

Charter Two.—Why, What, How

By SALLA SLOAN
Special Writer

In 1947 Michigan passed a law which allows an existing township to become a charter township. In 1960 amendments were added to the Charter Township Act which expanded the powers granted in the original act.

There are now 10 charter townships in the state. Waterford Township in Oakland County and Canton Township in Wayne have become charter townships.

The best way to understand charter township government is to contrast its differences with regular township government. For a charter township has all of the powers of a regular township but not all of its limitations.

Townships were first established in Michigan in 1787, the year the Northwest Ordinance was passed. Originally they served as boundaries for land surveying and the sale of land. Normally, they were land divisions of six miles by six miles.

In 1827, Michigan passed a law under which a form of local government for the township unit was set up. The form remains substantially the same, although over the years the township has been empowered to give additional services to its residents.

Also over the years villages and cities have been carved out of township territories so that you'll find smaller areas and irregularly shaped townships. Some have disappeared entirely, having been totally annexed by adjoining cities. Township government is essentially a "grass roots" government at its basic levels.

The governing body in the township board. In an urban township (a township with over 5,000 population or with more than 2,000 population but bordering on a city with more than 25,000 residents), the board consists of a supervisor, clerk, treasurer and four trustees. The first three are elected to two-year terms. The latter four are elected to staggered terms of four years.

The township board has rather wide powers in the appointment of administrative officials such as planning commissioners, an urban planner, fire and police boards, clerical employees, a township attorney, auditors, assessors and engineers.

The make-up of the charter township board is exactly the same as a township board.

However, it has broader appointive powers in creating non-administrative offices. A charter township may appoint a township manager to supervise all the business, purchase supplies and hire personnel. His function is that of a "city manager" and allows for

more professional administration of a charter township.

WIDE DISCRETION is given the charter township in creating any additional offices as may be needed, and in combining administrative offices so long as the official duties of the clerk and treasurer are not diminished.

The township planning commission assumes a more responsible role in a charter township, as it takes a two-thirds vote by the township board to override any zoning recommendation it makes.

The ordinance-passing power of a township is limited to those areas where power has been specifically delegated by state law. Until 1960 a township couldn't pass ordinances regulating public safety. Any ordinance which carries a penalty does not become law until 30 days from publication of the ordinance.

In a charter township, the ordinance-passing power is of broader scope.

It is granted regulatory powers under the broad terms of "public peace and health." This includes persons and property therein rather than the granting of specific areas in which it may pass ordinances.

IN ISSUING licenses a charter township is not only given the power to license, but also to prescribe the terms and conditions on which licenses may be granted, suspended or revoked.

Charter township ordinances also have immediate effect on publication.

Regular townships only have permissive powers to provide police and fire protection to their citizens, and are hampered by a number of financial and procedural regulations.

Only since 1951 can townships create a police department with a chief of police and other officers and detectives (other than traffic officers). However, township police don't have state authorization to enforce more than local township ordinances. Township police get the power to act as a peace officer only through deputization by the county sheriff. Therefore, township police are subject to county officers.

In a charter township, the township must provide police and fire protection.

POLICE in a chartered township may be invested with all the powers granted peace officers without being deputized by the county. They have powers of pursuit similar to those granted city police officers.

In a regular township, fines collected by the township justices of the peace are turned over to the county treasurer for the county library.

In a charter township, fines collected for the violation of a town-

ship ordinance are retained by the township.

The greatest difference in the power of a township and a charter township show up in the field of taxation and financing. This in turn affects the amount of services which the two types of townships can offer. Both can offer almost identical services, legally, but the township has less revenue to finance the services.

A township derives its local tax money from a property tax which has a 15-mill limitation. This 15-mill tax is shared with county and school government in a proportion determined by the county allocation board.

However, all three governmental units may, with the approval of the voters, levy a tax in excess of the 15 mills.

An increase for the township must be voted for a specific purpose such as establishment of a library, street lighting, road improvement fund, or the like. The increase can be for no longer than a period of 20 years.

BECAUSE a charter township is a municipal corporation it is not subject to the 15-mill tax limitation.

However, there are tax limitations on a charter township. Unless voters in the township set a tax limitation to the charter township, the limitation is legally five mills. Voters may set the tax limit anywhere up to 10 mills.

Since allocation boards usually allow townships anywhere from one to three mills for budgetary expenses (Bloomfield Township has gotten 1.6 mills for the past several years).

NORTH ADAMS

Three days, Feb. 21, Feb. 24 and March 20, are slated as "fun nights" at Eastover School by the PTO for the school children and their families.

The first date will be an early evening family skating party on the Eastover School "Ice Skating Rink." There will be hot food, refreshments and benches for skaters to toast their toes if it is an especially cold night. For those who want to skip the skating, there will be hot dogs, hot chocolate and coffee. Planning the event are the Daniel Tates of Helston Court, PTO ways & means chairman.

On the following Monday evening, Feb. 24, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., the annual Easter School "Pancake Supper" with special prizes for the children and large family groups, will be held. The Donald Hydes of S. Reading Road have volunteered to be chairman of this popular event.

For the parents and their families an evening card party and dessert is being planned for March 20, with more details at a later date.

WHEN a businessman travels to New York, Washington or other destinations, it's usually an eventful trip—but not so for Edward Smith of Charnwood Drive. When he mentioned his traveling plans to a group of colleagues last week it started a trend of thought with Robert DeBus of Lathrup Village. It seems Mr. DeBus and wife were flying to California on a vacation but had to deposit their eight-month-old daughter, Deirdre, at grandmother's in New York.

An idea blossomed and before Ed Smith knew what was happening he was on his business trip to New York with additional baggage—little Deirdre. It was fun trip for all the flight passengers as the word of the mission spread.

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The over-all pattern in bonding for a charter township is flexible. For non-charter townships there are right limitations in the area of bonding and debt limitation.

Charter townships have broader bonding powers in the use of general revenue bonds to issue bonds only for projects which they are specifically empowered by law to undertake.

Charter townships may transfer unincumbered funds from one fund to another without limitation. Surpluses in any funds revert to the general fund for reappropriation. Townships are limited in the transfer of funds.

MANY of the differences in the power of charter township and regular township are only slight. These occur where a regular township has been given broad powers, such as in zoning, so that a charter township can do little to equal its powers.

Others occur where both the township and charter township have almost no power, such as with sidewalks through special assessment districts, with approval by 65 per cent of property owners. It also curb and save streets by special assessment with the same percentage of approval.

Townships can construct sewer facilities and construction of water mains by special assessment with approval of 51 per cent of property ownership.

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THE B'HAM ECCENTRIC Page 3-CC
Feb. 18, 1964

Thinkshop Panel Hosts Eccentric's Society Editor

Mary Ellen Mead, society editor of The Birmingham Eccentric, is slated to appear as a panelist at the Thinkshop '64 program scheduled for Feb. 17 at the Sheraton-Cadillac Hotel.

Mrs. Mead will join with seven newspaper editors in a forum designed to aid non-professionals prepare and present publicity for their various projects.

The Thinkshop, beginning at 9:30 a.m., is sponsored jointly by Theta Sigma Phi, national fraternity for women in journalism and advertising, and the Women's Advertising Club.

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LWV to Hear Latest 'Report Card'

Birmingham's League of Women Voters will receive a "Report Card on Schools" at their general meeting on Feb. 17 at 12:45 p.m.

The local continuing responsibility committee, which is preparing an information booklet at the request of the Birmingham Board of Education, will present an updating of the League's study on the Birmingham school system.

Included will be a summary of the curriculum study committee report, the current budget and future plans for the system. The program is designed to prepare League members for consensus on any possible millage or bonding requests in the immediate future.

THE MEMBERS will also hear a report from the initiative and referendum committee which has concluded research and is prepared to make recommendations for future action in this area.

Mrs. Robert F. Gray, chairman of the Local Continuing responsibility committee and Mrs. William Essery, chairman of the Initiative and Referendum committee are in charge of the program which will be presented at the Birmingham Community House.

DR. NIXON will talk on his experiences as a staff physician for six weeks last fall on the SS. HOPE, the floating medical teaching center. He also will show color slides of the ship and the foreign places it docked.

Phi Mu plans to support Project HOPE, the principal activity of the People - to - People Health Foundation, as a service project. As their first fund-raising activity for HOPE, the alumnae of Phi Mu are sponsoring a theater party Feb. 26 at the Fisher Theater to see "Hello, Dolly," starring William Bachtel.

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Three Fun Nights Planned By Eastover School PTO

By ELIZABETH YATES
MI 6-1652

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The first date will be an early evening family skating party on the Eastover School "Ice Skating Rink." There will be hot food, refreshments and benches for skaters to toast their toes if it is an especially cold night. For those who want to skip the skating, there will be hot dogs, hot chocolate and coffee. Planning the event are the Daniel Tates of Helston Court, PTO ways & means chairman.

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Phi Mu Takes HOPE For New Project

Dr. Robert Nixon, of 563 Lakeview, Birmingham, will be the guest speaker at the Feb. 18 meeting of the Detroit-area chapter of Phi Mu at the Alabama Club. The meeting will be held at the home of Mrs. Barry Parsons, of 480 Abbey, Birmingham, beginning at 8 p.m.

DR. NIXON will talk on his experiences as a staff physician for six weeks last fall on the SS. HOPE, the floating medical teaching center. He also will show color slides of the ship and the foreign places it docked.

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'Saturday Adventure' Planned by YMCA

The Birmingham YMCA is forming a Saturday Adventure Club for boys and girls ages six through ten.

For 10 weeks beginning on Feb. 22 the Y will take the children to such places as Belle Isle, Froid Lake, or Greenfield Village, as well as arranging programs for them at the Y.

The YMCA bus will pick up children from the Eastover, Harlan, Pembroke, Adams, Quanton, Bloomfield Village, Midvale, Beverly, and Greenfield Schools for an additional fee. Registration must be made by Feb. 19.

THE STUART ROSSES of Robinson Circle entertained at a "get-acquainted open house" for residents of Riverside Meadows subdivision on a recent Saturday evening.

Introduced were newcomers the William Turners, the Joseph Johnsons and the Victor Clivettos, all from the state of Texas; the Creagers of Ohio, the Thomas Hasseys of New Jersey; the Joseph Schroeders of California; and the Carl Stewarts and the Bert Van Maerens of local areas.

"HEARTS AND FLOWERS" was the theme chosen by the Continental Dance Club for their dance Saturday evening at the Hickory Grove School. The 76 couples, all of the Birmingham area, were entertained by the Hickory Grove School and the James Greens of Pontiac; the Orin Cummings and the Ron McGraws of Bloomfield Hills; and the Max Kings of Birmingham.

Chairmen for the dance were the John Mahans and the Marie Flangians of Bloomfield Hills. Cocktails preceded the dance in many of the members' homes.

The dance club has four dances a year at Hickory Grove School and is planning a "guest night" at their dance slated for April 25. Officers of the club are the Gene Johnsons and the James Greens of Pontiac; the Orin Cummings and the Ron McGraws of Bloomfield Hills; and the Max Kings of Birmingham.

Secretaries Meet

Mrs. Anni Ault, of Roxie Road, Bloomfield Hills is registration chairman for the 12th annual National Secretaries Association workshop slated for March 7 at Cobo Hall.

Theme of the one-day workshop is "The Get-Ahead Secretary in This Get-By-World"

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