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\$100,000 SAVINGS IN BALANCE

Citizens of the entire Grosse Pointe area are eagerly waiting the results of the election in Grosse Pointe Village, Monday, March 13, when an issue of far greater importance than merely the election of officials will be decided. The voters will decide whether or not a program already started, that will reduce the budget for the coming fiscal year by at least \$100,000 shall go into effect or not.

The electors will select a President, three trustees, a village clerk, assessor, and treasurer. Candidates are divided chiefly into two groups, known as the Economy Group, consisting largely of present incumbents who have started the program of economy, and the Progressive Voters' League with a platform of ten planks.

Some of the present incumbents seeking re-election and others on the Economy slate promise to put into effect many of the recommendations made in the survey report of the Michigan Municipal League which was recently completed.

Among the candidates supporting the program to save the Village taxpayers \$100,000 are: Richard P. Connor, president, seeking re-election; Herbert B. Trix, candidate for re-election as trustee; James H. Marks and Walter C. Hartwig, also running for the office of trustee; Norbert P. Neff, candidate for re-election as clerk; Theodore G. Osius, candidate for treasurer and Neil Blondell, incumbent, candidate for re-election as assessor.

Running for election on the slate of the newly organized Progressive Voters' League are the following: For president, Sylvester A. Mauer; for clerk, George F. Kimber; treasurer, Albert Chisnall; assessor, Edwin S. Watko and for trustee, Richard D. Paterson, Stephen H. Van Niem and William Wybo.

Economy Started Year Ago

About a year ago Village officials realized that the operating expenses and debt service due to the Black Marsh Ditch necessary bond issue were mounting and that delinquent taxes and loans at the bank were increasing. The Bureau of Governmental Research was consulted on the reduction of operating expenses and the budget was reduced from \$588,000 to \$482,000. During the year there was a saving on this budget of approximately \$8,000.

Then the 15 mill restriction became a part of the State Constitution. The Council clearly saw that another big cut was inevitable. This time they consulted the Michigan Municipal League and ordered a survey of all Village departments and operations.

The Council has met several times both as a whole and in committees and has practically decided that the 15 mill provision can be met by following the principle recommendations of the report.

The necessity of bringing about lower operating costs in the Village government is emphasized in the League's report, which is on file in the clerk's office. Certain of the candidates are definitely in favor of these reductions. Others, although clamoring for a "new deal," are uncertain as to their method of proceeding.

Summary of Report

Briefly, the League's report points out that the income of the Village has been depleted as follows:

1. Village tax delinquency for the present fiscal year was 27.42 per cent, or \$113,511.81 as of January 20, 1933. The percentage of tax delinquency has been increasing rapidly since the beginning of the depression; in 1929 it was only 3.1 per cent, or \$12,381.22.

2. The Village's assessed valuation has decreased from \$28,762,944 in 1929 to \$22,573,894 in 1932, or slightly more than 22 per cent. Of course a portion of this was due to loss of bank tax.

To illustrate what this means to taxpayers, the report points out that if the valuation had remained where it was and tax collections had been as good in the last few years as formerly, the 1932 Village tax rate could have been \$7.90 lower.

The report also points out that due to the delinquency and the fact that the Village's fiscal year begins four months prior to the beginning of tax collections, it has been necessary to borrow \$100,000 against next year's taxes, despite efforts of the Village administration to keep within decreased revenues by reductions in expenditures. Such borrowing is not unusual in municipal governments.

Even with the increasing financial difficulties and the extraordinary standards maintained, the League report points out that the Village has not defaulted on any of its debt payments, has not resorted to refunding, and has made adequate provisions for bond retirement in its sinking funds, thus maintaining its credit and an enviable record for any municipal corporation under present conditions.

The 15 mill tax limitation amendment to the state constitution, adopted last fall, adds a further complication in Village finances, states the report. Its result depends to some extent upon judicial determination and action of the state legislature, but it is fairly safe to state, says the author, that its effect means the present total rate for operation purposes—

namely Village, Township, School, State and County—must be reduced from \$25.67 per thousand valuation in 1932 to \$15 per thousand in 1933, or \$10.67 per thousand valuation, and the Village must bear its share of the reduction.

Program Outlined

Considering the economic problems, the report then sets up an operating program for the year 1933-34, which provides:

1. For greatly reduced operating expenses without reducing services, by consolidating and reorganization of departments and functions and more efficient use of employees.

2. For advancing the tax collection period to conform with the fiscal year, thus eliminating or greatly diminishing the necessity and expense of borrowing money to finance this period as pointed out heretofore.

3. For meeting debt obligations and sinking fund requirements.

4. A means of making further reductions if increased delinquency or other additional financial troubles develop.

Under this plan the total taxes for local government in the Village can be reduced, says the report, by over \$100,000 better than 25 per cent with further reductions possible as soon as tax delinquency is diminished.

The report also favors the Village becoming a city and withdrawing from the Township, although the gain in so doing is not nearly as great as would result from the other proposed economies, and is a matter to be later considered.

The budget set up in the survey should be regarded as the foundation of a long-time financial policy for Grosse Pointe Village, according to Clarence Smazel, who made the survey for the Michigan Municipal League.

The report reads in part as follows: "The relatively successful operation of Grosse Pointe Village under the present plan is due to the fact that the trustees have been men who were willing to devote a large amount of time to public service for which they were not compensated. ***"

"An important factor in the successful operation of the Village government under the present plan has been the fact that the clerk, Norbert P. Neff, and the assessor, Neil Blondell, have been elected to office continuously for a period of years. Their long experience and earnest effort in these positions have enabled the council to place upon them numerous administrative responsibilities not required of their respective offices by charter or statute."

GROSSE POINTE GOES POLITICAL

Grosse Pointe office holders seeking reelection this spring will encounter strong opposition for every post.

Never in the history of this community have the candidates been so numerous and active. Never has the public been so interested.

National election last November, where over 90 per cent of the electorate voted, has shown the way. The prolonged depression, with its urgent need for tax reduction, has created a strong incentive. Grosse Pointe is going political.

Public opinion is being rapidly formed by intensive campaigning conducted by parties and groups, old and new.

In the township the "conservative" Democratic machine, under the leadership of Edmond Vernier, has maintained almost uninterrupted rule since the beginning of Grosse Pointe. In last fall's national and state elections, Grosse Pointe went Republican, in spite of the Democratic landslide in other places. The party claimed that the local Democrats would not stay in line in their out-of-state voting. Displeased with last fall's local election, a new group, the "Progressive Democrats," organized and furnished strong but unsuccessful opposition at the March 6th primary. Members of this group supported tickets in three of the five villages under the name of "Progressive Voters' League." The connection with the township group was not maintained, it being apparent that it was not critical to draw major party lines in villages. The Progressive Voters' League is losing incumbents in Grosse Pointe Park, Grosse Pointe Village they have a full ticket, and are active in Lochmoor.

In Grosse Pointe Village the Economy Club are making a campaign to reap the benefits and savings of the Michigan Municipal League report, promoting the election of a man who have endorsed this budget saving.

Record Vote

In Grosse Pointe Farms' Primary a record vote gave those in the lead a 2 to 1 majority. Their opposition's only hope of victory lies in the possibility that the large margin may not repeat.

In Lochmoor Village, a new ticket is headed by Roy B. Crane for President.

Grosse Pointe Shores is the only Village maintaining its political equanimity. Their election comes in May.

Dems Opposed

April 3, the final for the Township elections, will find Supervisor Vernier and his Democratic co-workers opposed by a complete Republican ticket. Ex-Senator Fred Harding has been chairman of the organization work of the New Republican Township Party, and William R. Hudson (formerly Hudson Lumber Co.) leads the ticket as candidate for Supervisor. (See page 4 for other candidates.)

The Republican party's platform includes the following planks: 1. Pledge 20 per cent reduction in cost of township government. 2. Put local welfare work in hands of a

citizens' committee, taking it out of politics. 3. Elimination of duplications such as (a) overlapping of Village and Township work; (b) Police radio, for which Grosse Pointe pays \$2.00 to \$2.50 per call, letting this work to Detroit for 75c per call. (Note: this would effect no change in village scout car work); (c) Survey on feasibility of eliminating entire Township unit of government. Opposed to this platform, the incumbent Democrats point to their record.

DELAYED BUT NOT AVOIDED

Township supervisor Edmund Vernier, has been credited in a recent public statement with a "successful blockade of the \$300,000 tax levy in 1930." Investigation of the statement proved that the reference was to the Eight Mile Road tax.

The claims as stated would give the public the impression that Grosse Pointe was not paying for the County Road Commission's levy on the Eight Mile Road improvement.

This does not appear to be so in the light of the following facts:

The state and county, in 1928, charged Grosse Pointe at large \$191,835.55 for its share of expense and benefit in the Eight Mile Highway. At the same time they charged \$67,000 to certain Grosse Pointe property holders of the immediate district under the then existing Covert Road Act No. 475. The total sum with interest was to be paid in ten annual installments.

Supervisor Vernier refused to spread these road taxes.

In 1932 the Norton Act relieved the township and district of future obligations on the Covert Road bill, but was not retroactive. Thus Grosse Pointe was relieved of the last six assessments and was held for the first four installments as follows:

	At Large	District
1928	\$ 24,650.86	\$ 5,838.52
1929	24,542.67	6,997.12
1930	28,391.67	6,724.49
1931	27,240.65	6,450.85
	<u>\$109,825.85</u>	<u>\$26,010.98</u>

Other township obligations, \$4,146.41, makes the total amount Grosse Pointe Township owes Wayne County \$139,983.24.

The County proceeded to collect this sum by holding out a portion of the annual school primary funds, but later decided against this procedure.

Nevertheless, the County is collecting its \$139,983.24 by retaining payments on delinquent taxes. All delinquent township taxes are payable at the County Building. The Grosse Pointe Township delinquent taxes past due and payable with the County are more than the sum involved, assuring the State and County full payment.

All of which means that the Supervisor has delayed, but has not avoided, the County assessments. Nor has his method saved the Grosse Pointe taxpayers at-large, but it has added to their burden the \$26,010.98 that would have been assumed by special pieces of property.

REMICK LEADS IN FARMS

In Grosse Pointe Farms primary Jerome H. Remick, Jr., led the field of seven candidates for trustee at the primary with a 514 vote. John R. Kerby, unopposed candidate for re-election polled 591 votes. Theodore H. Hinchman, candidate for president, received 481 votes in the primary, while his opponent, Francis J. Hock, received 265 votes.

The complete list of successful candidates, together with the number of votes each polled, is as follows: For President, Theodore H. Hinchman, 481, and Francis J. Hock, 265; for Trustee, Emmet F. Connely, 319; Raymond A. Fox, 159; John R. Grylls, the incumbent, 232; William K. Muir, 500; Jerome H. Remick, Jr., 514; and Dalton J. V. Snyder, 172; for Clerk, John R. Kerby, 591; for Treasurer, Russell A. Labadie, 164; and Cyriel O. Teetaert, 164; for assessor, Walter A. Allard, the incumbent, 304; and Frank G. VanDyke, 167.

Statements made by candidates in the Farms, follow:

Raymond A. Fox: "The times command every citizen to take an active interest in his government. It is my determination, if entrusted with the responsibility of office, to be faithfully present at the Council Meetings, devote other time and attention in getting a complete working knowledge of Village affairs and to actively support such measures of Village government as promote the local welfare without compromising the policy of drastic economy, which the times make imperative even in Grosse Pointe Farms."

Cyriel O. Teetaert: "I was born in Grosse Pointe, and attended St. Paul's and Grosse Pointe public schools, receiving three years commercial high school education. I am a taxpayer in Grosse Pointe Farms and have been a bookkeeper for a contracting firm for eight years, as well as being in the contracting business two years. If successful, I will devote as much time as the office requires and will practice economy at all times."

William K. Muir, General Superintendent Detroit & Cleveland Navigation Co.: "If elected to office, I will devote all the time and energy necessary and promise an economical and conservative treatment of the Village business."

Emmet F. Connely, President of the First Detroit Co.: "I am seeking office at the urge of friends who believe that the present condition of our Village requires men of business experience. I believe that Grosse Pointe Farms possibly should have a survey made, similar to the one recently completed in Grosse Pointe Village. If elected to office, I will give every Village problem the same careful consideration that I would in my own business."

