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Water Rates Should Be Reduced!

An Editorial

By GROVER C. WHYTE

There will be widespread disappointment among water consumers in Torrance if the city council follows the recommendations of the city's consulting engineer, Arthur Taylor, and gives a mere 15 per cent reduction in domestic water rates for the first year. "Better and cheaper water" was the campaign promise made at the time the \$400,000 water bonds were voted four years ago, and it was confidently expected that a substantial reduction in rates would be given as soon as the city took over its water system. In order to put Torrance on a comparable basis with neighboring communities, it will be necessary to eventually lower rates 50 per cent. However, such a sharp reduction can hardly be expected the first year, but it is not unreasonable to ask that rates be reduced 25 per cent at this time.

And a reduction of 25 per cent can safely be made within the next three months without any danger of increasing the tax rate, according to city officials who have given the financial set-up of the water department careful study. Water bills are at a minimum during January and February, and few would object to the city maintaining the present rate schedule for the next two months; but before spring a substantial decrease should be put into effect.

Abnormally high water rates have been responsible for keeping many people out of Torrance, and it is much more important that this city eliminate this obstacle to its development than it is to make money out of the sale of water. The increase in tax revenues that will accompany the growth of this city by making it attractive to new residents will more than offset any possible profit made by the water department.

Through modern purification methods, which are provided for in the new construction, the quality of the water will be brought up to a standard satisfactory for drinking and other uses. Better water is assured, and every effort should also be made to give us cheaper water, and thus fulfill the campaign promises made over four years ago.

Carrell Hears First Case In This District

New Justice of the Peace
Will Visit Torrance
Every Tuesday

Judge Frank Carrell, newly elected justice of the peace of the consolidated Inglewood township, held court in Torrance for the first time Tuesday morning, January 8, when he heard the arraignment of James J. O'Toole, 1225 Madrid avenue and Robert Williams, Davidson City, who were arrested January 5 on complaint of Victor Rosset, 22116 South Vermont, on a charge of disturbing the peace.

O'Toole and Williams pleaded not guilty to the charge, and a court trial to hear the case was set for Tuesday, January 15, at 11 o'clock. They were represented by Attorney Torrance C. Welch.

Separate actions against the defendant, alleging battery, with Leonard Pizal as the complaining witness, will also be heard on this date, the action following their arraignment on January 3, when they pleaded not guilty, and were released on their own recognizance to appear for trial later.

An argument over a milk route of the district, being the cause of the difficulty, will be heard on January 7, following the action of the board of supervisors last fall when the five townships of Lomita, La Rambla, Redondo, Gardena and Inglewood were consolidated. On November 6 Judge Frank Carrell of the Gardena court was elected to preside over the new township, and later action was taken by the board to appoint Judge A. F. Monroe, former Inglewood justice, as the second justice for the township, since it appeared that there would be too much work for one justice to handle.

Judge Carrell announced on Tuesday that for the present he would devote one day each week to work in Torrance, coming here on Tuesday, and that he would spend Thursday of each week in Redondo Beach, holding court the balance of the time in Gardena.

Mrs. Bertha Wilcox, Lomita court clerk, has been retained as clerk and will be in charge of the office in Torrance. Constable Charles R. Taber and his wife, Mrs. Tirzah Taber, who has been in charge of the office work for the constables, have tendered their resignations.

Drunk Drivers In Torrance Will Be Handed Penalties

Drunk driving in Torrance must stop, says Police Chief G. M. Calder, backed up by his corps of officers who are watching with considerable dismay the increasing number of such offenders who are taken into custody each week. Three cases in one day are too many, says the chief, and in this regard he is backed up by Police Judge Robert F. Lessing, who says that from now on, the man or woman who is brought into court on such a charge may expect no mercy but will be given a severe penalty.

It may be news to the general motoring public that under the California vehicle law, drunk driving can no longer be classed as a misdemeanor, but has been made a felony, with penalties ranging from a fine of \$500 and imprisonment for one year in the state penitentiary to a maximum of \$5000 fine and three years incarceration.

Drunk drivers constitute one of the greatest threats against the public peace and safety of the present day and this disregard for the lives of others must cease.

Drill Dry Wells to Drain Floods At Hydril Plant

In an effort to relieve flood water conditions surrounding the Hydril Company plant on Lomita boulevard, the Torrance city council authorized the drilling of two dry wells this week, upon recommendation of City Engineer F. R. Leonard. It is hoped that if these wells are drilled through the hard adobe that the water will drain away in the more porous sub-soil.

Reduced fare on the Pacific Electric railway from the Dolanco station to any point on the line in Torrance as far south as Plaza del Amo is now in effect. The fare has been cut from 10 to 5 cents. Dolanco station is located at the site of the Hughes-Mitchell plant.

HARBOR CHAMBERS INSTALL ITS OFFICERS HERE TONIGHT

Supervisor John R. Quinn Will Act As Installing Officer;
Many Distinguished Members and Guests Expected
At Annual Gathering In Torrance

Fred W. Marlow, director of the Southern California district of the Federal Housing Administration, will be the speaker of the evening at the annual installation meeting of the Harbor District Chambers of Commerce, which will be held this afternoon and evening at the Woman's clubhouse, 1422 Engracia avenue.

Mr. Marlow will talk on "Better Housing," a timely topic in view of the activities of federal workers in Torrance and Lomita who have just completed a survey of the needs of the property owners for improvements in their homes. His talk will take up various phases of the better housing program and show how easily applicable it is to the wants of those who are in a position to take advantage of it.

The evening program will open with the singing of "America" by the assembly, followed by the invocation by Rev. George G. Elder. Dinner will be served by the Woman's Club, and more than 200 guests are expected.

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Resignations of Lomita Officers Effective Jan. 22

Constable and Mrs. Taber
Retire After Decade of
Active Service

Resignations of Constable Charles R. Taber and his deputy, Mrs. Tirzah Taber, who has been in charge of office work in the constable's office for the past ten and one-half years, will take effect January 22, when Constable and Mrs. Taber will retire to private life. The office of the constable in Lomita was closed on Wednesday, and all official records were removed.

Contrary to the announcement, made recently, which had the appearance of authority since it was issued from the department of public relations of the sheriff's office, the appointment of Mr. Taber as constable of the new Inglewood township, was not made. Instead, Taber was offered a deputy constable's post, which he declined to accept and tendered his resignation. Taber has been in charge of this work in Lomita township for the past 11 years, and is the oldest constable in the state.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Taber have been efficient officers, and have handled the duties of their posts in a manner that met with the approval of all law-abiding residents of the township, and their retirement is regretted.

With the closing of the office in Lomita, Mr. and Mrs. Taber gave up active work as officers, but since each is entitled to a vacation period for the year their actual retirement from the service will not become effective until January 22.

Their plans for the future are as yet indefinite, but they expect to remain as residents of the district.

With the closing of the local office and the retirement of the constable, Lomita is now left without local police protection. All cases of a criminal nature will now be handled through Sheriff's sub-station No. 3, located on Vermont avenue, telephone Thornwall 1168, while the civil work will be handled by the constable of the new Inglewood township. The sheriff's radio car which patrols the district at night will still be in operation, but calls for its services will have to be relayed through sub-station 3.

Clerk's Time Is Divided Between Torrance, Redondo

As stated elsewhere in this issue, Judge Frank Carrell will hold court in Torrance on Tuesday of each week, but on Thursday in Redondo Beach. The clerk of the court, Mrs. Bertha Wilcox, will be in attendance at these court sessions all day, Tuesday in this city and Thursday in Redondo. On Monday, Wednesday and Friday she will be found in the Torrance office during the morning, and at the Redondo office in the afternoon.

All cases which had been set for hearing today in the Torrance court were postponed until next Tuesday, January 15.

Quarterly Meeting of C. of C. Members

The regular quarterly membership meeting of the Chamber of Commerce will be held Tuesday evening, January 15, at 7:30 at the chamber rooms in the rear of the Bank of America. There will be no speaker in order to give ample time for open discussion of local problems. All members are requested to attend.

Mother Is Awarded Custody of Child

At the conclusion of a hearing in superior court this week, Melva Snyder states that she was awarded the custody of her son, three months old. Suit had been brought by her former husband, James J. Matthews, Jr., but on hearing the testimony the custody of the child was granted to the young mother. Miss Snyder's marriage to Matthews was annulled in July, 1934.

PIONEER GROCER DIES

J. S. Smart, one of the organizers of the Smart & Final Co. wholesale grocery chain, and chairman of its board of directors, passed away Sunday of a heart attack, at his home in Santa Ana.

CITY LEASES CRAVENS AVE. BUILDING FOR WATER DEPT.

Report On Financial Set-Up and Possible Rate Reductions
Given By Consulting Engineer; Would
Employ Local Men

Offices of the newly acquired municipal water department will be moved about February 1 from the present quarters occupied by the Torrance Water, Light & Power Company on Post avenue to the building owned by Sam Levy on Cravens avenue, directly opposite the city hall.

A lease for the building was authorized by the Torrance city council Tuesday evening. Rental for the first year will be \$40 per month and an option was taken for the second year at \$50 per month. The city council also appointed City Engineer E. R. Leonard as manager of the water department, in charge of operations.

The firm of Salisbury, Bradshaw and Taylor, had previously been engaged as consulting engineers to supervise the construction of improvements and advise the council on financial matters pertaining to the water system.

Arthur Taylor, one of the consulting engineers, was present Tuesday night and explained many phases of the financial set-up, and outlined plans for a gradual reduction in water rates. Mr. Taylor predicted that the interest rate on the \$170,000 loan and grant recently approved by the PWA would be about 4 per cent per annum. Approximately \$45,000 of this fund will be given as a grant, leaving \$125,000 upon which the city will pay interest, which will be equivalent to a 3 per cent interest rate on the total fund furnished by the federal government, Taylor stated. Exact figures will not be available until the official notification arrives from Washington.

Under terms of the federal loan, all work must be done by contract, Taylor said, but contractors will be required to hire workers through the federal branch of the federal re-employment service bureau, and men living in this district will be given preference. This bureau should not be confused with the SERA or other relief agencies, Taylor stated, as any workman is eligible to register for employment, regardless of whether he is dependent upon public relief.

It will not be necessary to accept the entire \$170,000 from the federal government in one sum, Taylor stated, but funds may be requisitioned as needed to finance contemplated improvements. Neither will it be necessary to accept the entire amount; but 75 per cent of the loan and grant will be paid in the form of a bond issue of approximately \$40,000 from the \$200,000 bond issue sold to private investors which would not be required to finance improvements contemplated at the present time. This excess \$40,000 can be used to buy back some of the 6 per cent bonds or invested elsewhere until needed, he stated.

Mr. Taylor also pointed out the economy of drilling wells to provide a water supply, and stated that the maximum cost of pumping water from the city's own wells would not exceed 14 cents per 1000 cubic feet, as contrasted with the present charge of 40 cents per 1000 cubic feet charged by the Dominguez Water Company.

When asked regarding Colorado river water, Mr. Taylor stated that such water will be three times the hardness of local well water and will not be nearly as desirable for industrial, domestic or irrigation purposes. He stated that no one knows what the charge for Colorado river water will be as yet, but that if it was contemplated to raise sufficient revenue from the sale of Colorado river water to cover operation costs and interest on bonded indebtedness that the rate for the first few years had been estimated at about \$2.90 per 1000 cubic feet.

Rate Reductions
Under the set-up submitted by Mr. Taylor, a reduction in local water rates of 15 per cent would be given the first year, with an additional 10 per cent reduction in 1936. By 1941, it would be possible to cut the rates to approximately half the present schedule. No action regarding rate reductions, however, was taken by the city council, and the present schedule will remain in force for the time being, it was indicated.

Building Permit
Permit for the construction of an addition to a corrugated iron chemical plant building at 2021 Normandie avenue, has been issued to the Hughes-Mitchell Processes, Inc. The addition, to be 12 by 20 feet, will cost \$300.

Surveyors At Work
Surveyors from the engineering department of the city of Los Angeles were at work on the proposed extension of El Prado to the Hughes-Mitchell plant last week, which is taken to mean that early action on the improvement of this needed highway will be forthcoming.

CONTRACT FOR POST OFFICE IS AWARDED

Contractor Harold Hansen
States Work Will Start
Before January 27

Southwest Builder and Contractor, a Los Angeles publication, will carry the announcement of the award of contract for construction of the new federal building in Torrance. As was stated recently, Harold Hansen, 1187 North Flores street, Los Angeles, was the low bidder, and he has been officially notified of the award which was made Monday, January 7. Hansen's bid for the postoffice building was \$34,376.

Plans and specifications call for the erection of a one-story and basement structure, 68x87 feet in area, with concrete walls, composition roof, damp-proofing material, metal skylights, steam heating plant, and other features. Bids were opened November 12, and after due consideration of the ability of the bidders the contract was awarded this week.

In a telephone conversation with Mr. Hansen this morning, he stated that should the weather conditions become favorable work will start in about two weeks. The government requires that work shall start not more than 20 days after the award, which will make the final date for ground-breaking January 27. However, Mr. Hansen stated that he hopes to get started before that date.

The new building will be located on the west side of Marechal avenue, on the alley corner north of Cravens. The site was purchased last summer at a cost of \$7000.

CLOTHES ARE STOLEN

Following the basketball games at Torrance high school last Friday, Mrs. Wierk, 718 West Broadway, and Mrs. Jewell, 162 Plaza Square, Hawthorne, mothers of two of the Louisinger players, reported to police that a black leather jacket and a white sweater had been stolen from lockers at the Torrance high school.

Hot Tips for Contractors and Building Supply Men!

Plenty of work and orders waiting for you right here in Torrance and Lomita. The house-to-house canvass is revealing scores of people ready and anxious to build or remodel under the liberal financing terms of the Federal Housing Act. Others desire mechanical refrigerators and other household appliances.

In order that Contractors, Builders, Supply Men, and Appliance Merchants may be thoroughly familiar with the terms and opportunities of the Federal Housing Act, a special illustrated lecture will be given for their benefit Friday, January 11, at 7:30 P. M. at the Torrance Chamber of Commerce. No charge for admission. . . . collection! Come and get prepared to answer questions of prospective customers.

A discussion as to the method of distributing "leads" developed during the house-to-house canvass will also be held.

ALSO—Attend the Harbor District Chambers of Commerce dinner tonight. . . . 6:30 o'clock at Woman's Clubhouse. Hear address by Fred W. Marlow, director of FHA in Southern California. 75c plate.

Moose Lodge and Whittier Unite For Initiation

Large Class to Be Adopted
At Meeting Held Tomorrow Night

Torrance lodge, L. O. O. P. M., will combine with the Whittier lodge to put on a big initiation ceremony at their lodge rooms tomorrow evening, Friday, January 11. The local lodge is participating in the nation-wide drive for membership which closes January 31, and will have a large class to adopt at this meeting.

The Torrance lodge is one of the most progressive and active groups in this section, and is always on the alert to bring favorable publicity to itself and the community as witnessed by its success during the last state convention when the Torrance contingent won the first prize for its showing in the parade at Long Beach last summer. The cup and key awarded them at that time are now on display at the Chamber of Commerce. The lodge is busy at present making ready to enter the competition at the next convention which will be held in Oakland, in August, and will probably display the same unique project that won them fame at Long Beach.

Minstrel Show At Recreation Center Next Tuesday Nite

Due to an unfortunate misunderstanding as to transportation for the colored orchestras which were scheduled to play for dancing at the recreation center here and in Waltham last Tuesday night, several hundred people were disappointed. The failure of the orchestras to appear was no fault of the playground managers, and all future difficulties of that kind will be avoided, according to their announcement this week.

The next entertainment, a minstrel show, to be put on by dramatic talent from Los Angeles, will be held as stated, next Tuesday evening, January 15, and the public is invited to attend. All other plans for the month will be carried out. They include an old fashioned dance on January 22, and a swimming party at Redondo Beach on January 29.

RAINFALL

Up to last night, rainfall in Torrance measured 1.05 inches for the storm of the week, a total of 11.30 for the season, which is 4.17 inches more than was recorded at the same date last year.

In Lomita the rain gauge at Narbonne high school showed 1.21 inches for the storm, up to Wednesday evening, 10.65 inches for the season and 9.10 for last year to date.

HIT A MULE

Clyde Watts, 16433 St. Andrews, Moneta, told police that his car struck a mule which was wandering on the highway near Western and 190th street last Saturday.

THANKS ALL WHO HELPED

Mrs. Flora Waters, chairman in charge of the Red Cross membership drive, * thanks all those who aided * * either by paying their dues * * or in other ways, during the * * campaign just closed. * * hearty co-operation of all is * * appreciated, says Mrs. * * Waters. * * * * *