

(From Tuesday's Daily Colonist.)

City's Credit Stands High.

Four Per Cent. Debentures to Consolidate Loans Placed at Premium.

Council Discuss Tar and Feathers and Decline Invitation to Victoria West.

The city council of Victoria had a surprise for the citizens in connection with their regular weekly meeting yesterday evening, when an agreement was presented to the committee to whom had been referred the several tenders for twenty-year debentures issued under authority of the by-law for the consolidation of outstanding loans, to the total of \$210,000. These debentures are to bear interest at but 4 per cent., and it is most satisfactory to note, are disposed of at 25 above par—which is stated to be the most profitable bargain of the kind the city has ever made.

There were several other items of importance before the weekly meeting, one of which was brought forward in a letter from the management of the tramway company, with reference to the improvement of Rock Bay bridge, and the gradual filling in of the flats it traverses. The company offer to assume a proportion of the cost of this improvement, and the entire subject has been referred to a special committee, in conjunction with the engineer, for careful investigation, a favorable view being at the outset taken of the tramway company's proposition.

In connection with the invitation of the residents of Victoria West to the council to attend their meeting to protest against the closing of Craigflower road, a stand was taken somewhat in contradiction to the position assumed by the council at its last previous session—the invitation being practically ignored, and the dissatisfied suburbanites being informed that if they have a grievance to present to the mayor and aldermen, these gentlemen will be pleased to see them at the city hall. In connection with the debate on this topic, Ald. Kinsman last evening took a very decided stand, asserting that it was with the intention of administering tar-and-feathers that the representatives of the people had been bidden to the meeting of the displeased residents.

Ald. Beckwith had a question of privilege to present as soon as the minutes had been disposed of last evening. He noted that the newspapers had, in speaking of the council's decision with respect to the road to the new Clover Point rifle range, stated that upon the committee's report the council had decided to construct this road at a cost of \$15,000. This he denied—the committee had recommended building the road, and the council had endorsed this recommendation, but no stated cost was mentioned. With this the Mayor concurred. He pointed out, however, that while the amount had been fixed in the report, the road had been passed for construction, and the city engineer had estimated that the cost would be \$15,000 or thereabouts. "It's only a little mistake of the papers," he added, pleasantly.

ROCK BAY BRIDGE.
Under the head of communications, Manager A. T. Goward of the British Columbia Electric Railway Company addressed the council as follows:

Victoria, B. C., Nov. 6, 1899.

To the Mayor and Council of the Corporation of the City of Victoria:

Gentlemen: We have been advised that the guard-rail to be placed upon the Rock Bay bridge must be placed there at the company's expense. This causes us to give consideration to the whole question of policy as to what should be done in reference to Rock Bay bridge.

We may say, without entering into the question of obligation on the part of the Corporation of the City of Victoria to maintain and keep in good state of repair this amongst other bridges in the city, that we are willing under certain conditions to make a substantial contribution towards defraying the cost of material and labor in the construction of the bridge, but to do this we have certain views as to replacement of material and further construction, that we think, subject to your Engineer's opinion, should be carried out.

To commence with, we understand that there is the intention to fill in under the bridge—allowing, of course, for navigation—at the point where the draw or it may be that this requirement will not be insisted upon. In that this intention of filling in has been placed before the work will perhaps extend over a period of three years—it becomes necessary to be satisfied, considering this period of time, that the piles and other sub-structure should be sound and sufficiently durable. To accomplish this we have the honor to make the following suggestions, which being complied with for or with such modifications as your Engineer in consultation with us should be decided upon would influence us to bear a proportion of the cost, at the same time insisting that no portion of the cost should be upon us.

The detail in short would be that your Corporation (a) replace all (if any) piles and caps that may be found in any way defective; (b) put a new beat between each of the present beats.

(c) Put in piles with caps in one of the openings of the present swing bridge.

(d) Put in sufficient piles on each side of the forty-foot opening to carry a truss.

(e) Erect a truss across this opening.

(f) Put in new stringers and replace (if any) defective stringers.

(g) Lay cross ties on those stringers to which the rails will be attached.

The above being done, and whatever else may be by your Engineer be thought necessary, thereby making the Rock Bay bridge a roadway of a substantial nature for several years, and, in fact, agree to bear a proportion of the cost, although we do not consider that there is the slightest obligation on us to do so. However, in that we are desirous of preventing any cessation of traffic and thereby inconvenience to the public, we make this offer, trusting that it will receive favorable consideration.

We have the honor to be, gentlemen, Your obedient servants,

B. C. Electric Ry. Co.,
ALBERT T. GOWARD,
Local Manager.

Incidentally the Mayor explained that Messrs. Campbell and Goward had called upon him during the morning in this connection, and he had requested them to put their proposals in writing—the present communication being the result. His Worship also stated that he had had a brief conversation with the

engineer on the subject, and that gentleman did not anticipate that the expense involved in the proposed work would be very great. He suggested that the letter of the tramway company should be referred to the engineer for a report.

"How is it proposed to fill in the flats?" inquired Ald. Hayward.

Mayor Redfern explained that a generous offer had been made by Mr. Sayward to supply the necessary slabs free of all charge, if the city would build the required retaining wall; while the mill company would also "blow in" their sawdust and thus do the filling in. All that they asked was that the city furnish the requisite labor. He, too, thought that the filling in would be most desirable, especially as it would reduce the necessary length of the bridge to about 500 or 600 feet.

While disputing the denial of obligation contained in the letter from the tramway company, Ald. Humphrey was also well satisfied to go into their proposition provided they would assume a fair share of the expense—and moved in accordance with the Mayor's suggestion, for a reference to the engineer, in connection with a special committee of the council.

This was accepted by the board, and the committee named as Ald. Humphrey, Beckwith and Stewart.

VICTORIA WEST MEETING.

The Craigflower road difficulty again made its appearance in a letter from T. J. Gold, secretary of the suburbanites' committee, who informed the council that in compliance with their suggestion that the meeting contemplated to which the council had been invited, should be held on a date not in conflict with other municipal engagements, Thursday of this week had been decided upon, and it was hoped the Mayor and aldermen would find it convenient then to attend.

The Mayor was not disposed to favor an acceptance of the invitation. If citizens had a grievance, he maintained, it was quite in order for them to (individually or by deputation) present their grievance at the city hall, where the Mayor and aldermen were to be found attending to the city's business. He thought it would be much better than holding public meetings, so called, if the dissatisfied ones met the council for a conference in the committee room.

"That's as far as I'm prepared to go," observed Ald. Humphrey.

Ald. Williams, on the contrary, held that it would not be amiss in the present case to accept the invitation—and he moved accordingly.

Ald. Beckwith, while agreeing with the Mayor as to general procedure, thought that this Craigflower road question was in a very different position, in view of the exceptional circumstances of the case he was prepared to second the motion for acceptance of the invitation.

"It's just as difficult for the Mayor and aldermen to go out to Victoria West, as for the people of Victoria West to come and meet us at the city hall," said the Mayor.

Ald. Cameron was another member of the board who failed to see the force of Ald. Beckwith's contention. He thought that a public meeting was a public meeting, and that the residents of the Western suburb proposed.

He offered an amendment, to the effect that the secretary of the committee be invited to the council, and that the council would be pleased to receive the committee or a deputation at the city hall, either on Thursday, or any other evening they might find more convenient.

This was seconded by Ald. Humphrey who recognized as the only distinction between the case of West Victorians and residents of any other part of the city that the former do not use city water. He did not agree that suburbanites have any special reason for complaint.

Still Ald. Williams thought that in view of the hard feeling over the closing of Craigflower road, the council might strain a point to attend a meeting arranged for. It was possible that good might come out of this meeting. This they had promptly done, and he did not see that the invitation could now in fairness be refused.

"The grievance can best be considered at a conference here in the City Hall," observed the Mayor.

Ald. Kinsman was quite of the Mayor's opinion. He could not see what the residents of Victoria West could expect of members of the council with them for, had, indeed, understood that this was the real purpose of the meeting. West Victorians had been behaving themselves in a peculiar fashion that people coming in contact with them were fast growing tired, and might advantageously be secured for the city hall—this being ordered.

Market Superintendent Johnson reported his collection for the month of October at \$127.25—his report going on file.

J. T. L. Meyer and twelve other residents of Spring Ridge asked that Pango street be graded and supplied with a sidewalk to Fernwood road—this going to the engineer.

The committee in a special report stated their full appreciation of the advantage Victoria would secure in adopting the plan of grading the street, and next world's convention of the C. T. U. and promised to recommend an appropriation of \$250 toward this purpose for consideration by the council. This recommendation being unanimously adopted by the board.

The electric light committee for the week, totalling \$37,735.37, were passed for payment.

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Ald. Brynne concurred in Ald. Humphrey's remarks on the subject. While as a member of the electric light committee he was prepared to go to any length and inspect localities in which lights were asked for, he objected to being called upon to place a light in a place where a petition had been presented to the council to point out where a light was required. He hoped that the committee would provide for this light in their next report.

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Re Store Street from Johnson to Herald street, I was recommended to be graded and surfaced with stone, and put in good condition. Estimated cost, \$700.

Blanchard street, between Douglas and Victoria streets, would require this section be macadamized on north side of street, as same is at present in very bad condition. Estimated cost, \$425.

Re Government street, between Cornwall and Flanagan streets, I would recommend grading and surfacing with stone,

which is much needed. Total estimated cost, with catch basins and drainage connection, \$300.

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Re communication from S. G. Spence, asking attention to the condition of Garfield street, I have examined this locality, and have prepared an estimate of grading, showing the highest point an average of two feet in depth. Total estimated cost, \$285.

This improvement would be a considerable convenience, and would recommend it to be carried out, if funds are available for the purpose. Re gravelling of Langford street, between Russell and Catherine streets, since it has been recommended to close the old Craigflower road, it is very desirable, in my opinion, to improve Langford street, and as we have plenty of gravel on hand, I would recommend the work be carried out at an early date. Estimated cost, \$80.

Re petition from D. S. Morrison, for repairs to San Juan avenue. This improvement could be carried out very reasonably, providing pit gravel can be obtained in the vicinity of James Bay. Estimated cost of grading, \$40. I may say I could recommend the above at present, owing to the uncertainty of procuring gravel.

The City Carpenter reports and recommends the construction of the following plank sidewalks: Johnson street, south side, between Vancouver and Cook streets, 8 feet wide. Estimated cost, \$147.

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South side, between Victoria and Chambers streets, 6 feet wide. Estimated cost, \$124.

Toronto street, south side, from Slincoe street easterly, 4 feet wide. Estimated cost, \$90.

Respectfully submitted,
City Engineer.

As this report had been prepared at the suggestion of the Mayor, in the expectation that a special report from the auditor would be available for consideration in conjunction, and as the auditor's report was not yet ready—the engineer's recommendations were not put on the table, to be dealt with probably at a special meeting during next week.

Assessor Northcott reported upon the petition of the Johnson Estate against the suggested paving of Yates street, from Government to Broad, stating that the assessed value of the Johnson estate was \$89,000, as against \$71,000 held by four other owners. Still, as the law stated that a successful protest against such a petition must come from a majority of property holders interested, as well as from a majority valuation—he held that the petition failed.

Mayor Redfern explained the law in this respect (supported by the city solicitors), and the motion was carried. The suggested paving of Yates street, from Government to Broad, stating that the assessed value of the Johnson estate was \$89,000, as against \$71,000 held by four other owners. Still, as the law stated that a successful protest against such a petition must come from a majority of property holders interested, as well as from a majority valuation—he held that the petition failed.

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