

News of Municipal Finance

Financial Progress of South Vancouver During Past Year—Winnipeg Tax Rate Down Half Mill and Budget Also Reduced—Essex County Assessment Shows Huge Increase—Brandon Tax Rate Up Five Mills—Toronto and Regina Report Good Collections

Regina, Sask.—Taxes for the current year, paid to June 15th, amount to \$94,175, as compared with collections of \$51,975 for the same period last year.

Grey County, Ont.—The tax rate has been fixed at 7 mills, 4 mills being for good roads and 3 mills for general expenses, yielding \$205,484 on an assessment of \$29,354,900.

Hastings County, Ont.—A tax rate of 13.7 mills has been approved by the county council, as compared with 12½ mills last year. Expenditures are estimated at \$367,026 and receipts at \$129,400.

Carleton County, Ont.—Hugh Riley, late clerk of the county, has been dismissed, following the audit of the books, which revealed a shortage in funds of \$3,300. It is not known whether legal proceedings will be brought against Mr. Riley, but it is understood that restitution will be made just as soon as he can realize on some of his property.

Calgary, Alta.—All departments are keeping within their financial allowances this year, according to the report of Comptroller Wood. The year's appropriations total \$3,536,911, or the average of \$294,742 for one month. Expenditures during the first five months of the year total \$1,023,946, or a monthly average of \$204,789, which amount is \$89,953 less allowed per month.

Lennox and Addington Counties, Ont.—A discussion of the equalization of assessment in the united counties took place last week, but no agreement was reached. Finally, the equalized assessment of each municipality was raised eleven per cent., with a recommendation to next year's council that equalization be taken up in the January session.

Brandon, Man.—The tax rate for the city has been fixed and adopted at 35 mills, an increase of 5 mills over last year. Increased expenditures in all departments and a jump in the school estimates, are the causes of the advance.

Street car fares on the city's street railway have been raised by permission of the Manitoba Public Utilities Commission. The rates were: Cash fares, 5 cents; regular tickets, 5 cents; workmen's tickets, 6 for 25c.; children's tickets, 10 for 25c. The rates now are: Cash fare, 7 cents; regular tickets, 6 for 35c.; workmen's tickets, 5 cents; children's tickets, 8 for 25c.

Essex County, Ont.—Assessment valuation in the county has been raised from \$33,301,000 to \$86,029,500. At the council meeting on June 18th, the report of the Equalization Committee increasing these values, was adopted, with only one cut of \$300,000 in Sandwich West. The principal increases are: Sandwich West, from \$1,700,000 to \$11,908,000; town of Sandwich, \$1,350,000 to \$6,523,600; Ojibway, \$300,000 to \$3,238,000. It is understood that those municipalities will appeal for reductions.

Owen Sound, Ont.—At a conference between a committee from the city council and a special committee from Grey county council on June 19th, when the separation of the city from the county was discussed, it was recommended that Owen Sound pay one-sixth of the judicial expenses, one-eighth of the expenses of the Children's Shelter, a share to the House of Refuge, proportionate to the number of inmates, and \$250 to the county treasurer's salary. The city is entitled to one-eighth of the county's assets, and is also liable for one-eighth of the liabilities.

Toronto, Ont.—The amount of taxes which the city has received during the period of the first instalment will total nearly \$12,500,000, and is a new high record. As the first instalment involved only \$9,800,000, if all payments were made, it is evident that there were a large number of payments on all three instalments.

Expenditures for the first six months of the year are well within the limit, according to the acting city treasurer's

report. Complete figures are not ready yet, but the total for the five months from January to May, which is \$12,690,014, indicates that the total for the six months will be well under the year's appropriations of \$29,987,278.

County of Middlesex, Ont.—Estimated expenditures for the present year amount to approximately \$363,665. Of the total, \$20,000 is a deficit from 1919, while \$30,388 is for interest and sinking fund on debentures. About \$170,000 will be expended on county, provincial county and suburban roads.

A report of the auditors on the unpaid taxes in the different municipalities throughout the county has brought up the matter of each municipality dealing with its own taxes. It was pointed out by the county clerk that under a recently enacted provincial legislation a county might pass a by-law giving each municipality control over its own matters of taxation.

Edmonton, Alta.—City Treasurer Barnhouse has issued cheques redeeming tax arrear debentures to the amount of \$130,000. This action had been approved of previously by the city council. The bonds are in blocks of \$80,000 and \$50,000, and are held in the United States. They do not mature before next July 1st, but have been offered to the city at discounts ranging from 1 to 5 per cent. In addition to the saving of 6 per cent. interest for this month, the city will have the extra advantage if the exchange rate becomes less favorable. When the cheques were issued exchange was around 13 per cent. The securities are all short-term bonds against tax arrears.

Edmonton, Alta.—The finance committee has recommended recognition of deserving cases under the ten-year extension plan on tax arrears. In order for the applicants to come under the Arrears of Taxes Act, current taxes for 1919 and 1920 have to be paid with interest at eight per cent. on the arrears. In the following eight years, the act calls for a payment of one-eighth of the arrears each year.

The period for receiving notices from persons wishing to take advantage of the act expired last year, and now the council has the question of deciding what should be done regarding applications which were not submitted at that time owing to no fault of the person now owning the property, and who may have been holding a mortgage last year.

Winnipeg, Man.—A tax rate of 22.5 mills, as compared with 23 mills last year, has been recommended by the finance committee, and will most likely be enforced. Estimated expenditure for the year is \$6,490,461, as compared with \$6,493,943 last year. The expenditure will be financed as follows: Miscellaneous revenue, \$607,350; business tax, \$431,915; tax levy on rateable assessment of \$236,970,410, \$5,331,834; balance from preceding year, \$119,361.

At the meeting of the committee on June 18th, a surplus of \$282,539, in connection with the hydro-electric department was reported. The total revenue for the year is \$1,279,469, and the total expenses \$1,099,189. The surplus for the year is \$180,279, which with the surplus at the beginning of the year of \$104,262, and adjustments during the year (profit and loss) of \$2,003, bring the total surplus to \$282,539.

South Vancouver, B.C.—According to the second annual statement of F. J. Gillespie, commissioner named to take charge of the affairs of the municipality by the provincial government, South Vancouver during the year ended May 1st last, made satisfactory financial progress. General collections. The sum of \$17,848 was gained by taking advances were allowed by the reeve and council to fall into arrears, were restored to the extent of over \$10,000, thus reducing the unpaid funds to that amount, and the 1919 sinking fund allotment was set up; trust funds were opened to reduce loans under government guarantee, and on April 1st over \$120,000 had been deposited to these accounts. Outstanding