping station would be adequate for another five years, it was estimated last December, as far as handling sewage was concerned. The rains this Spring that resulted in flooding of many basements causing considerable damage led to the decision to end the property and health menace permanently and economically by constructing both the high-level sewer and the combined interceptor at the same time.

S. A. Healey, low bidder, was awarded the contract on July 12th when new bids were received. His bid totaled \$415,093 for the sewer and the interceptor. Work is to begin immediately with completion scheduled for December. The Healey firm was also successful bidder on the ditch sewer job now under construction in Grosse Pointe Farms. Actual work on the ditch sewer job recently completed in Grosse Pointe Park was done by Healey under a sub-contract with Callahan & Gross. In the bidding on the Park sewer, Healey's bid was \$613,000. Callahan & Gross were awarded the job on a bid of \$497,000.

Bids on the pumping station are to be taken soon as possible. This contract figure, plus \$415,000 and engineering fees, will determine the total cost of the project. Importance of proceeding at once with the work just let induced the Council to approve a contract. The \$360,000 bonds authorized last February by the voters, 779 to 73, for the ditch-closing plan are available immediately. A special election on an additional bond issue will be called as soon as the cost total of the enlarged project is known, the Council has announced. Plans for a special election July 29th were rescinded to await pumping station bids.

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have increased \$89,743.39, or a little more than 20 per cent, over last year. (Civic News' annual review of village budgets will appear in its next issue.)

Grosse Pointe Village's tax rate this year is \$14 on a total assessed valuation of \$28,762,965 to raise \$399,593.19 toward its budget of \$450,848.30. The balance of \$51,255.11 is to come from an estimated revenue of \$71,255.11, less estimated uncollected general taxes of \$20,000. A year ago the rate was \$14.40 on an assessed valuation of \$27,660,037 to raise \$397,155.28 of a total budget of \$450,657.97. Expenses of government have increased \$190.33, practically no increase whatever.

Grosse Pointe Farms this year is raising \$401,129 in taxes at the rate of \$17.50 on an assessed valuation total of \$22,920,000. Total budget appropriations amount to \$430,129. Estimated revenue is set at \$29,000. A year ago \$385,305 was placed on the tax roll to be collected at the rate of \$17.50 per thousand on \$22,081,780 assessed valuation. The Farms now has a modern budget with a standard classification of items and an estimate of revenue from sources other than taxation.

Grosse Pointe Shores has placed \$105,596.38 on this year's tax roll to be collected at the rate of \$11.25 on a total assessed valuation of \$9,386,330. A year ago the rate was \$12 per thousand on an assessed valuation of \$5,698,560 for a total levy of \$68,382.72.

Lochmoor's 1929 budget totaling \$77,665.05 has been spread on the tax roll for collection at the rate of \$8.65 on a total assessed valuation of \$8,979,450. A year ago the tax levy was \$64,072.09, rate \$7.90, assessed valuation \$8,110,392.10.

**HEALTH BOARD CHANGE**

State legislation which repealed the authority under which it was acting prompted the Board of Health of Health District No. 1-A, Grosse Pointe, to tender its resignation to the village legislative bodies, effective July 1st. The new legislation requires the township board to act also as a board of health. The township board has assumed this additional function with the announcement that the work of the former consolidated board will be carried on as before under Dr. B. H. Warren, health officer, and his staff, whose offices are at Jefferson Avenue and Rivard Boulevard.

**8,000-FOOT SEA WALL BEING BUILT IN SHORES**

Work is now under way on construction of an 8,000-foot sea wall paralleling Lake Shore Road through Grosse Pointe Shores at a distance of 80 to 100 feet from the present shore line between Weir Lane and Vernier Road. More than 160,000 cubic yards of land (to be pumped from the lake) will be required for the fill, it is estimated by Edward N. Hines, Wayne County Road Commissioner.

The road commission has undertaken the project to avoid as much as possible destruction of the present landscape in its work of widening the 18-foot concrete road built in 1912 into a 120-foot artery, as determined in Detroit's Master Plan of highway development. Much of the right-of-way needed will be obtained by the land gained within the sea wall. The remainder is being contributed by Grosse Pointe Shores.

The road commission looks forward eventually to widening the Lake Shore Road and Jefferson Avenue to a uniform width of 120 feet from the Detroit City Limits to Weir Lane with co-operation of Grosse Pointe Farms, Grosse Pointe Village and Grosse Pointe Park.

When the sea wall and fill in Grosse Pointe Shores are completed, the road commission expects this year to start construction of two 27-foot strips of concrete from Weir Lane to the County Line with a landscaped center between them. Added safety and convenience for both motorists and pedestrians have led the road commission to decide upon two one-way traffic strips on main arteries and superhighways in place of a single wide strip.

Joseph E. Beaufait, president of Lochmoor for the past two years, has become a resident of Grosse Pointe Park, 1127 Devonshire Road. The vacancy caused by his change of residence was filled by the village commission on July 16th by appointment of Edmund C. Vernier, township supervisor and former village president, who was defeated for re-election by Mr. Beaufait.

**SCHOOL ELECTION RETURNS**

	Pk.	Vil.	Fr.	Sh.	Loch.	Tl.
J. R. Watkins	240	272	154	74	30	776
C. A. Parcels	255	282	133	74	27	771
J. R. Kerby	405	67	158	3	49	742
J. L. Hibbard	449	63	102	2	30	646
P. H. Bradley	13	4	6	0	4	27
Tl. Vote Cast	741	367	295	78	82	1,503

Membership in the Citizens' Association is \$1.00 per year. As dollar memberships do not meet the Association's expenses (it costs 10 cents per copy to prepare, print and distribute Civic News) larger payments are invited. Check below the amount of your remittance and send to Charles H. L'Hon-medieu, Treasurer, 3000 Union Trust Building, Detroit, Michigan.

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ment will rise during this period, the Superintendent estimates, from 3,080 in February, 1930, to 7,480, in February, 1940. The total spent for school buildings will increase year by year but not as rapidly as the increase in enrollment so that the cost of school building will actually decrease year by year as shown in the last column to the right.

Discussing the effect on the tax rate of the proposed building program, the report says:

"The cause of the increased enrollment and hence need for more buildings comes largely from the building of new homes in the community. These new homes raise the assessed valuation of the district. Thus, building of new schools to care for the children of these new families is an additional burden to the community only to the extent to which building these new schools raises the tax rate. In figuring the cost of the building program, one must calculate the increasing valuation of the district."

Enrollment increased about 450 per year while assessed valuation was averaging a \$9,000,000 annual increase from 1924 to 1928. Projecting an average annual \$9,000,000 increase to

1940, the report reveals that the tax rate for buildings to be needed if enrollment continues to increase would be as follows:

Year	Total Payments for Buildings	Valuation of District	Tax Rate Per \$1,000
1930.....	\$315,125.00	134 mil.	2.35
1931.....	358,567.50	143 mil.	2.51
1932.....	372,885.00	152 mil.	2.46
1933.....	391,907.00	161 mil.	2.43
1934.....	433,822.00	170 mil.	2.56
1935.....	435,277.50	179 mil.	2.44
1936.....	439,186.50	188 mil.	2.34
1937.....	479,324.00	197 mil.	2.43
1938.....	479,021.50	206 mil.	2.33
1939.....	486,520.50	215 mil.	2.27
1940.....	489,637.48	224 mil.	2.19

The present tax rate for school building purposes is \$2.10. As shown in the table above, providing sites and buildings to house new pupils will increase the present tax rate an average of only 39 cents per year.

The latest available tax data by Supt. M. W. Longman of Muskegon, compiled from 109 cities in Michigan having a population in excess of 2,000, revealed (1) that Grosse Pointe has the lowest school tax rate, (2) that the proportion of school tax to total tax in Grosse Pointe is 18 per cent, compared with the average of 39 per cent.

The total tax rate for all purposes in the Grosse Pointes for 1928-29 and in Detroit are reported by Dr. Brownell as follows:

	Total	Schools
Grosse Pointe Park.....	\$21.95	19%
Grosse Pointe Village.....	24.88	17%
Grosse Pointe Farms.....	27.98	15%
Grosse Pointe Shores.....	22.48	19%
Lochmoor.....	18.37	23%
Detroit.....	27.30	24%

Another point worthy of note in considering school taxes is the growth

of the school tax in the last five years during which time the Board of Education opened for use the Defer, Trombly and Mason elementary schools, the Grosse Pointe High School and the Defer addition in addition to purchasing four elementary school sites, starting work on the Gabriel Richard School, and acting to acquire three junior high school sites, and erect the first junior high school building and construct an addition to the Trombly School.

During this 5-year period from 1925-1929, school enrollment increased 56 per cent while the school tax increased but 45 per cent. The new buildings created during this period are more adequate and better fitted for school use than those used in 1925 and the present teaching and administrative staff on the average has more training than those employed in 1925, the Superintendent's report points out. The economy of consolidated school administration is further apparent in that costs were kept proportionately below enrollment increases that included a 109 per cent increase in junior and senior high school enrollment. The cost per pupil to educate a junior or senior high school pupil is considerably more than that of educating an elementary school pupil.

The Citizens' Association believes the experience of the school board in effecting economies through consolidation and gradually increasing business-like methods—as illustrated in this constructive and informative 10-year building program—indicates that taxpayers might profitably consider consolidation of other public services now performed by five village governments.

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A municipal council is a representative body, and by its virtues or mistakes it probably reflects almost perfectly the kind of people who have chosen the council. Those who do not vote have no right to object.  
 —William P. Lovett.

Mrs. B. Vogt,  
 1304 Grayton.  
 Grosse Pointe Park, Mich.