

Rogue River Courier

COMPANY WANTS 50-YR. FRANCHISE

RATES ARE SAID TO REMAIN UN-CHANGED.

COUNCIL IS DELIBERATING

Mayor-Elect Smith Declares Franchises Should be Voted on by People.

It happened. The Rogue River Electric company last night applied to the city council of Grants Pass for a franchise.

And how long? Why, it demands the privilege of cinching the people now living and those to be born—for a period of 50 years.

At what rates? Why, practically the same old rates that Mr. Consumer has been compelled to dig up in the past and is digging up now.

How do you like it? And in the language of the average corporation official, "Well, what are you going to do about it?"

The manuscript of the proposed franchise was voted to the council chamber by a local lawyer who is zealously working that his employers get the goods. This lawyer did not make an oratorical address to the council. He did his talking on the side, quietly and "informally." He believes it is a fine thing—for the corporation.

Did the council grant it last night? That was the first question asked by the town when it waked this morning.

No, dear, it was not granted. Will it be granted?

Ask the stars on their courses. The stars may halt long enough to tell you—nobody down here on this spinning earth can answer that question with any degree of certainty.

There are those, however, who openly declare that the council will not dare grant it.

There are others who declare that the members of the council are too patriotic and have the best interests of the town too much at heart to grant such a franchise.

And there are others who believe that the thing is already greased and will slide through before the next administration takes up the reins of government in this town.

We shall see what we shall see. Section 2 details what the rates shall be, and it composes a long page of words and figures setting forth the prices per kilowatt this, and kilowatt that, all as clear to 99 men out of 100 as a bucket of mud.

The paper reads most graciously that no more shall be charged than these rates. Thanks, oh, thanks.

From Thursday's Daily.

Are the people of the city of Grants Pass in favor of the present city council granting another franchise to the Rogue River Electric company for the purpose of furnishing lights and power?

That question has suddenly jumped to the front, and last night and today Mayor-elect R. G. Smith expressed hostility to the granting of a franchise by the council, declared the present light and power rates too high, and, furthermore, wants no more privileges or franchises to go to any person, firm or corporation unless by vote of the people.

Rumor has it that at the regular meeting of the city council tonight the local electric company will apply for a franchise. The company once had a perpetual right to furnish lights and power in Grants Pass, but a decision of the Oregon supreme court declared such perpetual privileges void. Hence, the local company has not, in fact, a franchise of any kind.

Now, it is said, the company wants Grants Pass to grant a franchise, but for how many years is not known to the people at large, and will not be known until the company presents its

request to the council, which, as rumor says, it will do tonight.

Mayor-elect Smith today had the following to say on the subject:

"Rates for power and lights in Grants Pass are too high. Ashland, Gold Hill and Central Point enjoy cheaper rates than does this city. The Medford rate is about the same as ours. I am opposed to the granting of a franchise to the Rogue River Electric company at this time, and none should be granted unless better terms are given the city. Unless cheaper rates are given to the people why should a franchise be granted at all? The company is here and doing business and needs no franchise, from the viewpoint of the people."

Mr. Smith was attorney for the Rogue River Electric company when it was controlled by the Rays, and is familiar with all details of the corporation's affairs. This knowledge especially equips him for combatting further aggressions by the corporation. It was stated last night by a resident of the city that "the company is afraid of Bob Smith" and is anxious to force through a franchise before the new administration takes office.

Mayor-elect Smith last night, in discussing the matter in an informal way with a group of residents, at which Councilman Stricker was present, turned to Dr. Stricker and said: "If that franchise is presented I hope that the council will refuse to grant it." Dr. Stricker, in a smiling manner, said—nothing.

While neither a perpetual nor exclusive franchise can be granted by any city council in Oregon, yet granting a franchise to the local company at all, will, it is argued in some quarters, have a tendency to discourage any other corporation which might want to come into the city and furnish power and light, and "they do say" that such corporation exists which intends to get in the game.

Views of Councilmen.

The Courier interviewed the present city administration and secured expressions from the mayor and from all the councilmen regarding granting a franchise, except Huggins and South, who are out of town. The city officials expressed themselves as follows:

Mayor Myers—I do not care to discuss the matter at this time, or until it comes up and I have had further time to look into it. I expect to act for the best interests of the city.

Councilman Phillips—Rates for lighting and power in this city are too high. I am not in favor of granting a franchise to the Rogue River Electric company at this time. Other towns in the valley are getting cheaper rates than are furnished to us here. I will not vote to grant a franchise until I have more time to investigate the matter.

Councilman Wolfersberger—I am not in favor of granting the Rogue River Electric company a franchise carrying the rates for lighting and power as they are now. The rates are too high. I might favor a franchise in the future if the company makes proper concessions to the city.

Councilman Stricker—I would rather look into the matter further and see what the company wants before making any statement.

Councilman Dan'els—I do not see the use of granting the Rogue River Electric company a franchise. It is here and selling light and power and not being disturbed by anybody.

Councilman Herzinger.—Rates for power and lighting in this city are too high and something should be done to remedy the matter. It is a shame that the people of the city are compelled to pay the present rates for both water and lights. In the summer we are taxed to death for water to keep a little lawn alive, then when the winter rains come we are taxed to death for lights. We are having the life sapped out of us by so much money being taken from the people here and sent away. Regarding the granting of a franchise, I do not care to commit myself until I have had an opportunity to look further into the matter.

Councilman Sauer.—I am in favor of granting the Rogue River Electric company a franchise, but I think the present rates for lighting and power are too high, especially power.

Mayor-Elect Proposes Ordinance.

(Continued on page 8.)

ROBERT G. SMITH ELECTED MAYOR BY PLURALITY OF THREE VOTES

Dr. J. C. Smith Second, E. V. Smith, Socialist, Third--G. P. Jester for City Treasurer.

FOR MAYOR.	
Dr. J. C. Smith.....	316
E. V. Smith (Socialist).....	258
Attorney R. G. Smith.....	319
Attorney Smith's plurality.....	3
FOR CITY TREASURER.	
George P. Jester, (Socialist).....	397
James Holman.....	384
Jester's majority.....	13
FOR CITY COUNCIL, FIRST WARD.	
G. M. Caldwell, (Socialist).....	112
Frank South.....	100
Caldwell's majority.....	3
FOR CITY COUNCIL, SECOND WARD.	
Angus McLean.....	110
Tom Williams.....	83
J. A. Pittinger, (Socialist).....	41
McLean's plurality.....	27
FOR CITY COUNCIL, THIRD WARD.	
H. J. Clark.....	87
G. W. Sturgeon, (Socialist).....	61
Clark's majority.....	26
FOR CITY COUNCIL, FOURTH WARD.	
M. J. Anderson.....	67
C. D. Smith.....	70
W. E. Everton, (Socialist).....	110
Everton's plurality.....	40
Total vote cast in city.....	893

Attorney R. G. Smith, successful candidate for mayor, has announced that he will name the following to fill the appointive offices: George W. Colvig, city attorney; John N. Johnson, auditor and police magistrate; G. M. Rowley, chief of police; Alex Brown, policeman.

From Tuesday's Daily.

The story of the election in this city is told in the above table, except that the proposed commission charter was knocked out with rights and lefts to law and 13 amendments of the proposed fifteen to the old charter were put to sleep.

The two amendments which escaped were those making it mandatory on the part of the person holding the office of auditor and police magistrate to give a bond of \$5,000, and the one increasing the treasurer's salary from \$13.50 to \$25 a month.

The amendment raising the auditor's salary from \$30 per month to \$1,500 per year was killed along with the others. Thus the unusual situation is presented of holding the auditor to a salary of \$30 a month and forcing him to give a bond of \$5,000.

It was predicted today by members of the present city administration that the new council will be compelled to call a special election to cover the matter of salary, as the council will no longer be able to whip the devil around the stump.

Regarding the result for mayor, there was some little rumbling among the losers that a contest might be inaugurated, as Attorney Smith had only three plurality. Yet in many other quarters, the sentiment was expressed that the "verdict" will be allowed to stand.

There was much good natured badinage on the streets this morning as a result of the vote; also, some words of heat by disappointed friends of some of the candidates. This, that and the other fellow was blamed for a defeat here and a victory there, but as a whole the town took the results good naturedly.

Comment on the closeness of the mayoralty vote was universal.

Mayor-elect Robert G. Smith, made the following statement to The Courier:

"I appreciate the earnest support given me by the people of the city, and I wish to assure them that I do not consider my victory in any sense a personal triumph, but simply an effort to place the city on an enduring basis, viz: respect for and obedience to the law.

"Regarding my statements during the campaign as to the enforcement of the law, there is not much to add. That the law will be enforced, goes as a matter of course. All of the

every interested person to investigate before complaining.

"I am anxious for the betterment of Grants Pass in the future and I am ever ready to assist in every way that will redound to its welfare and growth. I pledge myself not to stand on the street corner and bawl about how rotten my neighbor is, nor call a man a liar, a grafter, or a thief.

"I have served the city for three years as councilman and mayor, and I need a rest. I wish I could have accomplished more. I have given the people about one-half of my time and as there is no salary attached to the office I feel that I have contributed my share."

Returning from a 40-mile tour visiting patients, Dr. J. C. Smith, courteous and good-natured, who according to first returns, was defeated for mayor of Grants Pass in the city election yesterday by a vote of three in approximately 900 registered names, said to The Courier today that he had no complaint to make and, as far as his personal wishes were concerned, had not a single regret.

Asked if he desired a contest, the popular physician asserted emphatically that he did not. Asked if his host of friends were to make a contest in his behalf, what his position would be, Dr. Smith declared that if they discovered errors in voting or registration, they could do so if they thought best.

The doctor dwelt on the well known fact that he entered the campaign only because of his many friends from every walk of life—employer and employee—who had watched with pleasure the growth and prosperity of Grants Pass under his former term.

The narrowly-defeated mayoralty candidate and well-trusted physician declared also—which is not news—that he did not spend a cent in his campaign for any purpose, either hiring halls, or printing of any kind. He left it to the people, and though nosed out by an eyelash does not even have to call his genial philosophy into action to comfort him.

MISCREANTS INTERFERE WITH FIRE ENGINE TEST

From Thursday's Daily.

The great pile of boxes and rubbish built up at Sixth and Jackson streets, on which, to test the chemical apparatus of the new fire engine, was set ablaze last night by young miscreants at 6:30 o'clock, an hour and a half before the time set for the test. The hose cart had been taken to the scene earlier in the day. The vandals dumped the cart into Skunk creek, over a bank 8 or 10 feet high, which bent the axle and broke off the fong.

Then at 9 o'clock some one set afire an old half burned house at Second and D streets. A run by the fire company to this blaze cost the city \$35.

The chemical apparatus of the new engine put out both fires in a few seconds.

Work on the big Golden Drift dam east of the city was closed down last night for the winter. The dam has been put in excellent shape for high water.

The new concrete pump house and the wall north from the same are complete and it is understood that another season will see the entire dam reconstructed of concrete.

The management is to be congratulated on the class of work done.

A leading member of the socialists, speaking for his party, today made the following statement regarding the election:

"The votes are counted and the successful candidates are known. The socialists have elected two councilmen and city treasurer and placed Grants Pass on the map as following in the line of recent victories.

"The vote we received showed the appreciation of reform ideas and bodes well for the future. Our candidate for mayor made a clean fight and we do not regret the outcome.

"To those who assisted us with a complimentary vote we are indeed very grateful. To the winning candidate we wish all the best of good will and will ever stand ready to assist in the upbuilding of our city financially and morally."

ELECTRIC PEOPLE SEEKS FRANCHISE

DECLARE THEY WILL COMMENCE TO BUILD FEBRUARY 1.

SELL BONDS IN THE EAST

Road to Touch Ashland Medford, Jacksonville, Ruch, Williams and Grants Pass.

H. M. Narren and J. Arnold Doyle, who have been in Grants Pass before in the interest of that proposed interurban electric railroad from Grants Pass to Ashland, or from Ashland to Grants Pass, just as you care to read it, were here again today accompanied by George Godfrey, of Spokane, who is the treasurer of the company which has been organized for the purpose of building the proposed road.

All parties declare they will build the line, but readily admit they have yet to sell bonds in the east to build it with.

Mr. Narren stated to The Courier that his company would apply for a franchise here in about two weeks; that, when franchisees from all the towns along the proposed line had been secured, they would put the matter up to a trust company in Portland, which would then underwrite the bonds and that then the bonds would be taken east and offered for sale.

"It may take but fifteen minutes to sell them," said Narren, "or it may take several weeks, but be that as it may, we intend to build the road and expect to begin work of actual construction February 1. We will start at Medford, headed for Jacksonville. From Jacksonville the line will run to Ruch, then down the Applegate to Williams and from Williams to Grants Pass. The line, as proposed will cross the Southern Pacific tracks at Phoenix."

From Williams the road is to come into this city over the route surveyed by the Grants Pass and Rogue River Railroad company.

MANAGER OF GLENDALE STORE KILLS HIMSELF

Joseph L. Winchell, general manager and bookkeeper of the firm of Snyder & Co., general merchants of Glendale committed suicide Wednesday evening by shooting himself through the right temple. He had been missing since Wednesday morning, and a searching party scoured the hills all night in search of the missing man.

The body was discovered Thursday morning about three-quarters of a mile above the water works reservoir on the ridge above Section Creek. He was lying on his left side under the root of a fallen tree, his pipe in his left hand and his automatic gun in his right.

A short distance from where the body lay was a bottle marked poison. The cause for the deed is unknown. Winchell leaves a wife and two sons.

Mr. Winchell was a resident of Grants Pass about six years ago, when he held the position of bookkeeper for the Rogue River Hardware company. He was a Yale graduate and held the highest respect of his employers and his many friends in this city. A brother of Joseph Winchell is president of the San Francisco System Railroad in the east and is also known in this city.

Hall Sells Interest.

W. C. Hall last evening sold his half interest in the Rogue River Lumber company to his partner, G. L. Lundberg, who now becomes sole proprietor of the big plant.

Mr. Hall expects to remain in this city, and it may be that he will go into other business.