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VOL. 1

ST. JOHNS, OREGON, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1905.

NO. 43

Keep Your Eye on St. Johns

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THE PUBLIC WEARIES

Yearn For Cessation of All Hostilities.

Monday evening occurred the regular meeting of the city council—with Mayor King in the chair and all councilmen present. With-out and within the house more than one hundred were "also present." The intimations of a possible brisk meeting had stirred many who desired to see something doing.

It was precisely 8:04 when Mayor King called to order. Several minutes were consumed in reading and accepting previous records. Then Mayor King opened the game with "According to our charter the first business will be that of electing a new member of the council." J. H. Shields then went to bat and desired to read a document signed by J. H. Black, of St. Johns, in which it was avowed serious charges against Mayor King and Councilman P. J. Peterson were rumored. This paper was in substance as follows:

That your petitioner is informed and believes and therefore charges that P. J. Peterson, a member of said council, together with one W. H. King, Mayor of the City of St. Johns, have, in violation of their public duties, entered into a conspiracy with other persons to disrupt the Common Council, disfranchise the citizens and impose upon the city other undesirable officials for the purpose of permitting the applicants for liquor to exploit the city to their own advantage.

That your petitioner is informed and believes and therefore charges one P. J. Peterson, a member of this Council, with basely entering into illegal and clandestine negotiations with a certain liquor dealer to obtain for him, for a valuable consideration, a license to sell liquor to the City of St. Johns.

That your petitioner is informed and believes and therefore charges that said W. H. King has on diverse occasions made offers and publicly announced his willingness to pay large sums of money to certain members of this Council in consideration of their withdrawing from its membership and resigning their said offices; that said offers and announcements are of a character involving moral turpitude, and were manifestly made by the said King for the purpose of corrupting the City Council and bringing the members thereof into public infamy and disgrace.

That your petitioner therefore prays that the said P. J. Peterson and the said W. H. King be suspended from participation in the duties of the honorable body; that they each of them be required to stand trial before this honorable body upon the charges herein made, and that if found guilty of such charges that they and each of them be permanently removed from their respective offices in accordance with the provisions of the charter in such case made and provided.

No sooner was this list of rumored offences read than Mr. Brice produced a set of resolutions favoring the suspension of W. H. King and P. J. Peterson and asked its adoption. These resolutions ordered City Attorney Greene to bring charges of impeachment against the accused within five days and stipulated that the defendants must plead, demur or answer within five days later. Moved by Mr. Shields and seconded by Mr. Edwards that the resolutions be adopted.

Mr. Peterson believed that no second had been made to the motion because he considered Mr. Edwards not a member of the council; but Mr. Leggett, who is president of the council, arose to put the question. There was a bit of movement at that time as to Mr. Leggett's right to act as head of the board but he declared that he was president of the council and had the right to assume control at such a time. Shields, Brice and Edwards voted yes; Peterson, Lindquist and Thompson no; and Mr. Leggett announced the question carried. Without doubt Mr. Peterson had no right to vote in a matter of his own personal interest—but he followed a recent precedent. Mayor King then questioned Mr. Leggett's right to the chair—and Attorney Oglesby Young declared that, according to the charter, a removal could be made only by a 5-7 vote of the council. He considered the action of the board null and void; no specific sworn charges had been made; anyone could repeat rumors but unless they were substantiated by an affidavit they were worthless. Attorney McGarry then stepped to the front as an advocate of C. D.

Forgot the Bait.

Last Sunday morning Harry Mansfield and J. H. Crook went to the Columbia Slough for the purpose of enticing a few fish to come out—thus saving a meat bill on Monday.

Edwards. He said he had publicly withdrawn from the case—under a bit of misinformation; but now he insisted that Mr. Edwards be either cleared of the charges or convicted. Mr. Edwards was entitled to have his character vindicated. Mr. Greene remarked that no charges had been made except the charge of having sold his property—thereby losing his membership.

Some warm discussion then ensued—but Mr. Greene suggested the propriety of ceasing idle talk; if the case was to be tried plenty of time would be given. Right here was where Attorney W. T. Vaughn, of Portland, grew busy. He wanted to know who was to be judge of what this moral turpitude consisted? If there was no crime directly charged to Mayor King how could he be deposed from his position? He considered the matter too trivial to fool away time over; Edwards had no more right to withdraw his resignation after it was in the proper hands, without first obtaining the consent of the council, than a lawyer had a right to papers filed in a legal case without consent of the court; and he could furnish a hundred authorities to back his assertion.

Mr. Edwards said he'd like to be heard. He authorized Mr. Greene to write his second resignation and intended to sign it—but he learned that some of the council had been speaking ill of him during his absence and he then refused to sign it. When these charges were settled he intended to leave the council because of his other interests; but he would not leave it with his reputation under a cloud.

Mr. Vaughn then asked that the question of whether or not Edwards was yet a member of the council be put to vote. Mr. McGarry said it was put he should insist that Mr. Leggett act as moderator. The question was not put. There was quite a bit of sharp legal sparring—and Vaughn proved his eligibility to a seat "in the tenth war-r-r-r-d" by his mental activity.

Finally Mr. Leggett declared it was time the council did business. Mayor King said that no legal business could be done with Mr. Edwards in the council. Mr. Lindquist said he'd vote "no" on every question brought up; and Mr. McGarry declared that he should advise Mr. Edwards to vote on every question.

In the matter of having Attorney Greene press the matter against Mayor King and Councilman Peterson it was decided to change the word "impeachment" to "charges and specifications."

Mr. Brice said he came to the meeting to transact regular business—but he didn't see how they could do it unless they put away the rag-chewing till the close of the meeting.

It was decided that bids should be called for sidewalks upon Oswego street; but the matter was carried over till the next meeting—although a new resolution must be adopted to have grading done.

Report was received upon the new street from Braasch's addition to Jersey street.

Messrs. Hinman, Leonard and Stearns were made a committee to appraise the matter of the continuation of Gresham street.

Mr. Brice reported the new dock crowded almost to its capacity with freight which is allowed to remain by owners, and the council will pass an ordinance to charge demurrage on all such goods not removed within a brief season.

Resignation of J. Henry Smith, city engineer, received and accepted with regret. His resignation was accompanied by plans, plans, field-notes, etc., worth several hundred dollars. W. W. Goodrich was appointed as his successor—and the council ratified Mayor King's appointment.

Matter of the new ferry franchise was deferred to adjourned meeting.

Adjourned to Tuesday evening, August 29.

An hour later Mansfield came back alone—his face expressing the disgust he felt. Questioned as to he came home so quickly, he hung his head and grunted out: "Doggone it all! We forgot the bait!"

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