

THIS Chief Administrator of Birmingham and THAT of the City Manager

By G. R. A.

Legislators Are But Human—Good, Poor, Indifferent Being connected with Governor Sanford's executive office in Lansing and, quite naturally, extending my efforts to aid him in obtaining desirable legislation, I have found myself during the past 16 months in several states of mind concerning the Legislature here in Michigan.

By this I mean simply that I have often found myself in vigorous commendation on the way down the House and the Senate on specific subjects under consideration; likewise, I have now and then been much disgusted with what I observed going on in one or both Houses.

From the perspective of an observer who wants only the Truth and the Right to prevail in a Legislature such an observer could find some situations that would utterly disgust him. For example, when you see one or more legislators opposing the best thought developed among their fellow-legislators, or when you see one legislator voting against an issue before one of the two Legislative branches, you seek to find the cause or causes.

Briefly, such causes may include: honest difference of opinion based upon available information; prejudice or lack of knowledge; mentally dishonest difference of opinion based upon unfair prepossession, fear of retribution from some business connection or pressure group; dislike by one or more legislators of the provisions of the bill under consideration, which can include members of the Legislature, some State officials whose department is concerned with the bill at issue, or antagonism of the Legislature toward the past 16 months by a few obstructive legislators, and fewer members of the House.

Take the case, last week, of the Senate attitude toward the continued funding of the State Penitentiary. When the Senate convened Monday morning, several items of business during the day, finally taking up Sanctioning of the State Penitentiary, the bill was passed by a vote of 17-10.

Then they voted, in this secret executive session, coming up with a vote of 17-10. The majority of the 32 members of the Senate voted to continue the State Penitentiary. News of Sanford's defeat reached the Governor at about 11 o'clock Thursday night.

It was then that a few of our staff got busy in the effort to hold all the favorable Senators in Lansing until the final vote. The next forenoon (usually, most of the day) would have started for their homes, but they were held and they did at the same time doing all possible to win the support of those who were not yet making the 17 approving votes.

There was no question in our mind as to what this was a fight between the Governor and his friends, and the Sigler administration. Had Sanford not been defeated, the Sigler administration temporarily would have been held within the hands of a selfish, non-productive and -others- so. In reviewing the action and attitude of the Senate on the Sanctioning of the State Penitentiary, I should understand why the impartial and objective minded 17 Senators voted as they did; but I can understand why Sanford's opponents voted as they did, and most of the reasons that motivated them.

Only One Reason I believe firmly in the spirit of competitive thinking and acting in the processes of our form of democratic government, my (See This & That, Page 2)

Chief Administrator of Birmingham is the City Manager

By George Wm. Averill To completely define the duties and responsibilities of a city manager, one must be an astute political scientist as well as a business management expert. For many books have been written about city management, and all of them are contrary to one another in some respects.

Few of us are real political scientists or management experts. However, there are a number of general aspects of a city manager's position that can be presented to the public in quite easily understood terms.

The manager of Birmingham is the chief administrative officer of this city. Carry Out Program It's up to him to see that things get done, that our local municipal government functions to the best advantage. He must marshal and use the resources of our city government to carry out—in an efficient manner—those programs assigned upon by the city's legislative body, the city commission.

It rests upon the city manager's shoulders to see that the administration of government is carried on at a high level of competence, that all the technical implications of policy approved by the commission are transmitted to city employees. He must make certain that the city commission itself receives adequate and proper technical information of its numerous decisions.

Then he must perform all the other duties and responsibilities assigned to him as the city manager. He is appointed by the city commission and is responsible to them alone. No Favoritism He is the task of developing and maintaining high performance and conduct standards among city personnel, and he is responsible for the personnel policies so that there can be no charge of favoritism or nepotism in either the personal or the public.

The city manager must explore, anticipate and release plans and policies which ultimately will be of benefit both to the city and to the community at large. He's got to explore all possible alternative courses of action; he must anticipate the consequences; he must develop and release them in detail before he makes a final decision. (See MANAGER, Page 2)

Little Interest Expressed Over Assessment Change Elliott Kinney, Birmingham realtor and member of the 1948 Board of Review, this week pointed out several interesting matters he had observed while a member of the board. He made his comments to the regular meeting of the Birmingham Real Estate Board.

He pointed out an existing problem which he felt was less than one per cent of the people paying taxes appeared to be interested in the assessment change. He said, "It is my opinion that the assessment change is probably one of the best conducted in our municipal structure. There is a very real feeling of interest available to the public. The records are in good order and are readily available. I found no evidence of favoritism or biasness. I believe Birmingham is indeed fortunate to have such an able civic official."

Assessing Difficult Kinney expressed his opinion that personal property assessments present a vexing problem to the assessor, to true formulae that can be applied to them, and it is hard to measure the diverse reports submitted by the various commercial enterprises in the city. "At present new construction is being reported infrequently or assessed at a maximum, according to the records, Kinney said. Perhaps the reason for this is an inclined to question the wisdom of calculating the maximum factors on new home construction in these days of high construction costs. When one thinks of the thousands of vacant lots whose tax revenue to the city for years has been negligible contribution, why should the enterprising builder or homeowner, when we expect to see a building boom, be given a special rate for many years to come?" Kinney said he felt that possibly the assessment rate should be tempered as to valuations should be tempered with more realism and horse sense. Due consideration to the fact that the opportunity to increase revenue by being somewhat realistic in applying the tax rates to new building, he concluded.

Charter Presented to Local Kiwanians

The Birmingham Kiwanis Club Tuesday evening was presented with its formal charter to Kiwanis International by James W. Robertson of Sault Ste. Marie, district governor. The meeting was held at the Community House Tuesday evening.

Edward O'Halloran (left), president of the College Park (Detroit) Kiwanis Club, presented the official club gavel to Ernie Miller, president of the local Kiwanis club, at the "Charter Night" ceremonies held at the Community House Tuesday evening.

Robert Magidoff, NBC Commentator, Will Speak Here Birmingham residents will be among the first in this country to hear from Robert Magidoff himself. Magidoff, NBC commentator of Russian, officials of the local League of Women Voters said this week.

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War Inside Russia During the war he covered the entire conflict from inside Russia. He visited the Soviet camp for 14 times. He covered the United States to the Soviet on a convoy to the Persian Gulf. He accompanied Eric Johnston on a fabulous trip to the Soviet on a convoy to the Persian Gulf.

Students Schedule Next Year's Work Scheduling of nearly 600 students for the 1948-49 term took place last week under direction of home-room teachers and counselors.

Students to Give 'Hansel and Gretel' "Hansel and Gretel" by Engelbert Humperdinck will be presented this evening by the pupils of the fourth, fifth and sixth grades of Adams School. The Bert Elamth arrangement will be staged at the school at 8 o'clock.

Ladies Night Set for June 3 Because the Memorial Day holiday falls on Monday, the ladies night program at the Birmingham Rotary Club will have no non-day luncheon meeting on Monday.

EARLY COPY WANTED

Because the Memorial Day holiday will be observed next Monday, The Eccentric editorial staff will have only four days to obtain and prepare copy for next week's issue, instead of the regular five days. This will necessitate, as far as humanly possible, the doing of two days' work in just one day—Tuesday. Therefore, news items should be submitted by the end of this week if at all possible.

SO PLEASE BRING IN OR PHONE IN YOUR NEWS BY THE END OF THIS WEEK

Community House Roll Call Nears Goal, Kass Reports

The Community House Roll Call fund is getting close to the minimum amount of \$24,538 needed for 1948-49 budgeted operating expenses and a picked score of workers in making a special effort to close the books of the fund drive by May 31 with the full sum collected or pledged.

Col. McCormick to Be Buried in Arlington, Va. Funeral services were held yesterday afternoon from the Bell Federal Home for Soldiers at Arlington, Va. Col. McCormick, 69, of 1280 Cranbrook road, who died suddenly Sunday.

Sigler to Address Franklin Residents Gov. Kim Sigler will address members of the Franklin Community Association at a meeting to be held in the Franklin Community Hall, Franklin, Mich., Monday.

H. R. Estes Files for 3rd Term in State Legislature Howard R. Estes, 492 Riverdale, filed his name for nomination as Republican candidate for state representative of the 3rd district of Oakland County.

City Lets Contract for Curbs, Gutters A contract for slightly less than 23,000 lineal feet of curb and gutter work was awarded by the city to the J. W. B. Co. of Detroit.

MOMS Club Tag Day Saturday, Sept. 18, will be "Tag Day" for the MOMS Club of Birmingham. The club will have a tag day given Monday night by the city commission.

\$615,575.06 Required for Coming Year

20-Minute Levy to Apply to Property Owners

Representing a total net tax increase of \$35,824.06 over last year, the city commission Monday night unanimously approved a \$615,575.06 city budget for the 1948-49 fiscal year.

Increased Salaries City Manager Donald C. Egbert in presenting his 1948-49 budget to the commission, listed the following items which account for most of the budget increase.

Salaries will receive an average 8 1/2 per cent pay boost with the hourly rated employees, who now are on a 40-hour week rather than a 44-hour basis, will receive an additional 10 per cent wage increase.

Local residents just won't stop overworking," he explained. Egbert said that the city received an appropriation of \$6,800 to assist its yearly program. Last year the city received \$15,000.

For Street Repairs The extra \$17,000 for the DPW will be spent mainly on the repair of streets. The city has received several contracts for street repairs, which received an unusual amount of damage this year.

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