

THE CITY COUNCIL AND ITS WORK

BIG QUESTIONS HANDLED
BY ALDERMEN THIS YEAR.A Peep at Your Civic Representatives and
Their Work.

Here are some of the big matters this year's council dealt with:

The Power Question—This was temporarily settled last month when the council voted to make a contract with the Hydro Commission for a supply of a thousand horse-power.

The Waterworks By-law—This provides for the metering of all large consumers and reduces the bath and closet rates, the first step in the direction of relief to the householder who pays the shot.

Civic Finances—Abolished overdrafts and saved the city many thousands of dollars by beginning the reorganization of civic departments.

Annexation—Annexed the large district east of Sherman avenue, putting an end to the constant friction between the city and Barton township over water and sewer connections.

Reorganization of Civic Departments—Began the work of shaking up civic departments and inaugurated a policy of economy, reducing the number of ward foremen and dispensing with the services of cement foremen.

Street Railway Work—Ended the long drawn-out struggle with the Street Railway Company for an improved system, getting the company to lay new tracks on James and Barton streets, the first step in a complete new system.

New Road Work—In connection with the Street Railway Company's reconstruction the city laid new permanent pavements on Barton and James streets and fixed up side streets with the macadam off James and Barton streets.

License Reduction—The council reduced the number of licenses the License Commissioners are authorized to issue from 75 to 68.

Library Building—The council voted to retain the old Library building as a civic convention hall, the city paying the debentures and the Library Board the interest.

Coal Oil Inlet—The city has succeeded in getting a ruling from Hon. Frank Cochrane that the inlet water lots are Crown lands. This settles an old and very troublesome question.

ence to their municipal experience, and their hobbies in the Council should of interest.

MAYOR McLAREN.

A business man is Mayor McLaren, and a man of unwavering determination once he marks out his course. The influence that tried to make him wilt on the power question were not long in discovering that.

When he was elected last January by the largest majority Hamilton ever rolled up for a mayoralty candidate, the slogan he chose for his campaign was this:

"administration of civic affairs is business, not politics."

His own election demonstrated what business methods accomplish. His private organization the Tories treated as a joke until the ballots were counted. Just how effective that organization was is shown by the fact that every polling sub-division, with one exception, gave him a majority. It was the hardest smash the "Tammany ring" in Hamilton ever got.

The minute he stepped into office, Mayor McLaren infused business methods into civic affairs. His first move was to sign the death warrant of "pull" which had always been a big factor in the municipal system under the old regime.

With the Council at his back he declared war against overdrafts and made good his promise that there would be no deficit at the end of 1909.

Working with a special committee he got the street railway tangle straightened out and re-construction work under way. This also resulted in the construction of permanent pavements on James and Barton streets. Next year the balance of the system will be re-built and new asphalt roads laid on the streets where the tracks are.

Years of warring under the old regime got the city nothing. Business methods practically got Hamilton a new street railway system in a few months.

After fighting the Cataract Company at every turn for months, he jumped in at the opportune minute and made a bargain with the Cataract company, which evened the Hydro aldermen in the Council admitted was the best proposition the city ever had placed before it. It guaranteed the city, small power users, large manufacturers and private house customers power at ten per cent. less than the Hydro-Electric no matter how low that figure might be. A campaign of misrepresentation based on prejudice defeated this by-law last June.

The Mayor took a prominent part in the great parks scheme. The result was that the Parks Board acquired property along the mountain brow and face which probably could not be purchased for four times the money to-day.

The annexation deal by which the city took in the district east of Sherman avenue to Ottawa street, is another bit of business to the credit of Mayor McLaren and this year's Council. In most of the previous annexation deals the city got the worst of it. When the annexation talk began this year Mayor McLaren declared himself opposed to concessions, and the Council backed him up. It was the best annexation deal the city has made yet, and as a result the corporation will save many thousands of dollars.

The improvement of the police force is another matter that his worship has very strongly agitated for, and doubtless next year more will be heard of it.

The rearrangement of civic departments so that the construction work may be done on a more economical basis is another improvement that the Mayor had the support of a large majority of the Council in. The first move made in this direction was to secure a new city engineer. The promised shake-up will take place just as soon as the new

He has religiously followed that policy since.

Whenever there is a difference of opinion about questions his advice always is this, "Gentlemen, it's a business proposition. What would you do if it was your business?"

There is one thing that even the Mayor's enemies will give him credit for, and that is the firm hand he has maintained in unholing the dignity of the Council. When he stepped into office he announced that efforts to stampede the aldermen by demonstrations from the back benches would not be tolerated. Just to show that he meant what he said he had a small squad of uniformed police there the first night there was a possibility of an outbreak. He has never had occasion since to take that precaution.

A SILENT QUARTETTE.

Aldermen Applegath, Ryan, Gardner and Guy are the "silent men" of the Council. None of them has ever been known to make a speech of any length in the Council chamber. Once Ald. Ryan created a stir by charging that the Board of Works discriminated politically in engaging teams. This quartette seem content to listen attentively to the discussion and let their votes do the talking.

Ald. Ryan believes in persevering. He had more than one shy at the aldermanic game before he was elected. Ward 6 returned him last year. He just nosed out ex-Ald. Howard. He will be a candidate again this year.

This is Ald. Applegath's first year in municipal life. The Tory machine backed him last year, and Ward 3 elected him. He will trust himself to the tender mercies of the electors of the same ward again.

From Ward 1 comes Ald. Guy. This is his second year in the Council. Although Ald. Guy never has much to say at Council or committee meetings he is a good worker. As Chairman of the Harbor Committee this year he has done a lot of valuable work. He is particularly interested at present in seeing the filling in of the reclamation wall completed and a new slip built.

CHARLIE'S A HUSTLER.

Ald. Gardner will be an odd on favorite

A GRIST OF IMPORTANT
BUSINESS FOR NEXT YEAR.

Big Schemes That Will Engage The Attention of 1910 Council.

Here are some of the big matters that next year's council will tackle:

The Union Station—It is expected that the scheme for the big union station, which took definite shape this year when the T. H. & B. bought up property for the site, will be in shape to proceed with. The question of subways for James and John streets and the closing of Hughson street will be interesting features.

Reorganization of Civic Departments—City Engineer Macallum, since last May, has been quietly working on a scheme for the reorganization of civic departments, which will include the amalgamation of a number of them. He will make a number of important recommendations to the new Board of Control.

License Reduction—This is problematical. It depends on the success of the temperance people in the election a majority of reduction candidates to the council. The plan is to reduce the number of licenses to 50.

Street Railway Work—The company has promised to lay new rails on practically the balance of the system, with the exception of the line from Sherman avenue to the Jockey Club on Barton street.

New Road Work—Permanent pavements will be constructed on all the streets where new tracks are laid. It is estimated that this work will cost about \$200,000.

Work in the Annex—The engineer's department is mapping out a comprehensive plan for sewerage and water systems in the annex.

New Appointments—The council will probably be called upon to deal with the question of appointing a purchasing agent, a plumbing inspector, a new assessor and two more health inspectors.

The Power Question—This matter, which was temporarily settled last month is sure to bob up again late next year. The question then will be whether the city will continue taking a thousand horsepower or go in for the whole scheme.

Street Railway Extensions—Providing the plan for re-building the present system goes through without a hitch next year's council will be called upon in the fall of 1910 to take up with the company the question of street railway extensions in 1911.

New Erie-Ontario Canal—It would be a great boon for Hamilton if the Dominion Government could be induced to build it on the route the city proposes. It will be for next year's council to look after the matter.

The aldermen and controllers will have a big programme of important business to handle next year. The controllers, who will be paid salaries of \$1,200 a year, will probably have to bear the brunt of it, for the new system of administering civic affairs promises to lighten the committee work considerable. The number of committees have been reduced; the fact that the Board of Control will be responsible for all expenditure and carrying into effect work sanctioned by the Council dispensing with the necessity of as many committees as previously.

Everyone admits that the success of the new system depends solely on the type of men who are elected to the Board of Control. If a per class of men are elected the controller experiment is likely to prove very costly for the city. The fact that there will be four controllers, and twenty-one aldermen promises to prove very cumbersome. It is expected that the people in January will vote to reduce the number of aldermen from each ward to two.

LICENSE REDUCTION.

Will the temperance element in next year's Council be strong enough to limit the number of liquor licenses in Hamilton from 68 to 50? The present by-law allows the former number, but before annexation brought in the two new race track hotels, there were only 63 licensed places. Undoubtedly the reduction question will be the first important matter the new Council will be called upon to deal with, although it depends entirely on the success of the Citizens' Campaign Committee as to what motion will be made before the Council.

If the temperance people have a safe majority they will demand that eighteen licenses be cut off. If they succeed in electing a number of aldermen they will demand in any event a division on the question. The temperance leaders are quite satisfied, however, that they will have no difficulty in capturing the Council. They point out that they are much better organized than they were a year ago, and the fact that they met with such success there will gather in many votes for them this year.

Although the Council has power to cut down the number of licenses, it is up to the License Commissioners to name the hotels that shall be put out of business.

This year the temperance ticket will be represented in every ward. Last year it was not, or the officers of the campaign committee say, they would have had a sure majority in the Council.

REORGANIZATION.

Another question that will come up early in the year will be that of reorganization. City Engineer Macallum since he has been on the job this year has been carefully figuring out a plan, and he makes no secret of the fact that he will make a number of important recommendations to the new Board of Control. It will provide for the carrying out of all construction work under one department, and will endeavor to avoid overlapping at present. It is believed that under the new system a great deal of trouble that has been caused by tearing up newly paved streets to install water or sewer pipes will be avoided.

There will also be a shake-up among the officials. It is expected that many changes will be made in the waterworks department.

NEW OFFICIALS.

This year there is all kinds of talk of new officials to be appointed. Probably by the time the Board of Control and Council are ready to act, the aldermen and controllers' enthusiasm in this respect will have cooled. About the most



ALD. CHAS. W. GARDNER.

Board of Control settles down to business.

Whether the Mayor has made good his promise to give Hamilton a business administration the electors can judge for themselves.

Certainly no man who has occupied the position of chief magistrate in recent years has spent more time on the



JOHN I. McLAREN, Mayor

of office. The Mayor seldom misses a committee meeting, and is generally always found at the sessions of the independent boards of which he is a member ex-officio.

When he first entered the Council three years ago, a candidate of the Board of Trade, he evinced the keenest desire to get a thorough grasp of every question with which the Council dealt.

in the Board of Control race. He plunged into the municipal whirl in 1907, making a phenomenal run for a new man. Last year he headed the poll under the election at large system, and this year was top man in Ward 5.

After serving in the ranks for two years and getting an insight into things Ald. Gardner took hold of the Markets Committee this year, a body which conducts its business with commendable despatch, and which has something to show for the money it has spent.

Although Ald. Gardner does little talking, he is a hustler. The City Hall officials say that more work has been done around that building since he became Chairman than was done for many years previously. Many of the offices have been improved, new desks purchased, the interior of the building touched up, and, last, but not least, the windows are always shining. The police stations, weigh scales and markets have all been repaired and improved.

Ald. Gardner's pet hobby since he entered the Council has been to get better and increased cell accommodation at No. 3 Station. He kept hammering away at this until the committee this year decided to submit a \$50,000 by-law in January.

STICKLER FOR DETAIL.

Ald. Lees, another aspirant for the Board of Control, has had wide experience in municipal affairs. Years ago he served as an alderman, and returned to the Council in 1907 as one of the three Board of Trade candidates. As a temperance candidate he went down to defeat in 1908, and with the same backing was returned this year. He is a keen business man, his knowledge of financial matters making him a valuable man on the Finance Committee.

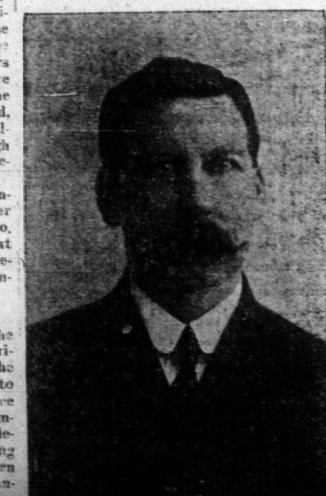
Above all things he is a stickler for

run on that ticket for the Board of Control.

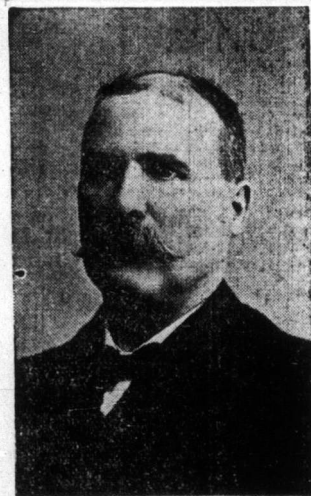
CLARK AND SWEENEY.

Ald. Clark and Sweeney, who came up smiling this year after rebuffing the concentrated attack made on them by the Hydro clique, are seasoned campaigners. Both have had several years of municipal experience. Ward 4 returned Ald. Clark this year, while Ald. Sweeney represents Ward 5.

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ALD. A. J. WRIGHT.



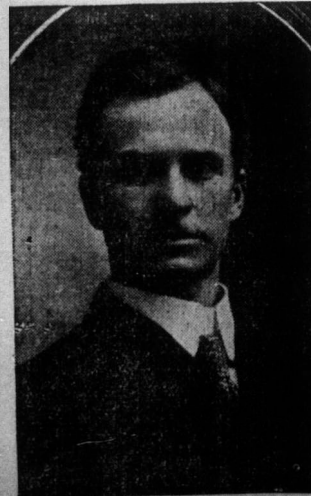
ALD. JOHN ALLAN.

The record of the Council of 1909 has been one of achievement, and one that should contain much of interest to the ratepayers who have been clamoring for a business administration of civic affairs.

This year's Council is a body that deserves to have its name inscribed on the roll of fame if for no other reason than the fact that it has managed to clear the year without an overdraft, a seemingly impossible feat for aldermanic boards that have held office for many years.

Without any display of fireworks and with fewer meetings than the Councils of the past two years have been in the habit of holding, the aldermen this year have cleaned up a lot of important business, including many big questions that have dragged along for years.

As no less than eight members of the present Council are candidates for the Board of Control, while the balance will seek re-election as aldermen, a refer-



ALD. W. H. COOPER.



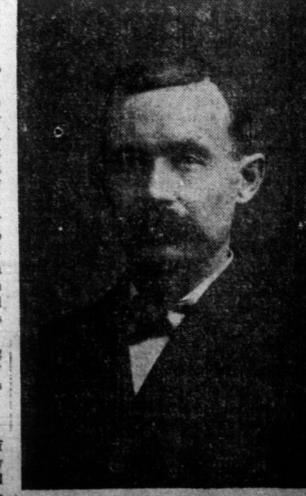
ALD. GEO. H. LEES.

important position, if it is created, is that of purchasing agent. It is believed that a big saving could be made if a purchasing agent was employed to buy all city stores and to carefully cheque them up as they come in and go out. The Mayor and the City Engineer admit that a purchasing agent might be a very useful official if the right man could be secured, but they point out that it is a job that demands a thoroughly qualified man. It is a question the new Council will settle.

The Board of Health says it must have two new inspectors. The Board of Control will recommend the men and the Council will appoint them. There are about a score of applications for the position already.

There will have to be at least one new assessor. The department has long been overtaxed with work, and the addition of the new annex district makes it absolutely necessary that a new man shall be appointed, the first thing next year.

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ALD. THOMAS JUTTEN.