

Greenbelt News Review

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

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Five Cents

GHI to Continue Preparing City Taxes, Concerned Over City Budget

By Al Skolnik

In a brief meeting on Thursday, Nov. 20, the Greenbelt Homes, Inc. board of directors decided not to push at this time for a change in its practice of prepaying city real estate taxes. GHI manager John O. Walker reported that under present conditions the gain for GHI would be inconsequential—roughly \$200—if it received interest on the prepaid taxes but had to pay additional taxes to cover the cost to the city of borrowing these amounts.

Walker stated that it would probably be advantageous to reopen this issue at a later date when more of the newly developed property comes on the tax rolls. At present, according to city figures, GHI is paying about 72 percent of the city's tax bill. With the expansion of residential Greenbelt, this ratio, of course, will drop. The board's feeling has been that it is increasingly inequitable to expect GHI to bear the entire cost of prepaying taxes, while the city's tax load is being shared by a growing number of taxpayers.

In another tax matter, the board expressed concern over the proposed budget and tax rate for 1959 submitted by city manager Charles McDonald to the city council last week. GHI management is now preparing next year's budget, to be taken up at the next board meeting, Thursday, Dec. 4, and the possibility of a city tax increase is expected to affect the deliberations of the board in setting monthly charges for next year.

In still another tax matter, the board was advised that GHI has paid under protest an ad valorem tax of about \$4,900 for 1958. This tax was assessed by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission on the grounds that Greenbelt was in the sanitary district during 1958. The co-op contends that this tax should not be applicable to GHI until 1959 when WSSC begins to provide service. The law is open to interpretation either way and GHI is considering getting a court ruling on the matter.

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WHAT GOES ON

Wednesday, Nov. 26—8 p.m. Registration, golf classes, Center School auditorium
Tuesday, Dec. 2—4 p.m. Registration, arts and crafts classes, Social room, Center School
Thursday, Dec. 4—8:15 p.m. GHI board discusses budget Administration bldg.
Friday, Dec. 5—8:45 p.m. Duplicate bridge, Arts and Crafts Room, Center School

Boys Return For Trial

By Isadore Parker

The three Greenbelt teen-age boys arrested by federal agents in Houston, Tex., were released to the custody of Joe O'Loughlin and will face trial in Hyattsville next Tuesday on charges of "unauthorized use of a vehicle." O'Loughlin left for by plane last Friday morning at 1 a.m. and returned with the boys early Saturday. The trip was paid for by parents of the boys and O'Loughlin did not represent the city police department at the Houston hearing.

Judge Emmet Nanna, in Hyattsville, waived juvenile jurisdiction in the case and the boys will appear in Judge Small's court to be tried as adults, on warrants issued by the city of Greenbelt.

According to Jim Williams, Greenbelt Chief of Police, the FBI had not contacted the parents of the youths involved, and had asked the boys to sign waivers permitting them to be tried without attorneys or a jury. The boys refused to sign. Maximum sentence of 11 years would have been permitted if tried in Houston. At the appearance of O'Loughlin, the boys were released to his custody and returned to Greenbelt under his escort.

In Hyattsville court, O'Loughlin also took the responsibility for one of the boys, who otherwise would have been required to await trial in jail. A full-time teacher in the North End elementary school, O'Loughlin is also a parttime Greenbelt policeman and manager of the local swimming pool during the summer. According to Williams, O'Loughlin has played an important part in the community combating juvenile delinquency and assisting in the rehabilitation of known offenders.

Arts and Crafts

The second registration for Arts and Crafts classes will be held on Tuesday, Dec. 2, at 3:30 p.m. in the Social Room at Center School. Registration fee is \$1.50 to cover the cost of material and supplies for the 15 sessions. Instructors are Evelyn Boggs and Charles Backstrum.

The North End Kindergarteners had a fine time viewing the turkeys at Beltsville Farm last week.

A speedy recovery to Harry Weidberg, 17-A Ridge.

The Greenbelt Co-op Nursery tots enjoyed their trip to Beltsville Farm last week.

The North End Drill Team, under the supervision of Joe O'Loughlin, is off to Philadelphia tomorrow. The team will participate in the Thanksgiving parade. Twenty-nine excited youngsters will fill a chartered bus at 5:30 a.m. For breakfast they will munch on doughnuts and drink hot chocolate. They will not miss out on their turkey dinner, for a lunch consisting of turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, potato chips, milk, ice cream, and cup cakes will travel along with them.

Council Hears Department Heads On Budget; Additional Funds Requested

By Russ Greenbaum

While sharpening its knives for the annual ritual of carving the budget, the city council devoted its first special budget review meeting on Monday, Nov. 24, to hearing the city department heads explain and justify their requests for funds submitted in the proposed 1959 budget. Three of the five department heads strongly urged the council to approve additional funds which had been omitted from the budget by City Manager Charles McDonald.

The additional funds would add more than \$3,000 to the budget submitted by McDonald, which totals \$203,138 and would require a 13.5 cent rise in the city tax rate making it \$1.71 per \$100 assessed evaluation. All the department heads supported the proposed ten percent across-the-board pay raise which would add another \$11,562 to the budget.

City Treasurer Mabel L. Kandler asked the \$900 in the budget for the annual city audit be increased to \$1500 to permit a more complete audit than has been made in the past. She said that the audit that the city has been receiving over the past year simply cannot reveal and reflect a true picture of the city's financial operations. She felt that \$900 can only buy a cash audit, which does no more than check "to see if the treasurer has stolen any funds."

Mrs. Kandler also said she was opposed to putting out the audit on bids to obtain the cheapest price. This was done by the city for the first time last year, and a saving of \$150 was effected. She said that this is not considered ethical in the profession. She obtained the figure of \$1500 as an estimate made by municipal administrative experts two years ago for a thorough audit of the accounts of a city of Greenbelt's size.

Police Force

Police Chief Jim Williams requested an additional full-time police officer, which would eliminate the services of one parttime officer and add \$1,000 to the departmental request. The present police force consists of the chief, three full-time officers, and two parttime foot patrolmen. Chief Williams argued that the new full-time man could be more conveniently scheduled and that his first interest would be in the department. He felt that parttime officers tend to think of their main job first and consider their police duties secondary.

Chief Williams, however, admitted that parttime officers are needed since the policy of the city is to have only one full-time officer on duty at a time plus a parttime officer. He indicated that the busiest hours for the police are in the late afternoon and early evening hours when there a number of juvenile calls. The foot patrolmen work from 8 p.m. until midnight, but there is less need of them during the later hours.

It was also revealed that the foot patrolmen do not walk a regular beat. They use the second police car to drive to select spots and then make a walking tour of the area. Use of the police car also keeps them in contact with the city police clerk. Chief Williams said that ever since the commercial center has been covered by the foot patrol, there are no longer doors and windows found opened or unlocked, such as at the Co-op store or the bank. Councilman Alan Kistler asked the chief to bring in a schedule showing how he would use the additional full-time officer.

Mrs. Winfield McCamy, the city clerk, sought additional funds to codify the city ordinances, which has never been done. She said that at the present time it is very difficult and inefficient to check on what ordinances are in operation. She said an estimate of the cost as of two years ago for this job was about \$800. She also requested that the city charter be printed rather than mimeographed as done presently. This would present the charter in a neater fashion and also make it much easier to fill the numerous requests for copies. Although she estimated \$300 for this purpose, she admitted that it was likely to cost much more. The printing would be done after the charter has gone through the special review now in progress.

At the same time, Mrs. McCamy suggested that a saving in her department could be made by taking the council minutes in a much briefer form. Presently the minutes of the council meetings average 15 pages. Municipal administrators are now advocating a brief form which simply lists the decisions reached, the votes taken and other essential data. The actual debate, however, would still be recorded on tape and retained as is done now.

The city manager and the public works director, Albert "Buddy" Attick were in complete agreement on the funds requested for his department. However, the city manager revealed that he had not included \$1,000 for parttime summer help to clean up the city. This amount was taken from surplus to do this work this past summer. Although Councilman Stan Edwards expressed serious doubts, McDonald stated that he felt fairly certain he could get by this summer without such additional help.

The two main additions to the recreation department budget, both included in the budget requests, were about \$800 to pay swimming pool lifeguards and instructors by the hour and \$400 for umpires and referees. Recreation director Warren Leddick figured that there will always be some days when inclement weather forces the pool to close, it is likely to be a saving in the long run to pay by the hour.

The continuing operation of the pool in the red was discussed briefly, with disagreement as to whether an increase in admission fees would raise more revenue. It was revealed, however, that non-residents, especially children and teen-agers, use the pool considerably more than Greenbelters.

THANKSGIVING SERVICE

The Eighth Annual Community Thanksgiving Service will be held this year at the JCC, Westway and Ridge, Thursday morning, Nov. 27, at 10 a.m. Rabbi Morris Gordon will conduct the service. Also participating will be Rev. McKenzie of the Community Church and Rev. Smith of the Methodist Church. Everyone is invited to attend this community service.

AUTHOR ON ISRAEL

The Women's Group of the JCC will meet Wednesday, Dec. 3, at 8:30 p.m. at the JCC building to elect officers.

The program will feature Mrs. Mary Clawson, economist and author. She spent two years in Israel with her husband and two sons and will speak of her family's experiences, and her personal impressions of Israel life.

Welcome

Four Services on Sunday

9:45 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Morning Worship
6:00 p.m. Training Union
7:00 p.m. Evening Worship

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Gift Wrapping Class

On Wednesday, Dec. 17 in the Social Room at 8:00 the Recreation Department will hold a Gift Wrapping Class under the supervision of Evelyn Boggs, our Arts and Crafts supervisor. Instructions will include fancy bows, wrapping, etc. Since we are holding the Clinic so close to Christmas you are invited to bring your packages with you and wrap them at the class. You must bring your own ribbon, seals and paper. There is no fee for the class.

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