

A MUNICIPAL DOCK FOR MARSHFIELD

(Continued from Page One.)

ports owned and controls public docks and warehouses.

Municipal Docks in United States.

In the United States the large cities of the Atlantic and Pacific have realized the importance of a public dock aside from the docks owned and operated by private steamship lines. On May 25 of last year a National Conference was held at Toronto with delegates from various parts of the United States, Canada and Great Britain, and it was the consensus of opinion that the waterfront is a heritage of great value to the citizens, and that it should be municipally owned and developed for the greatest benefit of all the citizens of this and future generations.

Not only the ocean ports, but the large river and lake ports have built and are now building large concrete piers equipped with modern machinery for handling all classes of freight economically and quickly where boats belonging to no particular line and commonly known as tramp steamers or schooners could be assured of safe dockage at a small expense.

Docks on Pacific Coast.

The most important dock on the Pacific Coast is the one now being completed at Los Angeles or San Pedro proper at an expense of nearly five million dollars, and I might also add that private owned docks 1200 feet long and 280 feet wide have also been completed.

In San Francisco the Harbor Commissioners built six piers 126 to 200 feet wide and 675 to 900 feet long, with reinforced concrete piers and deck and with sheds of steel and concrete at a cost of three million dollars.

In Seattle.

The Port Commission of Seattle has under way plans for the construction of perhaps the most elaborate municipal dock system on the Pacific Coast and a bond issue has been authorized for seven million dollars. The plans include cold storage warehouses with capacity of about 640 carloads of apples or other fruits. This building will be five stories high, built of concrete, the roof will be used as a roof garden and will be under the jurisdiction and be maintained by the Park Board.

In Portland.

In Portland the commission of public docks has completed municipal dock number one, which is 613 feet long and 110 feet wide, at an expense of \$210,000. Additional units are under construction and the work when completed will cost in the neighborhood of fourteen million dollars.

It is therefore evident that the subject of municipal ownership of docks is not a new one, nor is it an experiment, but it has been successfully accepted as the solution of a great question. Do not understand, however, that municipal docks interfere in an unfair way with private owned docks, warehouses or elevators. On the contrary it stimulates marine shipping and encourages the private operation of utilities created at public expense. Municipalities can build port facilities in advance of necessities and thus encourage commerce. Private capital does not find the building and equipping of modern docks a profitable investment. Municipalities can as a rule borrow money at a less rate of interest than an individual or corporation, and does not necessarily have to realize a profit on its investment.

The cities of this country have of individual's efforts without a for the most part grown as the result of civic purpose and unconscious of definite civic ends to be achieved but lately a change has been taking place, the individual has associated himself with other individuals, and corporations have been formed in order to accomplish the great things

the individual could not achieve alone. Naturally this change has been reflected to our civic life and municipalities are awakening to the realization of keener commercial competition; the municipalities have discovered that the concern or place which produces or transmits business with the greatest economy will be able to underbid its competitors. In no sphere of activity has this been more fully realized than in the matter of terminal transportation facilities, especially between water and land. I am sure that we all believe in the very near future, Coos Bay will be one of the great ocean ports of the Pacific Coast, where the flags of every nation will cross her bar and seek anchorage at her docks, where the merchandise of the Orient may find quick transfer and dispatch by rail to Eastern markets. This also will prove true on Eastern shipments through the Panama Canal, boats loaded with lumber for Eastern ports will not return empty, but will bring the manufactured products of the East for distribution as far east as the Missouri River. Does it seem reasonable to suppose that these ships will discharge their cargoes either at San Francisco or Portland if proper dockage and transfer facilities are to be had in their home port? Should we not profit by the experience of both Portland and Astoria who have but recently acquired their dockage and are now building their docks at an enormous expense?

Docks for Marshfield.

Marshfield should secure peacefully, if possible, by condemnation proceedings if necessary, a site at least 2500 feet long midway on the bay that in years to come will give her dockage facilities second to none. North Bend has already secured 1917 feet and have their plans completed for a modern dock and public market, and while all credit is due our sister city for her enterprise and public spirit, I hope to see one municipal dock so located that it will serve the needs of the entire bay and save the unnecessary expense where the interests are so closely allied, for I can see but one successful climax, a Greater Coos Bay, one united city, under one municipal government.

I believe the Port of Coos Bay Commission should have the power to handle the public dock proposition for this harbor and authority to levy special and regular taxes upon the property of the district for this purpose.

And in connection with public docks, a word might be said regarding dry-docks. In 1903 Portland, through her Port Commission built a sectional dry-dock with a lifting capacity of 10,000 tons, and it has been in constant use since completion. It has a length of 465 feet, a width of 82 feet and a depth of water over keel blocks of 25 feet. This cost the district \$379,000, but it has more than paid for itself and its maintenance. Coos Bay is situated half way between dry docks that are 400(?) miles apart, Portland and San Francisco, and a municipal dry dock located here would undoubtedly produce big revenues every year.

Regarding the location of a municipal dock we have a most natural site in the waterfront property lying in front of Ferndale and south of the stove mill. Here we have a harbor 2000 feet wide with the natural flow of the current from Coos River, which is essential in maintaining deep water at all times, the location of the railroad would furnish quick and economic transfer.

There is a great future for Coos Bay and we should exercise forethought and perfect plans, and be alive to the necessities of this future.

And as I said before, I think that the municipal dock question is the live question of today.

Should Bonds Be Voted In Aid of the Proposed Railroad from Roseburg?

The following is the full text of the address by A. H. Derbyshire: "When I was asked, the other day, to talk to the members of this club on the question 'Should the Cities of Coos Bay Bond Themselves for the Purpose of Aiding in the Building of a Railroad from Roseburg to Coos Bay?' I felt that by accepting the invitation I would be able to acquire a good meal without cost to myself, gratify my vanity by being permitted to impart to you some of the wisdom and knowledge which possesses me to overflowing; and, perhaps, become better and more favorably known to a bunch of good fellows. The meal I have eaten and paid for. Much to my disappointment your usual banquet has been dispensed with, for what reason I know not, but I

flatter myself with the hope that it was not omitted because the committee in charge had learned of my reputation as a gourmand. Now as to the gratification of my vanity by having the opportunity of unlimbering my vocal 42 centimeter howlers and bombarding you with great 'gobs' of wisdom and superior knowledge, and thus becoming better and more favorably known to you, I fear that I am to be again disappointed, for as soon as I had given the subject the little sober thought and reflection that I was capable of I concluded that it was a question with many ramifications and one entirely out of the range of my intellectual artillery. However, to cumulate further evidence of the truth of the old saying 'Fools rush in where an-

gels fear to tread,' I'm going to have my fling at it.

Both sides of Question.

It was suggested to me that I present both sides of this question, and then, if I chose to do so, to espouse the cause of the side which I personally favored. With the purpose of getting first hand information from those favoring the affirmative of the proposition, I wrote Mr. J. W. Perkins of Roseburg, Oregon, the reputed general of the affirmative forces, but I assume that he was too busy with the unalloyed task of trying to keep a lady out of the State Senate to find time to answer my request. At any rate the information was not forthcoming.

"I also wrote to the Assessor of Coos county for information relative to the assessed valuation and rate of taxation of the various municipalities on the Coos Bay side of the county, but he was unable to furnish me with this information, just now, on account of the press of official business. So again I was balked and the figures in regard to rate of taxation and valuation which I shall hereafter use are those of 1913.

"I have given this subject such thought as I am capable of, during the time that I have had at my command to devote to it, and I am unable to see but one side of it. Anyway I didn't start this war, and I am unable to see why I should be expected to see the righteousness of the cause of the aggressors.

"The first question one asks himself, if he is a good business man, when he contemplates borrowing money for some purpose that it is not absolutely necessary for him to borrow money for, is, will I profit by the transaction? If his answer be in the negative he will not incur the indebtedness. This same rule should apply more rigidly to a municipality contemplating the borrowing of money for the same purposes. Speaking of city and town governments, particularly, I take it that the taxpayer should not be required to pay money for other than governmental purposes, unless directly or indirectly he will be benefited, as nearly as our methods of taxation will permit. In a sum equal to or greater than the amount of the tax paid.

"Unless then, the taxpayers of the cities of Coos Bay will either directly or indirectly benefit by the building of the proposed road from Roseburg to Coos Bay in a sum equal to or greater than that paid by them, the cities should not aid in the building of the proposed railroad, because railroad building, at least outside of the corporate limits of a city, is foreign to the purpose of the city's existence. I do not mean by that the city has no power to engage in such a venture, for in Oregon, cities have such power, but I do mean that railroad building is not one of the purposes which usually impel people to form city governments.

About Bond Issue.

Another element which should be taken into consideration in the issue of municipal bonds, especially in such a case as this under discussion, is the effect that the contemplated issue, if consummated, will have on the rate of taxation, and the sale of later issues of bonds for strictly city purposes. If to dispose of an issue of bonds would materially raise the rate of taxation, especially when that rate is already high, it becomes a matter of grave concern for the effect that it would have on capital seeking investment, for capital, all other things being equal, will not invest in a city where taxes are higher than in other localities. So, too, if the total debt of a city be in disproportion to its assessed valuation it will have its effect in higher interest rates on future issues of bonds, and otherwise affect the market for such bonds. These elements and others, which I have not the time to discuss within the limits of the time allotted to me, ought to be considered in any proposed issue of bonds by a city or town.

No definite, tangible proposition has as yet been submitted to the people of Coos Bay in regard to the amount of aid that is desired of us for the purpose of constructing this talked of railroad, so I will assume for the purpose of this discussion that the promoters of the enterprise will ask us to aid to the extent of \$500,000. I will also assume that the life of the bonds will be 20 years and the rate of interest 5 per cent.

"I shall not include the municipalities of Eastside and Empire in my calculations, and, of course, if they were included the amounts to be raised by Marshfield and North Bend would be proportionately reduced. But that you may see the effect of including these I will merely say in passing that the assessed valuation of Empire is \$150,205 and of Eastside \$171,325, though Eastside's valuation ought to be considerably increased by the annexation of Cooston and adjacent territory.

Bond Issue and Taxes.

Let us see, then what effect such a bond issue would have on the rate of taxation in the two cities of Marshfield and North Bend, bearing in mind that my illustrations will be based on the assessed valuations and

rates of taxation of last year, and bearing in mind that in my opinion no issue of bonds should be sold for the purpose under discussion unless a sinking fund is yearly collected, sufficient to retire the bonds issued at their maturity.

The assessed valuation of Marshfield is \$2,602,250 and of North Bend \$1,207,273, a total of \$3,809,523. If the issue were divided between the two cities on an assessed valuation basis Marshfield's share would be approximately 68 per cent and North Bend's share approximately 22 per cent. This would impose an annual burden on Marshfield of \$17,000 interest and \$17,000 sinking fund, a total of \$34,000; and on North Bend an annual burden of \$8,000 for interest and \$8,000 for sinking fund, or a total of \$16,000 for North Bend. This would necessitate the levy each year of a tax of a little more than 13 mills on the dollar, assuming that the total tax levied in each year was collected. A 13 mill tax in Marshfield would raise \$33,329.00, in round numbers, and a like tax would raise in North Bend, in round numbers, \$15,694.00.

"The taxpayers of the City of Marshfield are paying interest on the following bonds:

Port of Coos Bay bonds, approximately 28 1/2 per cent of \$600,000	\$171,000
School District bonds, approximately 9 1/2 per cent of \$77,000	70,070
City of Marshfield bonds	34,900
	\$275,970

The annual interest on these bonds is as follows:

Port of Coos Bay at 5 per cent	\$8,550
School District No. 9 at 5 1/2 per cent	3,853
City of Marshfield bonds at 5 per cent	2,700
	\$15,103

I should here explain that I was unable to ascertain just what the interest on the bonds of the school district are, but was informed that some draw 6 per cent and others 5 per cent and that probably 5 1/2 per cent would be the average rate, and I have so figured.

A six mill tax on the taxable property of Marshfield will raise in round numbers only \$510.00, more than sufficient to meet the annual interest on the bonds the interest of which are properly chargeable to the taxpayers of Marshfield.

The taxpayers of the city of North Bend are paying interest on the following bonds:

Port of Coos Bay, approximately 14 per cent of \$600,000	\$84,000
School District No. 12	50,000
City of North Bend	34,000
	\$168,000

The annual interest on these bonds is as follows:

Port of Coos Bay, at 5 per cent	\$4,200
School District No. 12, \$40,000, at 5 per cent	2,000
School District No. 12, \$10,000 at 6 per cent	600
City of North Bend, at six per cent	2,140
	\$8,940

Add to this \$1700 raised each year for a sinking fund for the redemption of the city bonds, and the amount is \$10,640.

An eight mill tax on the taxable property of North Bend will raise, in round numbers, \$225.00 more than sufficient to pay this annual interest and redemption charge.

Present Tax Rate.

The city tax in Marshfield is ten mills and at North Bend it is fourteen mills, four mills of the North Bend levy being for the purpose of paying interest on its bonds and creating a sinking fund for their redemption. The rate of taxation, for all purposes, in Marshfield is 45 mills on the dollar, and in North Bend 63 mills on the dollar. If we add 13 mills to these rates, I believe all will agree that we would have a very high rate of taxation, when we stop further to consider that in 1916 Marshfield will lose \$15,000 in saloon licenses and North Bend will lose \$4800 theretofore collected for saloon licenses. In addition to this, if we are to believe the arguments of the prohibitionists, there will be a considerable falling off in the revenue from fines, because of less drunkenness and crime. I believe a great portion of the fines are now imposed on persons accused of being drunk, or drunk and disorderly. Most of this loss of revenue from the abolition of the liquor traffic will have to be made up from direct taxation, and its abolition will not curtail the expenses of the city in any appreciable degree, if at all. The police forces cannot be reduced for they are really not sufficient now.

I cannot speak for Marshfield, because I have not sufficient knowledge of the situation, but I believe it will be absolutely necessary for the people of the city of North Bend to amend their city charter so as to authorize the Council to levy a higher tax when the revenue from the liquor traffic is cut off, and this

only to provide for the current needs of the city and to take care of its present indebtedness. The present limit is ten mills on the dollar, exclusive of levies for the payment of principal and interest on city bonds. In addition to its bonded indebtedness, the city of North Bend on the first day of this year had a warrant indebtedness of \$34,371 drawing six per cent interest, and I assume that Marshfield had at the same time a warrant indebtedness of like proportion, and probably greater, bearing the same interest.

Is Bond Issued Justified?

These then, are some of the conditions that face us. Would we then be justified in bonding ourselves for the purpose of building the proposed railroad? I think not unless we shall be able to reap exceptional profits by so doing. If Coos Bay was not likely to have a railroad in the near future, there might be some justification in so doing. But we are already assured of communication by rail with the interior west coast of such a road nor of the probable traffic, neither have I at hand any statistics from which such data could be compiled. But taking a superficial view of the matter I cannot see how a railroad running from Coos Bay to Roseburg, competing with a line from Eugene to Coos Bay would make any great profits, when we consider the character of the country through which it would run with reference to population, cultivation, the nature of the freight traffic, and the high cost of construction. The zone from which it would secure its traffic would be very small and much of the freight which it would carry would be its way to Coos Bay, and in the future, private capital will bring the bulk of the traffic tributary to it to the vessels lying at our wharves, if an investment of capital in such an enterprise is profitable from a financial standpoint.

We have improved our harbor, without asking the aid of Roseburg, or of the territory lying outside of the Coos Bay water shed, through which the proposed road would run. Before they ask aid of us they should invest in harbor improvements as much as we have, in proportion to the benefits they would receive, or invest a that much greater amount in the building of the proposed road. Roseburg needs our harbor. We have it. Private capital will build our railroads. It is doing it now. A railroad from Roseburg would not appreciably increase the tonnage passing over the bar, with the Willamette-Pacific and its connections

running into our cities. The Roseburg line would secure only local traffic. Such a road would benefit Roseburg much more than it would benefit us.

Needs Other Things.

Coos Bay and her cities need other things far worse than a railroad to Roseburg. Some of these things have been discussed tonight. She needs wagon roads, municipal docks and warehouses, and an adequate supply of water for factory and other purposes. Any sum invested in either of these things will bring greater returns to the taxpayer than an investment of such sum in the proposed railroad venture. Particularly do we need a water plant owned and operated by the municipalities of the bay. When the railroad comes we must have water for factories and we now have no adequate supply. As the cities grow they will be an increase in revenue and after the initial expenditure the cost of maintaining the system as compared with its revenues ought to be no doubt will decrease. This is a matter of vital concern to the people of Coos Bay. Lack of water for domestic, industrial and other purposes will retard our growth. A good wagon road to Roseburg will be of more benefit than the proposed railroad and it would be a much better investment for the people of these communities. Roads are necessary to bring traffic to the railroad and a railroad, without the wagon road would soon become a streak of rust.

But, if we should decide to go into this railroad proposition, let us be sure that we secure a railroad. Let us not spend a dollar until we absolutely know that the road will actually be built and operated. Some of you have, or did have, stock in a railroad that was to be built. It is not long ago that a good many of you were wearing tag "It Will Be Built." The business houses of both cities on the bay were littered with them, and everyone who took no stock in the "It Will Be Built" road, to some of you, at least, was a knacker. Those of us who failed to put our money into it at that time evidently thought it was not a good investment for our money. Is it any better investment for the taxpayers' money? If it wasn't a good investment then it is surely a poorer investment now. Then there was no competition. Now there is.

My opinion is that we had better forget this railroad building and turn our attention to things not so foreign to the purposes for which we have incorporated the cities of Marshfield and North Bend. Let us

turn our attention to the pressing needs of our cities, and if we must go further in debt, if we must borrow more money to accomplish things which are essential and necessary to the growth of Coos Bay, let us not hesitate to assume the burden. Let's stop dreaming, and start doing."

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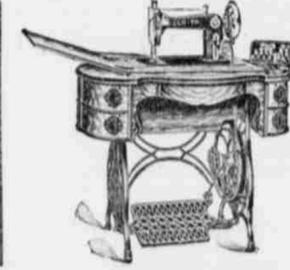
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