

# Team of Horses Bought For Street Department

## Ald. McLellan's Action Ratified by Council But His Methods Criticized as Improper --Lively Discussion in Committee Last Night--Ald. McLellan, Ald. Walker and Mayor Mitchell the Storm-Centres--Horses and Equipment Cost \$710.

The expected storm in civic circles over the purchase of a team of horses by Ald. McLellan, chairman of the Street Committee, for work of that department, broke last night, when the City Council met in committee. The mayor, Ald. McLellan and Ald. Walker were the storm-centres but other members of the council took part in a discussion which was heated at all times and personal quite frequently. The opinion was expressed by several aldermen that Ald. McLellan's methods in making the purchase of horses and equipment were irregular but on a final vote the two horses, a sled, a wagon, a set of harness and other equipment was purchased at a total cost of \$710. Ald. Walker and Ald. Baxter were the only opponents of the motion. All members were present except Ald. Shea.

Ald. Walker brought up the matter when the bill for \$300 for ex-Ald. Edward Moore's mare was before the council in committee. He objected that no legal meeting of the Street Committee had been held for the purpose of deciding upon the matter, the members not being formally notified. Mayor Mitchell took the same line and said that although a member of the Street Committee, he had not been notified of the meeting at which the matter had been discussed. Ald. McLellan retorted warmly and spoke of "ulterior motives" behind the opposition. This statement produced a prompt denial from both the mayor and Ald. Walker. Ald. McLellan claimed that the purchase of the horses was justifiable from the viewpoint of final economy and the majority of the council took that view.

At one stage of the proceedings, Mayor Mitchell remarked that he considered his own opinion on the matter of procedure in the council as good as that of Ald. McLellan. "Well, God help my opinion then," was Ald. McLellan's reply.

Later in the session, Ald. Walker remarked that he welcomed criticism for the latter had a value. It helped to keep some persons in their proper places if they knew enough to stay there.

### Total Cost of Horses.

The total cost of the horses and gear is \$710 but they must have stables built for them and a teamster has been engaged at a wage of \$2 per day. This cost is to come out of the Roads and Streets appropriation. The bills for the horses as passed last night are as follows:

One mare	\$300
One horse collar	5
W. A. Clark—	\$305
One mare	225
Harry Crotty—	
One wagon	\$ 75
One sled	25
One set double harness,	
one neck yoke, whiffle-	

tree and crotch chain complete	75
G. C. McCoy—	175
Veterinary inspection	5
	\$710

### Ald. Walker Objects.

Ald. Walker asked who authorized the purchase of the horses? Was there a meeting of the Street Committee or not?

Mayor Mitchell said he knew of no regularly called meeting of the committee. He had received no notice. Possibly the chairman could explain.

Ald. McLellan stated that an informal meeting of the committee was held in the council chamber. It was decided that a city team be purchased at a cost of about \$500. Ald. Burnett and Ald. Barker were present. He did not understand the position of His Worship. The latter could hardly say that he was not present when there was discussion on the matter.

The city engineer had declared in favor of purchasing a team of horses. The idea was favorably received. The horses were purchased largely through the efforts of the city engineer and himself (McLellan). The city engineer had been asked to attend and could be heard by the general committee.

Ald. Walker objected that his question had not been answered. There should have been a formal meeting of the Street Committee and a motion made and passed. It looked as if Ald. McLellan had gone ahead and bought the horses without any authority. No regularly called meeting of the committee had been held, it was evident, and the chairman, Ald. McLellan had no authority to purchase the horses. There was no record of the meeting of the Street Committee. In his experience all committee meetings had been regularly called and minutes kept.

### Ald. Reid's Views.

Ald. Reid stated that if that was correct, much business had been done in a slipshod manner. He knew of many informal meetings. He thought what was wanted was the opinion of each alderman on this purchase.

Mayor Mitchell—"I think all committee meetings should be regularly called. You know the trouble the city got into last year through a meeting not called regularly. It was in the Road Department, too."

Ald. Reid—"I think a chairman has the right to purchase for his department."

Ald. Wilkinson—"I don't think so. Chairmen have the power to buy only small articles urgently needed."

### Ald. McLellan Replies.

Ald. McLellan said that Ald. Walker was taking ground that was too technical. Since being an alderman he had received no formal notice to

attend any committee meeting. There had been objection to this purchase only in the case of the Street Committee. He was not going to take Ald. Walker's "say so" alone. It was strange that this particular meeting of the Street Committee was singled out. Possibly there was an ulterior motive which would be revealed in time. He denied Ald. Walker or any other person to say that a meeting was not legal at which a majority of members were present. The question was not, "Has this meeting been called?" but it was, "Was the meeting held?" He did not know what was the custom previous to March last, but he knew what was done since.

### Wordy Bout.

Ald. McLellan—"Was Your Worship not told after that meeting what had been done at that meeting?"

Mayor Mitchell—"I was told that the committee was talking of buying a team."

Ald. McLellan—"I didn't expect to get even that admission."

Mayor Mitchell—"Go on! Go on! I'm not worrying. I don't care if you are after me or not."

Ald. McLellan—"I'm not after you. You are after me."

Mayor Mitchell—"Oh, that's it, is it?"

Ald. McLellan—"Yes. Are you surprised?"

Mayor Mitchell—"What I say to you is that no meeting took place. Was not told that a meeting was to be held?"

Ald. McLellan—"Did Your Worship agree with the decision of the committee?"

Mayor Mitchell—"I did not."

Ald. McLellan—"That is where His Worship and I take issue. Fortunately there is proof outside myself or himself as to what his feelings were on that matter."

Mayor Mitchell—"Ald. McLellan, if you have gone ahead and bought a team of horses you must shoulder the responsibility. You cannot shoulder it upon me. I'm here to protect the city's interests."

Ald. McLellan—"We will come to the protection of the city's interests later, in this and other matters. I want all aldermen to understand that I do not ask the mayor to shoulder one farthing's worth of responsibility. I'll take it."

Mayor Mitchell—"Well, take it."

Ald. McLellan, continuing, said that the matter narrowed itself down to the question of whether it was in the city's interests or not to buy a pair of horses. The city engineer and himself had spent some time selecting those horses and had carefully considered the matter.

### Ald. Walker Again.

In response to Ald. Walker, Ald. Burnett, Ald. Lemont and Ald. Barker all said they had been notified of a meeting of the Justice Committee prior to its being called. Continuing, Ald. Walker denied Ald. McLellan's insinuation that he (Walker) had ulterior motives. He then asked Ald. McLellan if a teamster had been engaged by him.

Ald. McLellan said that the city engineer would give the detailed information concerning the horses, wagons, harness, etc. He suggested that he be called in.

Ald. Walker—"I don't want the city engineer. He is not the chairman. I have asked Ald. McLellan if

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he had hired a teamster?"

Ald. McLellan continued. He thought an excellent bargain had been secured. Horses were no good without wagon or harness. Fred Farrell had been engaged as teamster at a salary of \$2 per day. He was to be ready for work at any time between five a.m. and ten p.m. His regular hours would be between seven a.m. and five p.m. Street sweeping was to be done late at night, without extra charge to the city.

### Ald. Burnett's Statement.

Ald. Burnett said the time had come for the minor members of the Street Committee to be heard. The meeting of that committee had been held just before a meeting of the general committee. He had agreed with Ald. McLellan's suggestion and had fixed the maximum price of \$500. Ald. Burnett said he always had thought a chairman should have great latitude. Ald. McLellan, as far as he knew, had the city's interests at heart as much as had any other member of the council.

The speaker said he had done nothing more concerning the horses. The city engineer and come to him and discussed the matter of buying equipment. He had told the city engineer that that official was competent to buy the horses.

The city engineer had a reputation to make or lose. He considered him a diligent official. One thing he had done in the city's interest was to dig out of the mud at the city yard a rock drill which originally cost \$110. That place had been allowed to get into such condition that the men could not go to work in it.

Probably the expression of public opinion in the matter of horses was due to the difference in price between the Moore mare and the Clark horse. The question was whether the horses were to be bought or not. If so, buy them. If not, cut it out.

### The Mayor's Denial.

Mayor Mitchell said Ald. McLellan had stated that he (Mitchell) had agreed to the purchase of wagon, harness and sled.

Ald. McLellan—"I said that City Engineer McKnight had told me that."

Mayor Mitchell—"I wish to say I did not approve of the purchase of horses or equipment."

Ald. Barker said he had been favorable to the purchase of a pair of horses. He always had thought so. The horses were good ones, although he had nothing to do with buying them. The cost was to be about \$500. He thought there would be sufficient work to keep the horses going all year round.

Ald. McLellan said that his recollection was that the cost was to be about \$300. It turned out to be \$225. The Moore mare had been bought for \$200. She had cost that amount when first brought into the country. On going to Mr. Clark it was found that he wanted to sell a pair of horses for \$500. Finally, he sold the horse for \$225. The reduction of \$25 in the price of the horse was due to a matter of private business between Mr. Moore and Mr. Clark, by which the city paid \$25 less than it otherwise would for the pair of horses. Mr. Guilford Hammond, a well known judge of horses, on looking over the team and on being told that it was bought for \$525, had said, "Well, you've stolen the man's horses."

Ald. McLellan said that if the team was not found worth while it could be sold. There was much work to do. He had seen big double teams with two-foot sideboards hauling dry leaves. They cost \$4 a day and were not hauling a load that a pony could not have. That was a thing of the past. Four-foot sideboards had become the rule. He stated that the city team would have paid for itself by autumn and would increase the efficiency of all teams in city employ.

It was the idea of the city engineer to collect all city tools, wagons, etc., at the city yard and store them in a building to be erected there. It had been suggested to place the horses there. This was found inconvenient and the team had been placed in a large barn at the lower end of the city owned by himself. He had placed it at the city's convenience.

(Continued on page six)

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