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## EDMUNDSTON BOARD OF TRADE

The following is the report of the Secretary of the Board of Trade for the year 1923, given at meeting on Jan. 9, 1924:

To the President and Members of the Edmundston Board of Trade, Gentlemen:

As Secretary of the Board of Trade I beg to submit the second annual report showing operations for the past year.

Your Board is now in the third year of its existence with a total membership of sixty-three. During the course of last year we have lost one member by death, Mr. Jos. Michaud who was one of our leading merchants and a most respected citizen. Twelve other members have dropped their membership for various reasons, but to offset this loss we have added fourteen new members to our ranks, so that our membership is about the same as last year, namely, sixty-four, a net increase of one member during the course of the year.

**MEETINGS**—During the last year eight meetings have been held, and I am pleased to state that the attendance has been comparatively good. Those who have taken the trouble of attending our various meetings deserve credit and congratulations for their interest in local affairs and the good work they have done. Your Board has endeavored to further the interests of our town in many respects, and it is a pleasure to note that its efforts have met with some degree of success.

**GRAND FALLS POWER**—This very important question was first brought up at our last Annual Meeting, January 10th, 1923. Copy of a resolution which had been adopted at the Madawaska County Council was submitted, and after considerable discussion, the question was enthusiastically endorsed by our Board. A similar resolution was drafted and voted by the meeting, and delegates were at once appointed to represent the Board of Trade at the interview with the Provincial Government which took place at a later date during the session.

At a later meeting, in February, the question received more particular attention and a special meeting of the Board was held in order to go into the matter more fully. As a result of that meeting we got in touch with nearly all the Boards of Trade and Municipalities in the central and northern part of the province; our President, Dr. Laporte, sent to each one of the above, namely, through Mayors of towns and municipalities and Presidents and Secretaries of Boards of Trade, and also the heads of some large concerns, a personal letter in which was outlined in a very able manner the advantages to be derived by our province at large through the development of the Grand Falls power. Your Secretary received from all the parties interested in the question a lot of correspondence, and it was a pleasure to note that the movement which had been so wisely started received an immediate and hearty endorsement from all those who had been approached.

The Grand Falls Board of Trade having started a somewhat similar movement arrangements were made with them, and we worked in conjunction with our friends from Grand Falls in order to broadcast the question and arouse public interest. The papers of the province started to give publicity to the Grand Falls power question and

we had the opportunity of gathering therefrom a lot of valuable information. Finally, a joint meeting of delegates from County and Municipal Councils and Boards of Trade from several parts of the province was arranged to meet the government during the course of last session, and an interview took place with Premier Veniot and his cabinet. The question seems to have received very favorable consideration on the part of the government at that time, and although no promises were made, the different delegates returned with the impression that the agreement existing between the government and the International Paper Company would not be renewed. Some time after this it was with a feeling of pleasure and relief that we learned the Provincial Government had resumed its rights over the Grand Falls power. The people of the province thereafter got assurances that the Grand Falls power would be developed if it was shown that the enterprise could be self-supporting, and become a paying proposition.

With this end in view the government made surveys and it was shown that the amount of power could be developed from the Grand Falls was about 150,000 h.p. Mr. C. O. Foss, Chief Engineer of the New Brunswick Electric Power Commission was sent around the province, and the different towns and municipalities were invited to sign contracts for the purchase of electricity at cost. Our town Council following a petition signed by a large number of the leading citizens and taxpayers, and a resolution passed by our Board at its meeting of March 7th, 1923, signed an agreement for the purchase of 5000 h.p., several other towns and municipalities in the province entering into a similar agreement, as well as a few large corporations. We have information to date that enough power has been sold to warrant the development of the Grand Falls power, but although almost a year has elapsed since the government was approached on the question we are yet to know when this mighty power will be developed.

On December 5th last a telegram was sent by your Secretary to one of the government ministers while the cabinet was in session at St. John, N. B., asking if the government had received report from the engineers or made any decision regarding the Grand Falls power. The reply was No. We have since learned that the expert engineers who are working on the development of Grand Falls power have not yet made their report. There is no doubt that this very important matter is receiving the attention it so justly deserves, and although the development of the Grand Falls power may look to some people as a dream of the future, the work which has been done by our Board and all other parties interested should not be lost. It is to be hoped that the people of this province will never give up his question until we see the mighty Grand Falls power distributing electric energy throughout the province, thus contributing materially and to a large extent towards its advancement and industrial development.

**FIRE INSURANCE RATES**—As our members are well aware our town was subject since a couple of years to a 50 cent sur-charge on mercantile insurance risks. This sur-charge was in the way of a penalty imposed upon Edmundston on account of certain deficiencies in the electric wiring and lack of an adequate fire protection system. The joint efforts of the Town Council and Board of Trade were united in order to induce the New Brunswick Board of Fire Underwriters to take off that 50 cents surcharge. Mr. Ellsworth, Engineer of the N. B. Board of Fire Underwriters, was sent here on one or two occasions and had interviews with the Town Council and Board of Trade. The electric wiring was thoroughly inspected, deficiencies were found were remedied, the fire protection department was improved considerably, thanks to our Mayor and Aldermen, and finally our efforts were rewarded with success. On January 10th of last year while our Board was in session a telegram was received from the Honorable J. E. Michaud, who was then in St. John, informing us that the Board of Fire Underwriters had decided to take off the surcharge. This was good news indeed which have since meant to our merchants (and the proprietors of mercantile establishments) the saving of several hundred dollars in fire insurance premiums. This shows that with proper efforts we can always obtain what we have a right to fight for.

The Town Council is also to be complimented on the installation of an improved fire alarm which has been in operation for a few months and is giving much satisfaction. Together with the other improvements which have been made our fire protection department is in good shape and there is no reason why our insurance rates should be increased in the future.

**SMOKER**—On February 5th, 1923, we held a smoker in Mr. Jos. Telfer's new hotel, "The New Edmundston Hotel," and gave our former secretary, Mr. W. R. Belyea, a little send-off

party, he being presented with a beautiful traveling bag given by his fellow-members of the Board as a token of their appreciation for his untiring efforts and good fellowship. Mr. Belyea having played no small part in the organization of our Board, and having at all times shown more than ordinary interest into the welfare and development of Edmundston, his departure was considered as a loss to our Board and the town as well. Some of the questions discussed during the term of office, and I might say that on account of this he also deserves some of the credit for the work we have done during the course of last year.

**BAND, STAND AND COUNTRY MARKET**—At one of our meetings it was mentioned that the town intended to erect a band stand for the use of Edmundston Harmony and also for the purpose of allowing them to give concerts during the summer season. This was heartily endorsed by our Board and we are now pleased to see that a nice band stand has been erected in a conspicuous place on the town's land facing the post office. The lower part of the stand contains a well finished room large enough for the use of our bandmen in holding their practices and meetings. The Town Council deserve the people's appreciation and thanks for having fulfilled a desire which was dear to the hearts of our bandmen who were practically without a location, notwithstanding the fact that the premises can also be used for other purposes as well, the vacant ground around allowing ample space for holding meetings, etc.

The question of a country market was also brought to our attention about a year ago, it being, I believe, a suggestion of our former Secretary, Mr. Belyea. Our board at once took some interest into the matter and suggested to the Town Council that arrangements should be made for the building of a country market in a suitable location, so as to allow the farmers to sell their products there on certain days in the week instead of having to peddle them all around town. Our town council has not yet seen fit to act upon this matter, and as the question has never received a special study on the part of our Board, and also considering the fact that there are only three country markets in the province, namely, St. John, Fredericton and Moncton, it would seem that our civic authorities are rather doubtful as to the ultimate success of this enterprise. There is no doubt that the question could be parties interested, and if it was shown that a country market would be to

the best advantage of the consumers and not a detriment to our merchants, there is no reason why it should not receive favorable consideration. What is good in one place sometimes is not in another one, depending upon local conditions and the demand for same.

**NEW INDUSTRIES**—Our Board follows its tradition which is to uphold and advance the interests of Edmundston in trying to interest new industries to establish themselves here also has something to show in that direction, although our work so far has not materialized. It is simply a question of time and we are in hopes that some day we shall be accountable for having at least helped in some measure of success to bring what we so much need for the further development of our town, namely, New Industries.

In July last we had the good fortune of meeting a representative of one of the largest lumber firms in the Dominion who was interested in the construction of a crosscutting plant for hardwood railroad ties. Our town and its local advantages seemed to appeal to him, and arrangements were at once made to have this gentleman meet the members of the Board of Trade. After exchanging views and discussing the matter from several viewpoints it was decided that a letter should be sent to that firm outlining the numerous advantages offered by this locality for an industry of that kind. A long letter addressed to the head of that firm was at once written by the secretary and handed to their representative the following day.

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We understood at the time that some other towns in the province were also seeking to interest the same people, and the matter was given more credence when we learned that actual advance had been already made by some people in a different locality. Nevertheless, we were finally informed that this matter was receiving serious consideration and when time would come to do something our

(Continued on page 6)

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