

Volunteers For Romney Form Chapters

The campaign for the Republican Party under the guidance of Governor Romney will begin this week with the issuing of charters by the central Romney Volunteers organization. The charters, which will be issued to county and congressional districts and local chapters, will bridge territorial lines and the 14th District chapter headed by Robert L. Halbrook, Jr., a young Detroit attorney.

The head of the volunteer coordinating committee, John Dempsey, explained at a meeting in Ann Arbor for county chairmen that the Volunteers for Romney organization will have as its prime function the task of reducing friction between the Romney backers at large and the GOP segments working in behalf of the entire Republican ticket.

County and District GOP chairmen are being asked for their cooperation, so that all groups may coordinate their efforts.

IN OAKLAND COUNTY there will be a parent volunteers organization in the congressional districts. The charters will be issued

BITS OF BIRMINGHAM

When a Franklin School third-grader announced that she had prepared a book report, her parents naturally assumed that it would be written (i.e., printed) on ordinary issue school paper. Not so, said the young student, as she taped a series of shirt cardboard together and proceeded to put down the necessary information. Come time to turn in her assignment, she struggled out of the door, complete with book report, measuring about 18 by 30 inches. To her mother's "are you sure it's supposed to be so big?" little Miss replied, "of course. Karen made hers on a window shade."

Birmingham City Manager L. R. Gare has returned from a vacation to the South. He was on hand for this week's city commission meeting. Mayor Florence H. Willett will be back from her vacation to the South next week.

in the county, cities and townships. It is believed that in past gubernatorial campaigns, the task of wooing the independent and undecided voters has been neglected to the extent that capable candidates have lost elections that should have been won.

April 5, 1962

THE BIRMINGHAM (MICH.) ECCENTRIC 5-A

Airport

(Continued from 1-A)

ment and operation of the airport by adjacent counties or local governmental units on a regional basis or through a central authority similar to the New York Port Authority. Under such a system, several governmental units would share the cost of the airport project, thereby reducing Oakland County's cost.

WHILE HAMLIN cites such a plan as only a possibility, he claims queries and informal support from neighboring governmental units indicate such an idea should be explored.

Some county finance experts feel an intra-county cost sharing system would be the only feasible approach to the multi-million dollar project.

One county finance authority, who prefers remaining anonymous, is convinced that Oakland could not foot its 50-25 per cent share of the bill alone.

"The days of non-tax revenues or surplus (a strategic source for financing capital improvement projects such as an airport) are over," he said.

NEXT YEAR'S proposed budget, which goes to the board of supervisors in mid-April and then to the Allocations Board for final approval, calls for an increase of almost two million dollars over the current budget of \$14,775,941. He said the new budget will easily exceed \$16,000,000.

Welfare and hospitalization expenditures are cited as examples of the county's growing pains brought on by population growth which requires more services.

In addition, he said, the county will lose \$80,000 from the Department of Public Works in the fiscal year which will not be included in the 1963 budget.

IF WELFARE or hospitalization expenditures go up over the next year, as January figures indicate, said anonymous, the county will be operating in the red for the first time since 1946.

Welfare expenditures normally run around \$1,400,000, he said, but it looks like the county will spend \$2,000,000 or better. Hospitalization also was up for January.

However, the real indicators are the financial picture of these two accounts, he said, should be based on the first four months of the year. "Then, we'll know pretty well where we stand in the coming year."

ALTHOUGH NON-TAX revenues (officially known as unappropriated surplus from non-tax revenues) are expected to increase over the last year, he said, the increase will not be enough to offset additional expenses. Last year, accumulated non-tax revenues totaled \$3,562,500.

A restriction on accumulation of these non-tax revenue funds limits the county in building up these reserves in any one year to more than one mill of the county's state equalized valuation. Oakland's valuation in 1961 was \$2,094,683,180 or just in excess of two billion dollars. This non-tax revenue limitation

last year would have amounted to about \$2,900,000.

HOWEVER, said anonymous, the one mill limitation exists only in theory. It would be impossible to raise the equivalent of a mill in one year, he said, because the school districts and townships wouldn't stand for it.

The Allocations Board, which distributes each county's allotted 15 mills among the county government, townships and school districts according to needs, hardly has enough millage now without giving the county that full one-mill limitation, he said. Current distribution of the 15 mills (which amounts to \$15 in taxes collected on each \$100 of state equalized property valuation in the county) gives the county \$5.25 of each \$15 with the school districts and townships sharing the remaining \$9.75.

AT PRESENT, no non-tax revenue or surplus funds exist. The recent transfer of \$322,000 to a special airport account as payment for the initial 445 acres of the 3,000-acre airport site exhausted any non-tax revenue balance.

This \$362,000 previously had been intended to finance a county health department in Royal Oak and a welfare office in Pontiac until the airport project came up and diverted the money from these areas.

Another source of available funds consists of 1/10 of a mill included in the county budget for building. This building fund provides about \$200,000.

SUCH AVAILABLE funds from non-tax revenues, including monies from the sale of vacant residential and commercial property, and from the 1/10 of a mill building allotment, financed the new \$3,000,000-plus

county courthouse in Pontiac, he said.

Non-tax revenues accumulated over the past 10 years, said anonymous, played a key role in financing the courthouse which is paid in full.

What about the other two means of financing the airport project?

Well, issuance of general obligation bonds would require an increased millage over and above the 15-mill limitation, and consequently, a vote of the people.

Citizens would have to decide at the polls whether they want to a) develop the airport project and b) raise the millage to pay for it.

Both issues would be submitted to the voters at the same time and both would have to carry.

THE ONLY other alternative of financing the airport project would be issuance of revenue bonds which would make the airport a self-supporting operation.

Similar to the system used in financing sewer districts, the users of the facilities (airlines in the case of the airport) pay certain charges or fees on a contractual basis. These fees go toward paying off the bonds and interest.

No citizen vote is required for issuance of revenue bonds, only approval of the county and state Municipal Finance Commission.

Revenue bonds is the method of financing Detroit Metropolitan Airport where various fees charged the airlines and concession owners are used to pay off the bonds and interest.

Once the bonds are paid off, the revenues can be put in the county's general fund or in a fund for future maintenance of the airport.

ACCORDING TO William Baers, budget director of the Wayne County Road Commission, the body that operates and controls Metropolitan Airport, the combined principal payment on two recent bond issues in 1961 will be \$15,000 while the interest payment for the same

year will be \$391,487.50. As the bonds are gradually paid off, principal payments will increase and interest payments will decrease.

By the time the 35-year bonds are paid off, Wayne County will have paid off the original value of the bonds, \$7,050,000, plus a total of \$7,450,437 in interest.

Thus, financing through a bond issue is similar to financing a home—often ending up paying as high as twice as much as the bonds or the home were worth.

OF COURSE, the airport business is big business. And it can be profitable.

Metropolitan operated at a net profit of \$501,978.58 in 1960. Although the books show a loss of \$541,498.33 when depreciation totaling \$1,103,476.91 was applied, the airport is still considered to have operated at a profit, said Baers.

The profit and loss statement for the City Department of Airports in Los Angeles, Calif., during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1961, recorded a record income of \$5,913,563 and a net profit of \$1,100,870.

This was despite bond redemption and interest payments totaling \$2,135,661 and \$1,902,159 in increased operating expenses.

Next Week: Physical effect of jet airport on the county.

Postpone Meeting

SOUTHFIELD—The Southfield Civic Council meeting slated tonight has been postponed to April 26. The topic will still be multiple housing; the place—Michigan Bell Telephone Company, 23500 Northwestern, Service Center Building.

MI 4-1100 is a number for you to remember. Call it today and place your Birmingham Eccentric classifieds.

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