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HUNTINGTON BEACH, ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 1914

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WATER RATES HEARING

State Railroad Commission Here to Decide Upon Application of Huntington Beach Company For Permission to Raise Rates; Great Interest Shown and Good Attendance at All-Day Session.

Before State Railroad Commissioner Edwin O. Edgerston at the city hall here Wednesday, the request of the Huntington Beach Company for permission to raise local water rates was heard, the hearing occupying the entire day. Beside the Commissioner, those directly interested in the hearing and present were: For the city of Huntington Beach, City Attorney S. M. Davis, Engineer H. Clay Kellogg of Santa Ana; for the Huntington Beach Company, Attorney C. B. Eyer of Los Angeles, Engineer P. E. Harroun of San Francisco and Resident-manager H. L. Heffner; also, James Armstrong, engineer and A. T. Pettey, stenographer for the Railroad Commission.

C. E. Lavinger, city clerk, was the first witness examined and merely testified to the correctness of a map of Huntington Beach, filed as an exhibit.

W. D. Seely, president of the board of city trustees, underwent a lengthy examination during which he testified that he considered the new rates promulgated in ordinance No. 106 as more reasonable than those in force before the adoption of that ordinance against the enforcement of which a temporary injunction has been obtained by the Huntington Beach Company. Mr. Seely stated that his opinion is based upon investigation of the rates in effect in other cities nearby. He said that the majority of water users here use more than 500 feet monthly and therefore the old minimum rate is too high. He testified that, as he has been in the real estate business here since 1904, he is familiar with prices of lots in this city. He had sold many lots for the Huntington Beach Company at their list prices and the company's agents represented to buyers that

the price of the lots higher—that the building of the Pacific Electric railway to this city had also greatly enhanced their value and to get that railway here the company had surrendered a big proportion of its holdings to the railway. He claimed that curbing and paving were also to be considered as adding value to the lots.

On cross-examination, Mr. Seely testified that, in the first three or four years after this city was founded, prices of lots increased in selling value but not much afterwards. He inspected one of the Company's selling contracts and admitted that no obligation to pipe water was included in them but insisted that agents told buyers that this would be done. J. V. and Sumner Vickers of the Company had authorized him to so represent. He gave it as his opinion that the rates in the old ordinance were a little high and said that the city trustees were unanimous in so thinking. He considered the difference in the price of lots with and without water as about a hundred dollars.

T. B. Talbert swore that he was a realty dealer of ten years' experience. He corroborated Mr. Seely as to the first list price of city lots here but thought water made a difference of only about sixty-five dollars. He believed, he said, that it must have cost the Company about twenty-five per cent to sell its lots. He understood that to secure the Pacific Electric railway service had cost the Company one-twelfth of all its holdings here and a large part of the ocean frontage.

The files of the Huntington Beach News were introduced as evidence by City Attorney Davis to show what the Company advertised in regard to its water plant. The advertisements were what is known as "boasting" advertisements and were published in 1905 and 1906, chiefly.

Owner S. H. Finley of the East Side Water Company, which supplies residents in the Vista del Mar section of Huntington Beach, appeared and declared that he would be satisfied with the rates in either the old or the new ordinance.

D. E. Ford, resident manager

WORK BEGUN.

Contractor Bert Noble began work Tuesday morning on the construction of the plant of the Pacific Oilcloth and Linoleum Company just outside the city limits of Huntington Beach. Blasting for the foundation was the first step and work is to be pushed as fast as possible. As announced in last week's News the first building of the plant to be erected will be the oil house.

He and the Company disagreed, he said, as to the minimum rate to which he is entitled.

W. C. O'Connor swore that at his residence away out on Main street the supply pipe is a "dead end" and there is in summer a disagreeable odor to the water there. He had finished his pipes at the suggestion of the health officer but thought the Company put on a meter.

H. Clay Kellogg of Santa Ana, an expert hydraulic engineer, was the chief witness for the city and his testimony was lengthy. He submitted in writing his idea of what the water plant should cost and what should be its income to make it profitable. He believed the rates of the new more reasonable than those of the old ordinance. He had examined the local system carefully. He thought that the small consumer should have a lower rate because usually in moderate circumstances. Mr. Kellogg cited Santa Ana, Corvuss, Orange and Anaheim as examples of places where rates were lower than here. He asserted that plants 2 and 3 are sufficient for water supply here and that therefore the Company had "overbuilt" its plant, by having plant 1.

The witness read at length from his written statement telling of what would be a good plant to supply this city with water and how cheaply he has trenches dug and pipe laid. He laid special stress on his view that a water company in fixing its rates for consumers should do so on a basis of what the plant would earn in its life—

That on vacant lots on which 3000 feet or over is used there shall be charged only meter rates.

That the rate for yards exceeding 150 feet in depth and for public closets be retained as in the old ordinance.

That any minimum charge during non-use of water taps shall be eliminated.

All these changes suggested by Engineer Harroun and probably to be accepted by the Company favor the water users but his last suggestion created a sensation. It was that the city pay the Company for the use of water for quenching fires the sum of \$3,883.30 annually, the figure being based on the proportion of water for such purpose probably needed or ready for use to the whole quantity of water furnished for domestic purposes. Mr.

Harroun admitted that during the past year there had been only three fires here and these of brief duration but believed the charge just nevertheless because the fire hydrants and pipes necessitated the Company's having increased supply and power.

He does not believe the Huntington Beach plant "overbuilt," thus taking issue with Mr. Kellogg. He is of the opinion, he said, that there should be an excess capacity sufficient for five years. In his written opinion, he stated, he has placed the cost of the plant at what it ought to be and not any higher and he thought the increase in rates asked by the Company entirely reasonable.

H. V. Anderson testified that he is the Company's book-keeper and supplied the data asked for by both Engineer Kellogg and Engineer Harroun.

Both attorneys agreed to submit their arguments to the Railroad Commission in writing instead of orally and were given until January 20th by Commissioner Edgerston to do so. The hearing lasted from 10 o'clock in the morning until nearly 6 o'clock in the afternoon with an adjournment of an hour for lunch.

MARSHAL HAS RESIGNED.

The many failures to convict, in arrests made by City Marshal E. T.

PLANTING LEMONS HERE

Twenty Acres to Be Set Out by Owners of Large Tract; Local Bank to Enter Into New National Currency Plan; Matters of Minor Moment.

The directors of the First National bank of this city have authorized Cashier R. E. Graves to take the necessary steps for joining the regional reserve banks to be instituted in accordance with the provisions of the new Federal currency law. R. Courreges has been elected a vice-president of the local bank, which has re-elected its entire board of directors and the Savings Bank of Huntington Beach has done the same.

On Tuesday evening Misses Annie and Hilda Hill were the guests of Miss Clyde Glaves, the party attending a Los Angeles theater. Another theater party during the week was composed of Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Griffith and Dr. and Mrs. G. A. Shank. Misses Annie Hill and Vernie Worthly were Miss Leona Mudgett's guests at a theater party the first of this week.

A girl was born to the wife of Bert D. Elliott, presumably recently. The notice of the fact, which reached the News office Thursday, did not state the date of birth. Mr. and Mrs. Elliott are building a home at Santa Rosa of which city they are now residents. They formerly lived here, where they have a large circle of friends.

The Merceroan Bridge and Construction Company of Los Angeles, was on Wednesday awarded the contract for building a bulkhead to protect the Huntington Beach Company's bathhouse near Main street. The bulkhead will be of wood with sheet piling, this being considered more desirable for the purpose than a concrete structure.

A. J. Young of Wintersburg, well known as the potato king of Orange county, has received the prize he won at the state fair in Sacramento. He received one first and two special prizes. The varieties of potatoes he showed at the

Orange County Realty Board. A meeting of the organization was held Tuesday evening at Santa Ana.

Mrs. Joseph Vavra, who has been in the Westlake Hospital at Los Angeles the past week is doing well and may be able to return to her home here in another week.

The supervisors of this county have adopted an ordinance making it a misdemeanor to plow up a county road or to remove any material from a county road.

Mr. and Mrs. George Dofflemyer and daughter and S. Watson of Los Angeles were guests here Tuesday at the home of Leonard Obarr on Sixth street.

S. W. Sinsheimer arrived here this week from Swink, Colorado, and will spend a few weeks at the local plant of the Holly Sugar Company.

Clinton Newland, Victor Meyer, Albert Isenor and Clarence McClintock were among the local people who attended the Los Angeles auto show.

Obarr's drug store has been designated as a registration office for voters. This makes three registration places in the downtown district.

Miss Annie Frazier of Long Beach was a week-end guest here at the home of Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Johnson.

BIG WATER PROJECT.

A water project of considerable magnitude is being installed by James Irvine, owner of the 114,000 acre San Joaquin ranch. The source of water supply is artesian wells situated near the San Joaquin Gun Club. A 12-inch pipe line is being laid from Corona del Mar and the route being along the foot of the bay cliff.

supply is said to be plenty for domestic purposes, although there is sufficient quantity for irrigation as well. Among the consumers of this water, Balboa Island, it is said, will be the largest, the line passing that point and a reservoir to be built on the hill back of Corona del Mar, which place will also be supplied with the San Joaquin water. A large force of men is at work on