

THE CAMPBELLTON GRAPHIC

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GOVERNMENT AND BRIDGE SUPERINTENDANCE

More Light on Financial Matters--Accounts Held Back Till After Close of Fiscal Year.

FREDERICTON, April 12--By reference to the government's own reports and other documents it has been proven beyond a doubt that under the Hazen administration bills incurred in one fiscal year are held over for payment into the following year. In this the financial showing for each year is made to appear as somewhat better than it really is. This paper has already referred to cases indicating that the government holds over some of these bills from year to year. However, one or two striking cases which have been brought out in the Public Accounts Committee.

Take, for instance, the case of the Sheridan Mill Pond Bridge and the Renauds Bridge in the county of Kent. The work on these bridges was finished in October, 1909. The accounts were sworn to by the proper persons, one on October 26th and the other on October 28th. The Public Works Department did not apply for payment of the bills until November 3rd of the same year, or two days after the fiscal year closes, though the accounts were sworn to about two weeks before the close of the year. This fact stands. The accounts for this work done in 1909 were all in order before the close of the fiscal year. In spite of this they were not paid until 1910. It might be said in attempted justification that the Public Works Department did not forward the accounts for payment until two days after the fiscal year closed. What excuse had the department for this delay when the accounts had been in readiness for nearly two weeks? But, as a matter of fact, Hon. Mr. Fleming has stated in the house that accounts for the fiscal year are not closed until ten days after the year really ends. In other words, in the case of these bridges the accounts were presented for payment by the Public Works Department over a week before, according to Mr. Fleming's own statement, the accounts of the province were really closed.

There can be but one explanation of this state of affairs. The government deliberately carries over bills from one year to another in its attempt to show on paper a better financial position than really exists. Amounts were carried over from 1909 to 1910, and so on just as long as the present incompetent administration is in power. In this way the government tries to fool the people into the belief that there are no over-expenditures and that every care is observed in handling the financial affairs of the province. But the people will not long be fooled by such transparent methods. And it must be born in mind that it is not merely in the case of the two bridges above referred to that this carrying-over process has gone on. Bridge after bridge throughout the report is found to reveal the same state affairs.

It is interesting to notice also the method by which the government allows its superintendents to prepare their accounts. It has been shown in the Public Accounts Committee that in the case of Kent, for instance, many of the bills are made out by a man named Felix McLeod, though the superintendent is a close political friend of Dr. Landry, to wit, Mr. Peter Bernard. The accounts are made up by Mr. McLeod and the accounts are sworn to before Mr. McLeod, the same gentleman who made them up. It was also shown in the committee that in the case of at least one bridge in Gloucester County, Pont Brele Bridge, for which lumber was bought and never put in the bridge, the bills for lumber were not made out by the man who sold the lumber, but by a Mr. Stewart, a Conservative patronage dispenser in Gloucester. As the Opposition leader put it, Mr. Stewart apparently transacts the business and gets the superintendent to sign the bills.

Another sidelight on the Hazen bridge was brought out when it was shown that some men, political friends of the government, who have reaped such rich rewards as bridge superintendents have really not actually superintended the work of certain bridges at all, although they have been paid for so doing. In some cases, for instance, it was shown that the superintendent had been at the bridges before the work began, had not been at them during the progress of the work, but made an inspection after the work was completed. In these cases, just as in other cases, the superintendent was paid a tidy sum for superintending the work. How farcical the Hazen pretensions of carefulness in bridge work really are is well shown by facts such as these. Imagine paying the people's money to a man for superintending work which he did not see while it was being carried out. It is somewhat strange also that in these cases the superintendents could swear to the pay lists for the work although it was clear that they had no absolute personal knowledge as to the details of the work and the men employed.

The Hazen-Morrissey method of handling the bridge work of the province is apparently one of the most scandalous pieces of mismanagement of public affairs which could be brought to light. The people's money is being grossly wasted, while the government members and the government supporters sit by, complacently and allow the abuse to go on. Their political friends benefit and the province suffers.

NOMINATIONS FOR MAYOR AND COUNS.

Things were very quiet around the Council Chambers on Tuesday. It was expected that most of the retiring Councillors would again accept nomination, although Dr. Murray and Messrs. McLennan and Richards had stated positively they would not stand for re-election. Everything was going smoothly until we got a rude jolt when it became known that there would be a contest in Ward III. At five o'clock the town clerk declared that A. M. G. McDonald had been nominated for Mayor and there being no opposition declared him elected to that office. The following Councillors were declared elected viz--Ward I, H. Lunan, M. D. and L. G. Pinaud; M. D. Ward II, J. M. Mowat and S. M. Moores. At large, Chas. A. Alexander and W. H. Miller.

There being more than the requisite number of persons nominated for Ward III a poll will be held on Tuesday the 18th inst at the Wm. Cook building, Rosebery St., at 10 a. m. The nominations for Ward III and the nominators are--John White and J. R. McKenzie, nominated by E. J. Allingham, E. Sullivan, A. F. Ferguson, J. T. Mowat, John T. Nelson, Duncan Downes, Jas. Jardine, Edgar Shirley, Adam Pratt, M. P. Moores, John G. MacColl and M. Murray M. D. For Alex. Elsliger the nominators are--George Duncan, Robert L. Duncan, Alfred Maltais, Geo. A. Duncan, Geo. Poirier, John Lemieux, J. I. Boudreau, Isaac Boudreau, W. J. Duncan, S. Frenette, Jos. Duncan, J. A. Thiberge, W. J. Comeau, John McIntyre. It is expected there will be a heavy poll as the voters list is largely increased this year, and Messrs. White and McKenzie are confident of carrying their tickets.

TOWN COUNCIL MET TWICE THIS WEEK

Town Fathers Clear up Old Business--R. J. Sandover, New Town Engineer--Reports of Comm'ttees.

A meeting of the Town Council was held in the Council chambers on Monday evening. His Worship the Mayor presiding. Councillors present--Alexander, McDonald, Miller, Mowat, McLennan and Moores.

Minutes of previous meeting read and confirmed. Communication from R. M. Hope, manager of the Bank of New Brunswick asking permission to lay a granite crossing 5 feet wide on Water St. at the new Bank premises. The request was granted, the work to be performed under the superintendence of the Town Engineer.

Petition read from C. A. Belyea asking license for opening a store for builders supplies. This was referred to Police and License Committee. Councillor White at this time entered the meeting. Councillor McDonald submitted the report of the Water and Sewerage department and recommended payment of accounts to the amount of \$29.74. Report was received and adopted.

Councillor Moores submitted the report of the Public Charities committee and in it recommended the payment of accounts totalling \$57.50. The report was received and adopted. Councillor Mowat read the annual report of the Electric Light department for the year 1910, which was accepted by the council and ordered to be filed for publication in the town blue book.

Councillor Mowat in his committee report recommended the payment of accounts totalling \$906.12. This report was received and adopted. As one of the accounts in this report had been running since January 1909 it was felt advisable that all chairmen of committees should instruct suppliers that their accounts must be presented at a respectable time and not hold out accounts as was done in this case.

The feeling in the council was that it makes checking an account a very difficult matter when the bills were not rendered promptly and also leaves an easy opening for old bills to be overlapped and paid twice.

Councillor Miller reported progress from the special committee appointed to confer with the relief committee agent assistance given the council in financial matters.

In the report of a special committee appointed to investigate charges made against the Town Council in coal matters, Councillor McLennan reported that Mr. F. S. Blair refused to meet the committee and he (Blair) disclaimed the authorship of the statements questioned.

Councillor McLennan was of opinion that there was nothing in the charges made, and that there were no irregularities in the coal purchase in question. On this report being accepted the committee were thanked for their labors and discharged.

Councillor McDonald brought up the matter of the vacancy for town engineer.

Eighteen applications were received and after going carefully into these Councillor McDonald laid before the Council a short list of three. After discussion Councillor McDonald moved and Councillor McLennan seconded that R. J. Sandover Sly of Oshawa, Ont., be appointed town engineer at a salary of \$100 per month. Carried.

The request of the Presbyterian and Baptist churches to be allowed to build in wood, was again mooted, but nothing was done in the

matter. The Bye-Laws distinctly state that all buildings over 35 feet in height must be brick or fireproof construction, and in the Bye-Laws there is no power given the council to exempt any building.

Councillor Miller reported that there was no money available for water and sewerage accounts, and moved that the sum of \$502 be overdrawn and placed to the credit of Water (Capital) Account. Carried.

Councillor McLennan moved and Councillor McDonald seconded that Maxwell M. Mowat be appointed a member of the Board of School Trustees in room of A. G. Adams resigned. Carried.

It was agreed to by the Council that the street from west of Sugarloaf St. south of the I. C. R. and north of Gerrard St. and parallel thereto, and at one time known as Duncan St., shall be now named and known as Hillside St.

The thanks to and appreciation of the efforts made by the fire brigade of Dalhousie on the day of the fire, were placed on record, as also to Mr. John McDonald for his services on that occasion.

The question of the \$30,000 for school purposes threatened to come up again, but the Mayor ruled that this matter was now out of the council's hands, and was before the Legislature.

After a question re the destruction of liquor, the council adjourned.

A meeting of Council was held on Thursday evening His Worship Mayor Murray presiding. Councillors present, Alexander, McDonald, White, Miller, McLennan and Mowat.

Minutes of previous meeting read and approved. Mr. D. F. Graham was appointed returning officer at the coming election for Ward III.

Moved by Councillor McDonald, seconded by Councillor McLennan, that the Town Treasurer be instructed to furnish the returning officer with a list of defaulters and that no person be allowed to vote unless their taxes were paid.

Communication read from the Board of Trade regarding the appointment of a Public Weigher. The council appointed Alphonse Lacombe to this position.

The Mayor submitted a communication from the Lieut. Gov. Tweedie regarding the proposed memorial from the Georges to His Majesty, and a motion was passed acknowledging receipt of the communication and authorizing the Town Clerk to open a subscription list and give public notice of same.

Councillor McDonald submitted the report of the Water and Sewerage Committee recommending payment of accounts totalling \$2.20. Report received and adopted.

Councillor Miller read the report of the Finance Committee recommending payment of accounts totalling \$11.50. Report received and adopted.

Councillor McLennan in presenting the report of the Fire Protection Committee draw attention to the charge of \$3 for horse hire. It was the feeling that this charge was too high but after discussion the report was received and adopted recommending the payment of accounts totalling \$15.05.

Councillor McLennan brought up the question of Fire Protection. The Councillor's idea was to have a paid captain and allow him to organize the department. This the GRAPHIC has spoken of already and it is now an absolute necessity. The discussion showed that the council were in complete sympathy with this and thought it should be the first thing for the new council to deal with.

(Continued on page 8)