

GROSSE POINTE CIVIC NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
OF GROSSE POINTE TOWNSHIP

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INFORMATION WANTED

For more than seven months, Civic News has been endeavoring to obtain full, detailed information on the expenditures of taxpayers' money by Grosse Pointe Park in connection with the condemnation suit for property for a proposed beach-park, which was discontinued last January. Finally, the following registered letter, to which no reply has been received, was sent to the village clerk:

October 26, 1929.

Mr. Waldo J. Berns, Clerk,
Village of Grosse Pointe Park,
15115 Jefferson Avenue,
Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan.
Dear Mr. Berns:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your memorandum of expenditures from the contingent fund of the village during the fiscal year 1928-29, showing that the cost of the Park condemnation suit, including juror fees, appraisal fees, attorney fees and incidental expenses, totaled \$11,457.38.

The minutes of the Commission's meeting on February 1st indicate that bills on that date were approved for payment as follows:

Dolsen, Scratch & Hidy, appraisers	\$ 9,557.38
Julius L. Berns, attorney	7,000.00
Charles H. Marden, engineer	12,500.00

Will you kindly advise me what portion of each of these bills was for services in connection with surveying, appraising and attorney's fees in the condemnation suit? We should like to publish in Civic News a detailed list of the expenditures in connection with this suit.

An early reply will be greatly appreciated.

Yours very truly,
CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION
of GROSSE POINTE
TOWNSHIP
B. E. Meyers,
Executive Secretary.

NEW ARCHITECTURAL CONTRACT AGREED UPON; RICHARD SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION BEGINS

A new model architectural contract, approved by the architect and the attorney for the Board of Education, was adopted November 18th when the Board voted to authorize its officers to sign a contract for services of Smith, Hinchman & Grylls in the designing and supervision of an addition to the Robert Trombly School. The principal new feature of the contract is that the architect agrees to obtain the construction of a building of a definite size within 10 per cent of a definite price, in this case an 11-room addition for \$95,000. Conditions at the present time are favorable for obtaining fair prices on construction, the architect informed the Board. Plans are to be ready for submission to bidders in February. Completion is scheduled for next August. In reply to a question by the Board the architect informed the Board that his office expected to do all the supervision the job requires and would not think of recommending hiring of a clerk-of-the-works.

The question arose due to the fact that the architects on the Gabriel Richard School, Robert O. Derrick, Inc., had recommended hiring a clerk-of-the-works. In turning down the request, the Board informed the architect that it was of the opinion that he was responsible for getting the job done right and done on time.

The Board also decided to proceed with an alternate in the Richard contract that will add a wing with 100-pupil capacity at a cost of \$37,598, rather than add the wing at a future date when its cost would be an esti-

LOCHMOOR'S PROBLEMS

Three issues of major importance have recently agitated village officials in Lochmoor: (1) Plans for a new village hall; (2) Request for plans to abate the open sewer nuisance due to the emptying of raw sewage into Milk River; (3) Request for the opening of

(Continued on Page 4, Col. 2)

mated \$10,000 higher. Without the wing, the construction contracts totaled \$299,055.40 for a 480-pupil unit; with the wing the total is \$336,653.40 for 580-pupil capacity. Contracts were awarded for general construction, \$255,190, A. W. Kutsche & Co.; plumbing, heating and ventilating, \$64,667, Otto A. Wurm; electrical wiring, \$14,785, W. D. Gale; lighting fixtures, \$2,011, Detroit Mantle & Tile Co. Work is now under way.

Due to the fact that the platoon organization and 6-hour day educational policy used by Professor Arthur Moehlman in planning the Trombly School in 1926 was not subsequently followed by the Board, which has been following a non-platoon basis with approximately a five-hour day, it was revealed in a survey of educational needs for the Trombly elementary school district presented to the Board by Dr. S. M. Brownell that it will be necessary at this time to plan the present addition keeping in mind that another addition to the Trombly School will be necessary at a future date.

The addition to be built now will include an art room, music room, coaching room, lunch kitchen, two janitor's rooms and eight typical class rooms. The future addition will be a coaching room and three typical class rooms. The unit now in use has a 320-pupil capacity. The addition will bring the total capacity to around 700, the future addition to approximately 890.

Since 1926, the ratio of school population to total population in this district has jumped from 18.4 to 22.6 per cent, Dr. Brownell's survey shows. An ultimate school population of 1,590 is now predicted, compared with 1,185 predicted in 1926. It is estimated that of an ultimate total of 986 children of elementary school ages, 5 to 12, ninety per cent, or 888, will attend the public school. At present 70 per cent attend the public school, compared with 66 per cent in 1926.

Grosse Pointe Civic News

Grosse Pointe, Mich.

P. O. Address, 51 Warren Ave., W., Detroit
B. E. Meyers, Editor

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ARE THE PEOPLE OF GROSSE POINTE ASLEEP AT THE SWITCH?

In planning for the play life of any community, its needs must first be analyzed, and then the way pointed out to meet these needs and provide for financing them. Provision for public recreation is today recognized as just as important a factor in the growth and development of any city, as is the provision for proper lighting, policing and adequate water supply.

As Civic News has pointed out from time to time there is no underlying, comprehensive plan for municipal playgrounds and recreation in Grosse Pointe Township. Officials and citizens have permitted this area of 10 square miles to attract a population of more than 21,000—more than half of which is located in a two-square-mile area at the western end—with little more than a hit-or-miss recreation program. Piece-meal plans advanced by officials from time to time have met with stifling opposition. A year ago a park proposition in Grosse Pointe Park was defeated after thousands of dollars of public money had been spent in condemnation procedure.

For a number of years, the school problem was in very much the same status as recreation is today. Then in 1922 the school districts in the township voted to consolidate. The consolidated Board of Education has since built four million dollars worth of schools and has plans worked out for construction of four million dollars worth more in the next ten years to keep pace with growth.

Co-operation Shunned

A year ago the Citizens' Association asked Mr. C. E. Brewer, Commissioner of Recreation in the City of Detroit, to suggest a proper method of solving Grosse Pointe's recreation problem. He recommended a central recreation sys-

tem for the whole township, rather than separate recreation departments in each municipality. His report and recommendations were placed before all official bodies in the township. No new legislation is needed other than proper co-operation by present officials, but no action of any kind has resulted to date. Officials' comments on the matter invariably have ended with the refrain that "it can't be done."

So it seems that we must continue to work out our recreation problem piecemeal, each new park, playfield and playground project standing or falling on the merits or demerits advanced for it and against it without more than superficial knowledge of its relation to proper development of a well-rounded recreation program. In other words, each nut and bolt for the machine will be acquired as necessity or political expediency demands, with the possibility of extravagance on each item greatly enhanced and with the likelihood of a patched-up job into the bargain.

Today, if an engineer falls asleep and the train is wrecked, we prosecute him for criminal negligence. Just so is every community criminally negligent which fails to provide adequately for its public recreation program. Proper community action safeguards life and happiness. In one American city a few years ago, a child was killed, drowned or injured every 29 hours by reason of lack of adequate play spaces and facilities. Since the latter have been provided, two years have elapsed without a single drowning.

Safety Factor

Records of the National Safety Council for a five-year period show that out of 78,000 persons killed, 26,000 were children under 15 years of age. Recreation authorities contend that such death rate can be almost totally avoided by adequate provision for safe places in which to play, also that juvenile delinquency is reduced all the way from 25 per cent to 100 per cent by the provision for adequate play and recreation under right leadership. The Russel Sage Foundation stated in a recent study that "To provide a district with adequate play facilities is coincident with a reduction in delinquency of 44 per cent on an average."

Grosse Pointe now has 21,000 inhabitants. By 1942, our population will approximate 58,000 according to conservative estimates. The problems

of a built-up urban area are much different from those of a sparsely-settled suburban village. Surely now is the time to look ahead, analyze our needs, plan for the play life of a community of 60,000 and then carry out the various items of the job in the order of their importance and in the most business-like fashion. It is the belief of the Citizens' Association that an intelligently planned recreation program would command the moral and financial support of the vast majority of citizens in this progressive community, would silence any selfish or ill-conceived opposition and would avoid extravagant and unwise expenditures of public funds.

STREET CAR SERVICE PROPOSAL REJECTED

The council of Grosse Pointe Village on November 14th rejected a proposal that it permit use of the old D. U. R. tracks on Jefferson for a 90-day experiment by the D. S. R. to consist of 15-minute service from Weir Lane to downtown Detroit between 6 a. m. and 9 p. m. and 30-minute service between 9 p. m. and 12 p. m. The fare proposed was 16 cents beyond Fisher Road, 11 cents south of Fisher. The village some time ago ordered the D. U. R. to tear up its tracks and remove poles and wires. An appeal by the Eastern Michigan Railways from a Federal Court decision upholding the village's order is now pending.

Announcement of the D. S. R.'s willingness to experiment with an extension of Detroit street car service struck no responsive chords among officials in the Park, Village and Farms, though all agreed that there could be an improvement in the bus service. The opinion was expressed that street car service is a noisy, antiquated and undesirable means of transportation not wanted in Grosse Pointe.

BOND ISSUE APPROVED

By a vote of 202 to 21, Grosse Pointe Village on November 11th approved an additional bond issue of \$300,000 to complete at this time the entire \$640,000 program of enclosing the Black Marsh Ditch through the village, eliminating the flood menace with an intercepting sewer in the ditch right-of-way, and constructing a pumping station at Neff and Charlevoix. Work on the project has been under way for some time.

PROCEDURE METHODS OF THE TOWNSHIP

No. 3—Poor Fund

The poor fund is under the direct supervision of the supervisor, who is given entire authority to administer the fund according to his best judgment subject only to an audit of the township board at the spring meeting. As this meeting is no longer held in Grosse Pointe, the township board passes on each bill as it is offered for payment, and thus maintains some check as to the disbursement of the fund.

The township fund amounts to about \$10,000 a year. In addition about \$1,000 is dispensed by the Neighborhood Club supported by the Detroit Community Fund. Donations of clothing are also secured by a full-time social worker employed by the Club. The mother's pension bureau of the Probate Court grants pensions to widows with children under 17 years of age. The township endeavors to supply necessities of life, such as food, rent, heat and medical attention.

An analysis of one year's disbursements from the poor fund, through the minutes of the township board approving the various bills for this fund, indicated that approximately 73 persons received relief. The period chosen for this study was in the year ending August 1, 1927. Two grocery bills amounting to \$352.50 were not allocated to any specific persons, thus the number receiving aid may be somewhat in excess of this number. The following table gives the number of families who received aid, by groups:

Group Number	Total Amount Paid	Number Families Receiving Aid
1	\$250 to \$700	11
2	100 to 249	14
3	50 to 99	15
4	25 to 49	15
5	3 to 24	18

About two-thirds of the cases handled received less than \$100 during the year. In Group 5, from \$3 to \$24, many of the items covered a small amount of coal supplied during the winter. This is often necessary when the breadwinner, often a laborer, is out of work during the winter months. The next higher group, from \$25 to \$49, covers in general the same class of people, except that they required a few more of the necessities of life, perhaps a grocery bill now and then. Of the top three groups, the relief covered more or less regular assistance, in varying degrees, over a

consecutive period, in some cases extending for the entire year, but more generally only a portion of the year.

The following table shows the average weekly payments for the cases in each group:

Group 1 \$250-\$750		Group 2 \$100-\$249		Group 3 \$50-\$99	
Approx. No. Wks.	Av. Paid per Week	Approx. No. Wks.	Av. Paid per Week	Approx. No. Wks.	Av. Paid per Week
50	\$15.55*	35	\$7.00	20	\$4.86
50	13.30	50	4.70	30	3.08
50	13.00	30	6.28	20	4.60
50	11.50	35	5.36	30	2.91
50	10.25	35	4.66	15	5.16
40	8.92	15	9.05	10	7.41
50	7.15	15	9.31	10	6.50
25	8.96	15	7.31	10	5.91
40	7.42	25	4.26	15	3.83
40	7.13	30	3.47		

*Of this amount an average of \$9.38 was spent for medical attention. The case has now been committed to Eloise.

It is seen that some assistance was given more or less regularly throughout the year to about seven cases, but that the balance covers what might be more correctly termed "temporary" relief. Many of the cases shown cover the maintenance given to a family consisting of 4 to 5 children in addition to the parents. A brief history of some of the cases demonstrates the type of relief given:

Case 1. A widow with three children, two within limits of mothers' pension. Received \$12 a week from county, and \$665.31 a year from township, or \$13.30 a week.

Case 2. A widow with feeble-minded son and large family, 2 other children tubercular. Mother works regularly at cleaning. Received \$651.51 for the year, of which \$129 represented medical service. The payments averaged \$14 a week.

Case 7. Husband hurt at factory, disabled for 15 months, had many operations; four small children. Total paid \$357.40 or \$7.15 a week. Received compensation and medical service from employer.

Case 17. Lady 70 years old. Husband claimed rupture prevented working, laid on cot for 15 years. Supervisor tried to commit to Eloise but children would not sign commitment. Total relief, for year, \$159.73, or \$4.50 per week.

The cases are brought to the attention of the supervisor in various ways: (1) by personal application to him, (2) through neighbors or others, and (3) through the social worker of the Neighborhood Club. The case is investigated as soon as possible and if the indications are such that relief should be furnished, the supervisor immediately writes the proper orders. Certain regulations are observed; house rent is limited to \$20 per month

except a few cases where \$25 is paid; coal is ordered by the ton or ton and a half, at about \$10 a ton; food is given by orders on the grocery stores ranging from \$4 to \$10 a week, depending upon the condition of the families' finances and number of small children.

Amount of Food Supplied Through Poor Fund

Group Number	No. Families Receiving Food Relief	Av. No. Wks. Food Relief Supplied	Av. Amt. of Food Relief Per Week
1	8	43	\$5.23
2	6	23	3.84
3	8	18	2.86

From the above, it is apparent that the average order is near to the minimum of \$4 a week per family. The orders are written for periods from one week to one month, depending upon the circumstances of the case. If further assistance is necessary after one month, the supervisor again investigates and issues orders as he deems necessary. This system, started by the present supervisor, is an improvement over the former practice of issuing perpetual orders.

While the responsibility of the poor fund is vested in the supervisor, the custom has arisen of bringing cases to the attention of the township board, whose members are drawn from different portions of the township, and it is upon their vote that relief is given or denied.

Medical attention is supplied through the regular practitioners of Grosse Pointe, according to the special preference of the patient, and the bills met from the poor fund. Not a great amount of medical attention is furnished, as the case is hospitalized either in a private sanitarium or Eloise, in cases of protracted illness.

Expenditures from the Poor Fund for the year, studied in this review, were divided as follows:

Coal	\$1,060.27
Rent	2,150.00
Food	3,790.77
C Medical	3,087.70*

Total \$9,925.32

*Includes all charges for hospitalized cases, funeral expenses, and Eloise patients.

The Grosse Pointe Lions' Club was active during the Detroit Community Fund Campaign in helping to obtain subscriptions totaling in excess of \$2,500, a three-fold increase over a year ago, according to William Wiedbusch, secretary of the club.

70 PERCENT OF PUPIL'S TIME GOES TO THREE R's

An examination made recently by a committee studying curriculum has revealed that students in the public elementary schools in Grosse Pointe devote approximately three-fifths of their time to training and instruction in the Three R's.

The time allotted to the elementary school subjects is reported as follows:

	Grades 1, 2	3, 4	5, 6
Three R's.....	70%	67%	64%
Health	10%	10%	10%
Geography, History and Nature Study	10%	13%	16%
Music and Art	10%	10%	10%

The proportion of time now devoted to health work, music and art remains constant throughout the elementary school course, and the percentage given to the social and natural sciences increases as the student grows older. A committee of elementary school principals and the superintendent is constantly studying the allotment for each subject, from 1826 to 1926, to determine the proper amount of time to insure the greatest achievement results.

A comparison of the proportion of the school day now devoted to the "Three R's" with that of bygone days is found in a study of the time allotted to the teaching of the different grade subjects in 444 cities of the United States, from 1826 to 1926, made by Dr. Carleton H. Mann, Asheville, N. C. Dr. Mann reports that the children of the nation now receive twice as many hours of instruction in readin', 'ritin' and 'rithmetic as they did in 1866, and almost four times that which they received in 1826.

Throughout his school career in 1826, a pupil studied the three R's for a total of 934 hours. In 1866, he was spending 1,693 hours on these subjects, while in 1926 he was required to put in a total of 3,565 hours on the same fundamentals. In 1800, the average number of days of schooling for American children was 82. It had increased to 163 in 1826, and by 1926 it had leaped to 1,360. Spelling and grammar took their places among the school subjects as early as 1826, Dr. Mann found. Some schools offered geography and sewing at this early date. By 1866 one-fourth of all the time was given to studying the group of special subjects and activities, which is about the same proportion as was given to special subjects in 1904. Since 1904, the time devoted to these studies has increased to 36 per cent.

(Concluded from Page 1, Col. 2)
E. Street at 3,600-foot distance to connect with Grosse Pointe Boulevard and Kercheval Avenue in Grosse Pointe Farms.

The village commission on November 5th received a recommendation from a committee of property owners for the hiring of an attorney to start work on the opening of E Street from a point east of Lochmoor Boulevard to Weir Lane at the intersection of the three village boundary lines—Shores, Farms and Lochmoor—from whence the plan is to widen Weir Lane, taking a strip off the rear of several Provençal Road lots, to connect E Street with Grosse Pointe Boulevard. This, it is believed, would serve to divert traffic between Mack and Lake Shore Road

around the Country Club and avoid any possible necessity for connecting E Street and Ridge Road across the Country Club grounds at some future time.

Request for information on how the village plans abatement of the open sewer nuisance was made by an official of Lochmoor Golf Club. The commission authorized its engineer to consult with club officials to see what could be done at a point in the vicinity of Vernier Road and the ditch. The ultimate solution of the whole problem, the Commission agreed, would be the closing of the ditch through Lochmoor as is being done in the Farms, Village and Park. But it was felt that the cost of an enclosure project, estimated at around \$300,000, would be unthinkable until the village had a much larger population and more extensive resources than at present. It was pointed out that the village is now within \$300,000 of its bonding limit.

The purchase of an \$18,000 site and the erection of an appropriate village hall on the site have been discussed by the Lochmoor Commission. Plans were reviewed November 5th for a building on the style of Grosse Pointe Village's new fire hall, which it was felt could be used for police headquarters and village offices until growth of the village would warrant a fire department to replace the present inexpensive arrangement with Grosse Pointe Shores' fire department. Some commissioners expressed the opinion that taxpayers would not approve such a plan at this time, and the architect was asked to submit plans for a smaller structure to cost around \$20,000.

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Officialdom seldom can be ahead of what the people think and demand.

—Lent D. Upson.

Mrs. B. Vogt,
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