

Round-Table Conference Re Grand Falls Current for City

Hon. C. D. Richards and J. K. Palmer Before City Council Last Night — Several Suggestions Made—To Expend \$15,000 on Waterloo Row and River Road This Year.

The City Council in special session Tuesday night heard Hon. C. D. Richards, Minister of Lands and Mines and J. D. Palmer, member of the New Brunswick Power Commission, relative to Grand Falls current and the action the city should take toward making application for a portion of the block of 6,000 horse power reserved for public use. The final result was a decision to have a round-table conference held at which the City Council, Fredericton Board of Trade and New Brunswick Power Commission would be represented, and at which the question would be discussed in all its phases. Emphasis was put on the fact that Fredericton was expected to lead in the matter of securing Grand Falls current for the Saint John Valley, by the two speakers who addressed the Council.

The question of constructing permanent highway to the Dominion Experimental Station in the eastern part of the province also was considered. The final decision was to construct two blocks of tarvia or asphalt on Waterloo Row and to use standard gravel construction from the Ketchum Bridge east during the present year with the intention of continuing the work next year. For this work it was decided to issue \$15,000 worth of bonds out of the issue of \$60,000 which was authorized by the legislature. This decision was reached only after other motions had been defeated and much discussion had taken place.

Grand Falls Current.

Hon. C. D. Richards and J. D. Palmer appeared before the Council and were invited by His Worship Mayor Clark to address the Council. Their subject was Grand Falls power development and its relationship to Fredericton. Hon. Mr. Richards spoke

first dealing with the matter in a more or less general way. Mr. Palmer entered more into detail.

Hon. Mr. Richards.

Hon. Mr. Richards informed the Council that he and Mr. Palmer appeared more as citizens than officials. It was desired by all who had the interest of the city at heart that Fredericton take advantage of the development of electric power at Grand Falls by the Saint John River Power Co. A reservation for public use had been made up to June 1st, 1927, of 6,000 horse power, through the New Brunswick Power Commission. If that amount were not applied for it was to be reduced to 4,000 horse power up to June 1st, 1929. The Power Commission had control of the current and was desirous of making re-sale of current for public uses. On accounts of geographical position Fredericton might well be considered the most important centre in the district which would use Grand Falls power.

Situation Complicated.

He explained that where possible the Commission shall deal with the municipality. In certain communities the existence of a distributing and producing company complicated the situation. Moncton, Sussex and Saint John had been in that position. In Saint John an unfortunate condition had arisen as a result. Fredericton must consider the existence of such a company.

Distance from Grand Falls and means of local distribution were factors which entered into the matter. Really the question was one of cost. So far at was not possible to tell what the cost would be.

He had been informed that in Fredericton the existing organization developed 800 horse power and in Marysville approaching 1,500 horse

power was developed by the main industry located there.

Mr. Palmer would deal with other features of the question of hydro-power.

Discussion.

Mayor Clark asked if there was a possibility of the N. B. Power Co. acquiring a transmission line down the Saint John Valley.

Hon. Mr. Richards said there was no intimation of that. The Commission would construct the transmission line making charge of maintenance on the people.

Ald. Mitchell said the cost of the transmission line would determine the cost of current.

Hon. Mr. Richards said that such was the case. There was the unfortunate fact that Victoria and Carleton Counties already were provided for by current from Aroostook Falls. That left Fredericton the chief centre in the Saint John Valley and the rest of the country was looking to this city for a lead.

J. D. Palmer.

J. D. Palmer was next heard. He pointed out the necessity for Fredericton to act toward getting cheap power. If the community is to advance cheap power must be provided. There were many uses, domestic and industrial to which it could be placed.

He advised a conference with the N. B. Power Commission at a meeting with Hon. Mr. Reilly and the engineers better results could be obtained in a short time than in any other way. They would have the information.

Some Suggestions.

Ald. Ross suggested that an arrangement might be made to use the existing power line from Aroostook Falls to Woodstock. He could see no reason for building two lines when one might do.

Mr. Palmer said that could be considered. In response to a question about estimated cost of current he said that it was expected to cost \$1,000,000 to build 140 miles of transmission line from Grand Falls to Fredericton. Interest charges, depreciation and other charges would re-

quire 11½ per cent annually. At the legal charge of \$20 per horse power, 6,000 horse power would cost \$120,000. Those two items would have to be added. There also would be a loss in transmission. About 5,200 horse power would be available here and Fredericton could use all of that.

Ald. Currier pointed out that Welsford was only 38 miles from Fredericton compared with 140 to Grand Falls. A power line from Musquash already existed as far as Welsford. If surplus current existed it might be used.

Mr. Palmer said the line to Welsford was very light and could not bear current required by Fredericton.

Mr. Mitchell said the matter was one in which the citizens in general were interested. A survey of all the possible demand should be made. He suggested that a round-table conference be held at which the City Council, the Board of Trade and the Power Commission be represented.

In response to Ald. McKnight, Hon. Mr. Richards stated that 6,000 horse power was the total current available for public use. There were no limitations placed on the Commission in the matter of distribution.

Ald. Ross said that the disposal of current must be considered, there were but two alternatives, use of the Maritime Electric Company's system or the construction of a city line.

Ald. Goodspeed said the most logical method would be to use the Maritime Electric Company's lines. He understood that the company was eager to have hydro current come in.

Decide on Conference.

Ald. Mitchell seconded by Ald. Currier moved that His Worship the Mayor make arrangements for a round-table conference.

In response to Ald. Ross, Mr. Palmer said that he believed that S. R. Weston, Chief Engineer of the Power Commission, could quote cost figures which would be practically accurate. The motion was put and carried.

Debate Issue.

On motion of Ald. Thompson it was decided to issue debentures to the value of \$25,000 to meet extra expenditure on the new unit at the Pumping station.

Street Matters.

Reporting for the Roads and Streets Committee Ald. Currier said that with regard to street improvement in the eastern portion of the city the plan was to lay tarvia pavement on Waterloo Row from the C. N. R. station to the Ketchum bridge at a cost of \$12,000 and construct standard gravel road from the Ketchum Bridge to the Experimental station at a cost of \$6,000 a mile. To aid in that Dominion aid amounting to \$10,000, \$5,000 in each of two years, was available for labor charges and hauling.

Ald. Currier moved that the committee be authorized to proceed as outlined.

Ald. Mitchell said he would like to second the motion but must explain why he did not. A delegation had waited upon the Provincial Government and asked for assistance. No reply had been received. Without this aid too great an obligation would be placed on the city.

He would suggest that two blocks of tarvia be laid this year and certain work done on the road near the Experimental Station. He would be willing to move to that effect.

Suggestion Adopted.

After long discussion Ald. Currier moved that until it were ascertained what the extent of the provincial aid would be, the Roads and Streets Committee be authorized to lay two blocks of tarvia pavement and lay a portion of gravel road from the Ketchum Bridge east.

Ald. McKnight seconded the motion. Ald. Currier said the tarvia would cost \$6,000 and gravel road cost could be regulated so as to total about \$12,000.

The motion was carried.

Ald. Currier seconded by Ald. McKnight moved for an issue of \$30,000 in bonds for permanent streets.

Amendment Carried.

In amendment Ald. Thompson moved that bonds be issued to an amount of \$15,000. This Council had been elected to practise economy. Spending \$30,000 would not be doing that.

Ald. Currier said that \$15,000 would not be sufficient.

The amendment was carried on the following vote:—

Yea — Davidson, Hay, Mitchell, Thompson, Richards.

Nay — McKnight, Currier, Ross, Goodspeed.

To Consider Asphalt.

Ald. Mitchell said it might be well to consider asphalt as a material for paving. He moved that the Roads and Streets Committee be authorized to lay the two blocks of Waterloo Row with asphalt if deemed advisable. The motion was carried.

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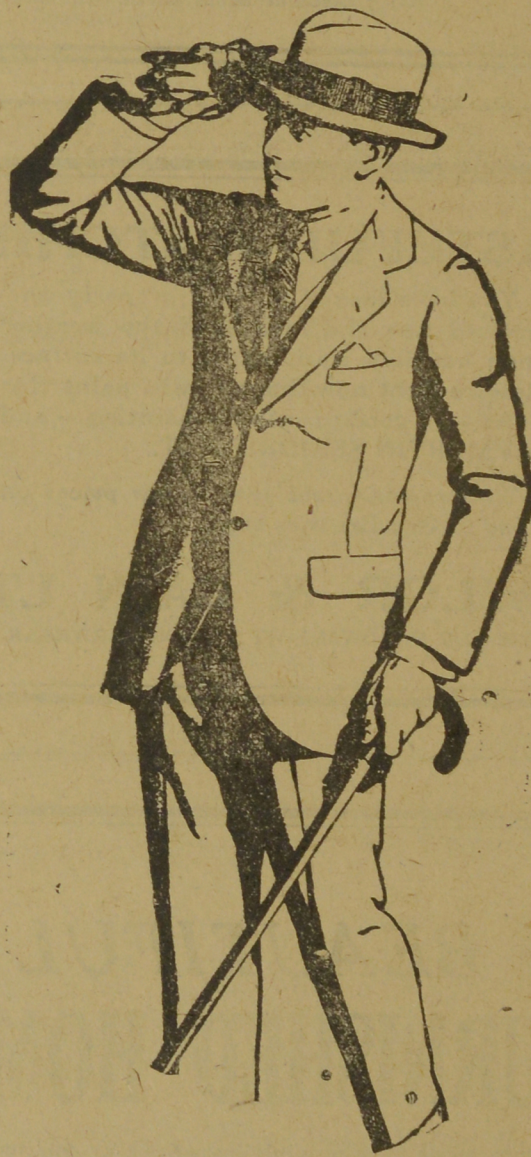
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