

The Municipal World.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

In the interests of every department of our Municipal System—the best in the world.

TERMS. \$1.00 per annum. Single copy, 10c.; Six copies, \$5.00, payable in advance.

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ST. THOMAS, JULY 1, 1894.

Special Meetings.

The head of every council may at any time summon a special meeting thereof, and it is his duty to do so, whenever requested in writing by a majority of the members of the council. All the members are entitled to be present at a special meeting, and should be notified to attend, and if practicable, notified also of the purposes for which the meeting is called. The omission to notify a member entitled to be present may be held to invalidate all proceedings at such meeting, and where the purposes for which the meeting is called is specified in the notice, there is, in general, no power to transact business besides that specified.

In the absence or death of the head of the council, a special meeting may be summoned at any time by the clerk upon special requisition to him signed by a majority of the council. Where there is no by-law of the council fixing the place of meeting, any special meeting is required to be held at the place where the then last meeting of the council was held. Ordinary meetings of the council are required to be open to the public, but under the authority of section 237, of the Municipal Act, power is given a council to have special meetings in private when, in the opinion of the council, by resolution in writing, the public interest requires it.

Requisitions for special meetings of councils should be carefully worded both as to the purpose for which the meeting is called, and the time at which meeting will be held. The most insignificant error might render the transactions of special meetings of the council void. The same care should be taken in wording the notices of special meetings given to members of the council.

The Kent county council at its recent session, passed the following resolution:

“Moved by Messrs. Morrison and White, that on account of the Blenheim public school obtaining so high a standing at the departmental, art and leaving examinations, that this council grant a gold medal suitably engraved to the school.”

Before the motion was voted upon, the mover stated that for three years, the school had ranked first among the public schools of the province.

The year 1893 was marked by a general sanitary revival and the consequence has been that while cholera raged a deadly warfare in other lands, and found some victims even in Hamburg, where such stringent measures had been taken, there were very few cases on this side of the Atlantic; in fact the whole country was unusually free from the class of preventative diseases. The great danger now is that we will, while thus congratulating ourselves, allow the means of defence to grow weaker. The fight against disease must be kept up, and because we have done a good work in one year is no reason why we should be idle the next. The cholera scare has done much good work and many filthy places have been changed under Hygeia's cleansing glance. This warfare against pestilence must be continued, and as the summer months are upon us we must renew our efforts.

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The special committee of the Ontario county council appointed to consider the advisability of erecting a house of industry, reported that during the last five years the total expenditure of the local municipalities in the county for indigent purposes, averaged \$5,911. The committee have been instructed to prepare and distribute facts for the electors, and a vote will be taken on the question at the next municipal elections.

* * *

We notice that several councils in passing by-laws for borrowing money under the Tile, Stone and Timber Drainage Act, only provide for the sum of \$2,000; this is the smallest amount for which a by-law can be passed, and as the expenses are the same whether the by-law is for \$2,000 or \$10,000, the cost to the borrower for the expenses of the by-law, etc., would be less if the council would pass by-laws to borrow the maximum amount of \$10,000.

* * *

The county council of Welland will solicit the co-operation of other counties in petitioning the Ontario Legislature to amend the Anatomy Act, so that the disposal of bodies of inmates of county houses of industry will be absolutely under the control of the county councils, and also for an amendment to the Act respecting coroners, so that its provisions will not apply to inmates dying in houses of industry.

In reply to an enquiry made by the Elgin county council last year in reference to this matter, the Deputy Attorney General gave the following opinion in reference to inquests on inmates in houses of industry:

“Looking at the language employed in section 3, of the Act respecting coroners, R. S. O., chap. 80, I am inclined to think that the provision as to holding inquests has reference to prisoners committed to the house of industry, and not merely to persons sent there to be cared for without any formal commitment. The word ‘prisoner’ used in this section points to this conclusion.”

Collectors' Rolls.

The preparation of collectors' rolls, will during the next two months, engage the attention of municipal clerks. Section 119, of the Assessment Act, refers to these duties. It is very necessary that the work of the clerk in this respect should be accurate, as the financial business of the municipality depends on the payment of correct amounts by the parties liable under by-laws that may have been passed in accordance with the Municipal, Drainage and other acts. The first duty of the clerk should be to enter as much of the Assessment roll as is required in the collector's roll, and ascertain the total assessment of the municipality. This will be required by the council in striking the rate. In townships, clerks will find it to their advantage in checking these additions to ascertain the valuation of each school section, and the total valuation of all the sections should agree with the total of the assessment roll.

Owing to the difference in the rates imposed, clerks should be very careful in checking over the valuations of the different school sections in their municipality to see that the assessor has made no errors, and that the property rightly belonging to the section is assessed therein. To obtain a requisition from trustees in the proper time, it is advisable to send each secretary-treasurer a circular or letter giving the valuation of his school section as it appears on the assessment roll for the year and number of children between five and twenty-one, as shown by the assessment, and as required by section 2, of the Assessment Amendment Act, 1893, and enclose a blank form of requisition to be filled in, signed by the trustees and returned to the clerk on or before the first day of August. This would insure uniformity of requisitions. The circular should also direct the trustees to enter in requisition the full amount required by them, and the council in levying the school section rates can deduct the amount to be raised by the general public school rate imposed under section 109.

The suggestions contained in the circular issued by the Provincial Board of Health, re vaccination, have caused many councils to put into force the compulsory clauses of the act.

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The New Jersey State Road Improvement Association suggests that during the National Editorial Convention which will be held at Ashbury Park this summer, a general conference of the advocates of road improvement in America should be held. General Roy Stone, engineer in charge of the office of road enquiry, Washington, D. C., has the matter in hand and will furnish full information on application. The 5th and 6th of July are suggested for date of meeting.