

# News of Municipal Finance

**Fort William, Moose Jaw and Stratford Tax Rates Increase—Medicine Hat Given Right to Institute Rental Tax—Kingston Bonded Debt Will be Increased Over \$250,000—Greater Winnipeg Water District Assessment Reduced**

**Fort William, Ont.**—The civic finance committee has struck a tax rate of 36 mills.

**Stratford, Ont.**—The tax rate for 1920 will be 39½ mills, an increase of 1 mill over 1919. The estimated expenditure amounts to \$470,000.

**Chatham, Ont.**—The tax rate this year will be 31 mills, a decrease of 1 mill as compared with last year. Assessment will be increased \$2,000,000.

**Toronto, Ont.**—The civic budget, which was reviewed in these columns last week, has been adopted without amendment by the Board of Control.

**Regina, Sask.**—The expenditures for the general government of the city for the year 1920, totalling \$244,115, have been approved by the council. The actual expenditure last year was \$249,215.

**Edmonton, Alta.**—Municipal taxes levied in 1919 amounted to \$2,795,436, according to the report of the minister of municipalities. The municipal debenture debt amounts to \$25,316,884, and the school debenture debt \$3,374,230. Land values amount to \$62,471,850, and values of buildings and improvements \$16,834,470.

**Calgary, Alta.**—According to the report of the minister of municipalities for 1919, the municipal debenture debt is \$22,875,967 and the school debenture debt \$2,656,966. Land values are \$57,239,421, and values of buildings and improvements are estimated at \$20,359,836. Municipal taxes levied in 1919 amounted to \$2,767,213.

**Quebec, Que.**—At a meeting of the school board on April 4th, the Quebec Catholic School Commission appropriations, totalling \$391,059, were approved. The increase of \$57,681, as compared with last year, will necessitate an advance in the school taxes from 55 to 60 cents per hundred dollars' valuation. It was pointed out that the value of taxable property for Catholic school purposes is \$64,641,404.

**London, Ont.**—The council has framed its plans so that the first instalment of taxes will be paid on June 15th this year, the second on August 16 and the third on October 15. This will mean a big saving to the city on bank interest, as large sums will now be available when required to meet expenditures. The city this year will spend \$2,062,000, including general expenditure and debt charges.

**Medicine Hat, Alta.**—The city has been given the right to institute a tax on rental value of all properties by the municipal law committee of the legislature, which considered amendments to the Medicine Hat charter. The tax will be 10 per cent. of the rental value of property, and will be collected from all occupiers of property, whether owners or tenants. Lethbridge is considering the same scheme, but the proposal is not meeting with approval.

**Moose Jaw, Sask.**—The tax rate for public school supporters for 1920 will be 41.6 mills, an increase of 6.9 mills over last year. Separate school supporters will have to pay 49.3 mills, an increase of 1.75. The total levy amounts to \$946,577, or an increase of \$210,266 over the 1919 levy, exclusive of the local improvement levy of \$71,229, which brings the city's levy for the first time over the million dollar mark.

**Moose Jaw, Sask.**—The auditor's report for the year ended December 31st, 1919, shows that revenue exceeded expenditure by \$18,436, the total being \$1,173,161, against \$1,154,724. The principal item on the revenue side was the municipal tax levy, amounting to \$543,526. Electric light and waterworks systems brought in over \$400,000. Under expenditures the principal items include: Sundry interest and sinking fund charges, \$11,712; general interest, \$192,855; electric light system, \$284,436; waterworks system, \$154,142.

The balance sheet shows total assets of \$8,339,034, and current assets of \$1,084,848. The liabilities side shows net

bonded debt of \$5,092,566. Current and accrued liabilities total \$896,924, and excess levies, \$4,630, bringing total liabilities up to \$5,994,121. The surplus of \$2,344,912 is composed of capital, including local improvements (deferred assessment per contra), \$1,946,749, and revenue available as a reserve for possible uncollected taxes, \$398,162.

**Winnipeg, Man.**—The total assessable value of the land contained in the Greater Winnipeg Water District is \$173,734,838, according to the report of the Board of Equalization of Assessment on Taxable Lands. The assessable value is less by \$7,500,000 than in 1919, due to the taking out of portions of municipalities from the district. The assessable value of land in the city of Winnipeg remains the same, \$146,882,650; St. Boniface, \$10,263,300, an increase of \$760,245; Assiniboia, \$5,807,600, an increase of \$379,963; West Kildonan, \$2,756,598, the same as last year; East Kildonan, \$2,281,190, unchanged; Fort Garry, \$2,024,000, an increase of \$379,962; St. Vital, \$1,876,370, an increase of \$112,630; Transcona, \$2,163,090, a decrease of \$432,590. Winnipeg's share of taxable land for the upkeep of the district is increased from 81 to 85 per cent.

**Kingston, Ont.**—The civic budget, which was approved and passed by the city council on March 29, provides for a tax rate of 35½ mills, an increase of 7 mills over last year. Total controllable expenditure is estimated at \$194,081, and uncontrollable expenditure at \$350,500, a total of \$544,582. Assets applicable against floating liabilities as on December 31, 1919, showed a deficiency of \$14,305, the total being \$151,081, against \$165,387 liabilities. The bonded debt of the city at December 31, 1919, was \$1,809,530, and this amount will be increased this year by authorized debentures amounting to \$261,243. The amount of the sinking funds is \$294,414, and of this amount \$279,112 is invested in government and municipal debentures, and \$15,302 is on special deposit in the bank. The amount to be levied for the sinking funds this year is \$53,561, the parties specially benefited paying \$24,326, and the city generally paying \$29,234.

## ONTARIO HYDRO ACQUIRES ANOTHER RAILWAY

The Sandwich, Windsor and Amherstburg Railway was acquired by the Ontario Hydro-Electric Power Commission on March 31st. Purchase of the railway by the border municipalities involves an investment of more than \$2,000,000, of which Windsor's share is approximately \$700,000. Payment of the purchase price, which is guaranteed by bonds issued by each interested municipality, will be spread over fifty years. The present rate of fares, six tickets for a quarter, will be continued, according to Sir Adam Beck, chairman of the commission.

## RECOGNIZE HIGHER BUILDING COSTS

Authority has been given to the provincial governments to increase the maximum amounts of the loans which may be granted under class "A" of the federal housing project from \$3,000 to \$3,500 for four or five-roomed dwellings, and from \$3,500 to \$4,000 for six or seven-roomed dwellings.

The question was brought before the cabinet council in regard to houses of wooden construction. Thos. Adams, town planning adviser, reported that in some cities, especially in St. John, N.B., and in Winnipeg, preference was shown for such houses, and it was pointed out that the cost of the material and labor necessary for their erection had greatly increased during the past year.