

GROSSE POINTE CIVIC NEWS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
OF GROSSE POINTE TOWNSHIP

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CIVIC NEWS INCREASES MONTHLY CIRCULATION

A revision of the CIVIC NEWS mailing list has resulted in the addition of 2,100 new names, starting with this issue. During the last two years a consistent decrease has seen the circulation cut down about 1,000, due to people moving away from the community.

Hand picking the mailing list to eliminate, as much as possible, more than one copy being sent to a home took more than a 1,000 names from the list. In cases where two or more members of a family are paying Citizens' Association dues, it should be borne in mind that the sending of but one copy to a home is an economic move and should not be taken as a slight on any membership.

A word of introduction to those receiving the paper for the first time:

The Grosse Pointe CIVIC NEWS is the official organ of the Citizens' Association of Grosse Pointe Township, an organization of taxpayers, founded in 1922, for the purpose of promoting governmental efficiency. The CIVIC NEWS is the means of reaching the entire electorate, giving such information of civic nature that will aid the voter in following the course of political events.

The paper is non-partisan in general, but in specific cases and at the instigation of the majority of the Board of Directors, adopts a definite policy on issues.

The Association is non-profit sharing. The Board of Directors are elected at the annual meeting and serve without pay. The paper is mailed to all known residents of Grosse Pointe, regardless of whether they contribute to its support.

The expense of the Association work and the publication of the paper is borne by memberships, which are of three kinds: active, one dollar per year; contributing five to ten dollars and sustaining, twenty-five to thirty-five dollars per year.

ELEVEN IN FIELD FOR COUNCIL

Interest in the Grosse Pointe spring election centers in the contest for selection of three Trustees in Grosse Pointe Farms, where 11 candidates are in the field. Six of the 11 are to be nominated at the primary on February 15, and three chosen by the voters at the election on March 14.

The candidates include the following: William J. Mason, 74 Kirby Road, who is Police Chief in the Village of Lochmoor; James N. Rasmussen, 21000 Mack Ave., who is also Township Treasurer; and Joseph W. Snay, 101 Oak St., Chauffeur; Frank E. Price, 14 Vendome Road, Sales Broker; Frank G. Van Dyke, 55 Moross Road, Real Estate Dealer; Edward A. Batchelor, 65 Moran Road, Advertising man and former Newspaperman; William W. Penoyer, 148 Moran Road, Real Estate Dealer; Albert Champine, 127 Oak St., Remi De Clercq, 48½ Hilcrest St., Frank W. De Fer, 34 Ridgemont Road and Andrew B. La Forest, 291 Moross Road.

The campaign, to date, has not developed any definite platform on the part of individual candidates. However, the three incumbents seek reelection on the record of their performances in office while Messrs. Price, Batchelor, Penoyer and Van Dyke stand for a change in affairs aimed to reduce taxes.

Registration for voting can be made by citizens until one day before the primary, every day except Sunday, from 9 A. M. to 5 P. M. To accommodate those who are unable to appear earlier in the day, registrations may be made until 8 P. M. on three successive Saturdays, February 13, 20, and 27.

Other officials in the Farms seeking reelection, but without opposition, include the President, Michael C. Beaupre; Clerk, John R. Kirby; Treasurer, Gervase Meldrum, and Assessor, Walter A. Allard.

COMMITTEE ACTS TO LOWER TAXES

A thorough study of the economic structure of each of the villages in the Grosse Pointe area is being undertaken by a committee appointed following a meeting of Grosse Pointe citizens, held December 14, to discuss financial problems confronting officials and taxpayers.

The committee of six members, including Frank Price, Ford Ballentyne, Harry Covington, Raymond Dykema, William Stevens and E. B. Whitcomb, met for the first time January 8. The first step in the committee's plan will be to obtain figures on the cost of all divisions of the local governments. When this has been done, an attempt will be made to determine if taxes can be lowered under the existing forms of government and whether or not economy would result from a change in the existing form of village government.

The committee, it was decided, would make no recommendation on any proposal until a thorough study of the facts convinced them of the advisability of a change. Possibility of changing the separate communities to individual cities and of combining two or more will be discussed.

Among other proposals to be considered will be the possibility of combining the public service departments of two or more communities for the sake of economy, while the actual political machinery remains the same.

The committee has been assured the cooperation of the Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research and the Michigan Municipal League, as well as help from many influential citizens of the Grosse Pointe area.

Although the Committee of Six realizes that an educational campaign may be needed to show the advisability of any change which it may recommend after study, it was felt that its work would be at an end with the report of its findings. The actual campaign to bring about the suggested

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Grosse Pointe Civic News

Grosse Pointe, Mich.

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

Lincoln Maire, President.

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Circulation of Civic News is 5,000

SCHOOLS \$30,000 UNDER BUDGET

Savings have been effected in the operation of the schools which, it is estimated, will lop \$30,000 from the budget figure of \$803,000, according to the monthly report of Dr. S. M. Brownell, Superintendent, submitted to the Board Monday evening, Feb. 8.

The budget for 1931-1932 was \$71,000 under that of the previous year. With the additional \$30,000 a total saving in the operation of the school system of more than \$100,000 is anticipated. To Feb. 1, expenditures were \$48,761.24 less than for the same period last year.

In spite of the lowered cost of operating the schools it is feared that the income from school taxes may be short \$10,000 of the required amount because of tax delinquencies. To meet this situation, the Board will ask the Township Supervisor and Treasurer to make special efforts to collect delinquent taxes.

Night school work for the first semester of the current year was self-sustaining. A minimum tuition rate of \$3.00 per student was charged and no class was organized unless tuition fees would approximately equal the cost. The 163 students in the evening classes, which met once a week from Oct. 5, 1931, to Jan. 27, 1932, paid a total of \$531 in fees, leaving a surplus of \$79 over the cost of operating the classes.

As the work of the first term has shown that the evening school activities may be provided on a self-supporting basis, classes are being continued through the second semester. The unexpended balance from the first semester's operation will be used as a reserve for night school funds.

BEDFORD BUYS G. P. MOTORBUSES

Ownership of the Grosse Pointe lines of the Detroit Motorbus Company passed to Thomas B. Bedford when the sale was ratified at the annual meeting of the Board of Directors and Stockholders Monday.

"There will be no radical change in the operation of the line," said Mr. Bedford who has been operating manager for the company. "The buses will probably be operated under the name of the Lake Shore Coach Lines. At the present time there are 25 buses in service. In the near future I hope to add several of the latest type motor coaches.

"As this is a personal venture, I naturally will give my best efforts to supplying efficient service for I realize that is the only way I can hope for success. Schedules will be changed from time to time to meet changing conditions."

The fares are to remain the same as at present, from Grand Circus Park to Fisher Road, 10 cents. To Weir Lane or Mack Ave. and Seven Mile Road, 15 cents. A five cent fare applies between Fisher Road and Mack Ave. at the Seven Mile Road. A 10 cent fare applies between the city limits at Jefferson and Wayburn Aves., and the Mack-Seven Mile Road terminal.

The new owner of the bus line has had 24 years' experience in the transportation business beginning with the street railway of New York City in 1907. From 1913 to 1920 he was with the Fifth Avenue Coach Lines. Since that time he has been associated with the Detroit Motorbus Company.

PARK NAMED

At its regular meeting Feb. 1, the Trustees of the Village of Grosse Pointe Shores adopted a resolution naming the recently developed park along the lake shore adjacent to the village in honor of George Osius, President of the Village since its incorporation in 1911 until he retired after more than 16 years of continuous service in guiding the affairs of the community.

PARK ELECTION TO BE LIGHT

A light election is forecast in the Village of Grosse Pointe Park to be held March 14 as there is no opposition to the present incumbents in office who are seeking re-election. Because of the lack of opposition, it was not necessary to hold a primary.

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changes would then be undertaken by others.

An expert in civic accounting has begun the task of collecting the figures for the analysis. The statistics required from each village include:

Most recent assessed valuation and basis of assessment. Bonded and floating outstanding indebtedness as of January 1, 1932. All sinking fund balances showing portion in cash and portion invested as of January 1, 1932. Tax rate per thousand for 1931 and 1932 for village purposes. Total levies and percentage or amount of delinquent taxes for 1928, 1929, 1930 and 1931, as of January 1, 1932. Total revenues for last completed fiscal year from property taxes, public service enterprises and from all other sources including taxes other than property.

Total expenditures of last completed fiscal year. Payments for operation and maintenance of general departments by departments in detail including wages and salaries with number of employees and position in each case, cost of and maintenance of city equipment, including all motor vehicles, cost of supplies, including clerical, fuel and others; all other payments in as much detail as possible. Payments for interest and sinking funds, including interest on bonded indebtedness, interest on floating indebtedness and sinking fund payments. Payments for permanent improvements out of revenue and from proceeds of bond issues. All other payments. Disposition of surplus, if any. Amount of borrowings in anticipation of taxes as of January 1, March 1, and July 1, 1929, 1930, 1931, and 1932.

VILLAGES MAY CHANGE TO CITY

Possibility of the eventual union of Grosse Pointe Village and Grosse Pointe Farms into one city was forecast following a meeting of the Village Council, January 28, when it appointed Norbert Neff, Clerk of the Village, and Herbert Trix, Council Member, a committee to meet with the Farms Council.

This action followed an address by Clarence Smazel, of the Michigan Municipal League, on the advantages of changing to a city form of government and of combining. As yet no action has been taken by the Farms Council, but it is expected that Mr. Smazel will be first invited to talk to the Council and later a joint meeting will be called to consider the proposal.

CLUB INCREASES ATTENDANCE

An increase of 36,668 or 30 per cent in attendance at the Neighborhood Club of Grosse Pointe during the year 1931 over the previous year is shown in the annual report of the club's activities recently submitted by its director, W. George Elworthy.

Not only has the club functioned as a recreation center, but it took on the added responsibility of serving as a clearing house for social service and charitable work being undertaken by public officials, clubs and individuals. A well organized staff of trained workers was ready and equipped to make proper investigations and provide adequate relief for the indigents of the Grosse Pointe Township when the unemployment situation caused many to appeal for aid. The work of the club is credited with preventing duplication of effort on the part of the several agencies interested in relief work.

Social service is a general term which applies to the entire program. The case work department, under the leadership of Miss Ruby Brownlee, who makes investigations, family adjustments and administers relief. She also has to contact and coordinate other groups in the community endeavoring to help, thus eliminating to the minimum duplication of effort and a waste of money.

Miss Theresa Browne, assigned from the Visiting Nurse Association, is accomplishing a phase of social work which has meant so much to the people of the community who need nursing care. She works in close cooperation with the Board of Health and Cottage Hospital.

Mr. Elworthy's report, in part follows:

"A phase of social work that is vital and necessary to a community, especially in time of unemployment, is a Neighborhood Club, which is everything that the name implies, a place where folks with excess leisure time may come to forget their troubles. The spirit of unrest which is eating their very hearts may be forgotten in the excitement of a volleyball game—a place where children congregate in

the afternoon and evening to escape drab home conditions and listen to the radio, something they haven't in their own homes—a place where the typical gang of village hoodlums hang out, only under proper supervision.

"The Director has spent many hours during the past year listening to the troubles of people who do not want material aid, but just someone whom to unload their troubles.

"The indoor program which taxed every available space in our building to capacity and is planned to fit all ages, is only half of the work. The outdoor year 'round activities, starting with skating, were enjoyed by hundreds of people. Mr. D. M. Ferry loaned the property to be used for a rink, which was cooperatively maintained by the Grosse Pointe Village and the Neighborhood Club. The toboggan was a source of pleasure for all ages. Early spring brought the onslaught of an army of tennis players, tournaments being conducted for every class of players. Men's singles and doubles, women's singles, mixed doubles, girls' singles, boys' singles and a novice tournament for men made up the list and each had a very large enrollment. Mrs. E. L. Ford generously donated prizes and trophies for all the events.

"Hundreds of people congregated every Sunday afternoon to watch the baseball games during the season. The playground ball league every Wednesday evening was a spectacle. Ten teams of ten men each, playing at the same time and each team bringing with them a goodly number of rooters, literally covered our entire playfield. Kite contests, marble tournaments, horse-shoe pitching, roller skating races and athletics were some of the activities for the boys, while the girls, under the able direction of Miss Frost, conducted a program including dramatics, handcraft, story telling hours, costume parties, hikes and group games.

"During the month of July, a new camp site was rented from Mr. Fred L. Smith. It was the first time that our groups have had a camp site that seemed to be theirs and entirely by themselves. A shack was built, using dole labor, assisted by our Scouts. The Boy Scouts, Camp Fire and A. C.

Girls each enjoyed a period of outdoor life. Every child underwent a physical examination by one of our local physicians before going to camp, and came back in a healthier condition, weighing from two to five pounds more.

"The fall season brought out on the gridiron our big football players, averaging about sixty pounds each, equipped very well with rummage sale togs. They are known as the Neighborhood Club Midgets and had a very successful season. We were able to rent our field to the Lasky professional team, which netted our refunds a nice little sum and which might have been more, had many of the spectators preferred not to have taken 'fence tickets.'

"A program such as has been carried on during the past year has been made possible only by the interest and untiring effort on the part of the Board of Trustees, the various committees and many faithful volunteers."

Officers of the Neighborhood Club for 1932 are as follows:

President, Mrs. Lucian Moore, Jr.

Vice-Presidents: Mrs. Douglas Campbell, Mrs. Howard Smith, Mrs. William P. Stevens, and Mrs. Dexter M. Ferry.

Recording Secretary, Mrs. H. S. Finkenstadt; Asst. Rec. Secretary, Mrs. Witter J. Peabody.

Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. Allen F. Edwards; Asst. Corresponding Sec., Mrs. S. T. Miller, Jr.

Treasurer, Mrs. James Turner and Assistant Treasurer, Mrs. W. O. Mundy.

Trustees include Mmes. W. K. Muir, W. P. Stevens, Sidney Miller, Jr., W. O. Mundy, Allen Edwards, James Turner, L. S. Moore, Jr., H. S. Finkenstadt, R. A. Alger, J. G. Standart, Percival Dodge, R. K. Dykema, D. M. Ferry, Jr., T. Worden Hunter, E. B. Whitcomb, S. Dickinson, Sarah Hendrie, W. J. Peabody, Douglas Campbell, Willard Worcester, H. F. Smith, F. C. Walker, Walter Hock and E. B. Henry.

Mrs. T. Worden Hunter was appointed to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mrs. W. H. Spicer, and Mrs. E. L. Ford was elected an Honorary Member of the Board.

ADVANTAGES OF INCORPORATION AS A CITY

(From Michigan Municipal League Pamphlet)

Increasing costs of government in recent years have forced upon the nation, state and individual communities the necessity for reducing expenses without, if possible, curtailing necessary or desirable services.

Michigan villages of more than 750 population and all county seat villages, regardless of population, find themselves in an especially favorable position to meet this need, because they can throw off the entire cost of one government—the township government—within a period of a few months at very little expense, while gaining several advantages and without suffering any loss in governmental services.

The differences between a city and a village revolve around the fact that a village is still part of the township, whereas a city is an independent unit of government of equal importance with the township. Villages, therefore, pay township taxes, which cities do not pay, and are represented on the county board only by the township supervisor, whereas cities have their own supervisors.

The fact that village taxpayers support a township government, which is of little or no value to them, has received more or less

recognition from the state legislature for the past half century. First, it was provided that the township should care for bridges on village streets that were formerly township roads; then village taxpayers were excused from paying township road repair taxes; next, half of the township highway improvement taxes paid by the village was returned to the village for use on village streets. Now villages should pay taxes only into the township contingent fund and one-half the road improvement fund, and these can readily be avoided by all county seat villages and all other villages of more than 750 population, by reincorporation as cities under the Michigan Home Rule act for cities.

The fact that important advantages could be secured by villages by reincorporating as cities has been almost unknown, and in even fewer cases was it known that the change could be made under Michigan law, if the advantages were understood. The fifth class city amendment to the Home Rule act was passed in 1923, and at the beginning of 1931, only eight villages had taken advantage of its possibilities—many of them without understanding or appreciating the benefits, but rather for the purpose of being known as a city. The Munic-

ipal League office first stressed the importance of this provision of the statutes in 1930; during 1931 five villages completed the change to cities; several had the project under way, and the question was under consideration in probably a third of all the villages eligible to make the change.

Elimination of township taxes assessed against village property is usually regarded as the greatest benefit of becoming a city. The taxes which are almost universally assessed against villages are the township contingent fund and the township highway improvement fund. The first is used principally for paying salaries in most townships, and so far as the village part of the township is concerned, these salaries are an unnecessary duplication of other expenses. The township supervisor makes a separate assessment of village property from that of the village assessor and gets paid for it; the two treasurers duplicate their tax collections rolls; the clerks duplicate the list of registered voters. It is principally for these wholly unnecessary (even thoroughly troublesome, in some cases) governmental duplications that the village taxpayer pays township contingent fund taxes.

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