

HARD SURFACED ROADS MUST BE BUILT.

Maintenance Charges on Macadam Roads Eat Up Road Fund--Hard Surfaced Victory Highway Through County to be Boosted.

TILLAMOOK COUNTY TO HAVE BOND ELECTION SOON.

State Legislature to Take Up Road Legislation--Good Prospect of Counties Receiving Considerable State Aid for Principal Highways the Next Few Years.

At the commencement of a new year the editor of the Tillamook Headlight cannot perform a better service for the people of Tillamook county than boost for a hard surfaced highway through the entire length of the county, for good roads is the paramount issue, and which the people demand. Never before in the history of Oregon have the sentiment been so strong for permanent highways than today, so much so that it is the burning question and one which the State Legislature will have to provide a large amount of money. Tillamook County's representatives in the State Legislature know that the people of this county are enthusiastic good road boosters, and they will be expected to support the good road bills. It is a little premature to say what the State Legislature will do, because there are those who have different ideas as to how to obtain the money to build more hard surfaced roads in the state. It is safe to say, however, after the matter is discussed from all angles in committee that a suitable bill will be drafted to bond the state for several millions of dollars, which will meet with the approval of the people.

Did you know that maintenance charges on macadam roads are eating up too much of the road fund? It is a fact, and the only way this can be overcome is to hard surface the main road through the county.

We are glad to say that County Judge Hare is in favor of a continuation of the hard surfaced road north of this city to Bay City. It is only right and proper that the north part of the county should come in for a little more consideration, and every mile of hard surfaced road laid in that direction will add that much more to the hard surfaced highway through the entire length of the county.

This is the point. It takes money to build good roads and lots of it. But how and which is the best way to obtain it? Some autos travel comparatively few miles in twelve months, while others travel thousands of miles. Here is a good argument for taxing autos for the number of miles they travel. It is proposed that gasoline for autos be taxed one cent a gallon, which would provide a large amount of money for road work and would be a just tax as well, for those who use the road most should be made to pay more for their up keep.

There was a peace conference at Wheeler last Friday evening. It was of no international importance. The anti-bond agitators and bond agitators declared an armistice, in a get together spirit over the festive board. It was a little embarrassing for the anti-bond agitators to square themselves, but after the evening's discussion there was not one particle of friction or difference of opinion between the anti and the bond agitators, and from the looks of things there will not be in the future. Our leading citizens are taking a liberal and more magnanimous view of the hard surfacing question and are wanting to help it along as quickly as possible.

The "Three Busy Bees"—Beals, Botts and Baker—as they were called in the last bond agitation, didn't start the new agitation to bond the county for hard surfaced roads. The initiative was taken by Frank A. Rowe, of Wheeler. But he called on the "Three Busy Bees" to put the machinery in motion and inject some ginger into the proposition. Now if the two other "Busy Bees" will start out and keep up the same lick that we intend going there will be nothing to this bonding question, for we are sure that by the time we get through the people of Tillamook county will be falling over one another to vote for bonds for a hard surfaced road through the county.

What's the use, anyway, of spending large sums of money on hard surfaced roads and then allow auto trucks, with ten ton loads, to destroy them? The snap shot man is firmly of the opinion that the heavy trucking over county roads should be stopped at once before the hard surfaced roads are injured. The hard surfaced roads were never built for heavy trucking and are not guaranteed to stand up under ten and twelve ton loads. We do not want to see the hard surfaced roads cut up, neither does the taxpayers. Let those who want to haul heavy loads build railroads, and not impose upon the taxpayers to provide roads for heavy trucking. If it is not stopped it will

soon do thousands of dollars worth of damage to the hard surfaced road and which the taxpayers will have to pay for to keep them in repair.

There are some persons in the north part of the county who think that the best way out of the county is by way of Seaside. We want to disabuse their minds of this. The best highway out of the county even for those who live in the north part of the county, is by the south route. We base our contention that the improvements on the roads in the south part of the county are being built permanently for commercial purposes, whereas the road via Seaside will be nothing more than a summer road for tourists for a number of years, so every piece of hard surfaced road in the south part of the county is of just as much benefit to the north part of the county. It will only take a few more years and the Nehalem country will be enjoying hard surfaced roads.

There is one plan proposed for hard surfacing roads that we heartily approve of. It is the 50-50 plan, or in other words for every dollar a county puts into hard surfaced roads the state to contribute a like amount, up to a certain amount. This would meet the situation in Tillamook county and come near completing the hard surface through the county. With \$400,000 raised by bonding the county, \$400,000 from the state on a 50-50 basis and \$200,000 by taxation, this would give \$1,000,000 in one year. With that amount of money available it would bring about a wonderful improvement in Tillamook county at very little extra expense to the taxpayers. That is what the good road boosters of Tillamook county want to see brought about and are striving for.

The editor of the Headlight some time ago took the position that now that the Three Rivers road is to be improved and a large amount of money expended on it, that it should be hard surfaced. We still hold strongly to that opinion and advocate that the County Court and the State Highway Commission get together and decide to do so. There are good and logical reasons why this should be done. First, the most suitable roads in this wet country is hard surfaced, and most economical. Second, in the near future there will be heavy trucking into this county from the valley, and as maintenance charges on a macadam road will be heavy this can be eliminated by hard surfacing the road. It is a great mistake, in our judgment, to expend a large amount of money in putting down a good, solid road bed and not hard surface it. Somehow and in some way the money should be obtained to hard surface the Three Rivers road.

We are going to suggest that Wheeler pave the main street through that city, which would not only be a great improvement, but would start the hard surfacing of roads in the north part of the county. Let's see how enterprising the city on Nehalem Bay is in the matter of hard surfaced roads. Do you see the point, gentlemen, and what an inducement it would be for the county to join up with more hard surfaced roads. We want to see the north part of the county take a more lively interest in procuring hard surfaced roads there, and the way to do so is to lay a mile or so of hard surfaced road and it will not be long before the people will demand more. So why not get busy and start at Wheeler? This would greatly add to the property values of Wheeler, but it would not be a great while before a hard surfaced road was built to Brighton. The trouble with our friends in the north part of the county, they need a little more hard surfaced ginger put into their makeup.

As the State Highway Commission designated the Three Rivers road as the State Highway, there will be no factional fight about the Little Nestucca route when the bonding question is again submitted. But that does not say that the Nestucca country will be overlooked. It is an important dairy section and is entitled to some benefits should the county be bonded. For instance, we are in favor of making a start by hard surfacing from Hebo to Cloverdale. The Little Nestucca road may be a closed incident for the present, but as other road improvements are completed, money will be available for that project at some future date. There is the same trouble in the north part of the county where different routes are advocated. The

State Highway Commission will have to decide which is the best route from the State's point of view, and the proper thing to do is for the people to abide by it in good grace, not knock because they cannot have their own way. The editor was in favor of the Little Nestucca route, but when the State Highway Commission decided on the Three Rivers route we took off our hats and boosted for the improvement of that road and is now boosting to have it hard surfaced. That is the spirit and attitude all of the advocates of good roads should take when it comes to a question of deciding as to two or more routes.

It is reported that maintenance charges on macadam roads are eating up a large portion of the road fund, which is freely admitted, for they will not stand up under heavy auto and auto truck travel. But that is not the only maintenance charges. Very few persons know what the difference is in running autos over hard surfaced and macadam roads. Take tires alone. We are reliably informed that in traveling over bad macadam roads tires are worn out after traveling three thousand miles, whereas, on hard surfaced roads, from ten to twelve thousand miles are obtained. We will not mention other maintenance charges that owners of autos have to meet frequently and often expensive accidents to machines traveling over bad roads, making the maintenance charge on most machines heavy for twelve months. Persons who own autos know this and they cuss the bad roads for making them go down into their jeans for maintenance charges. So what with the heavy maintenance charges on macadam roads and heavy charges for maintenance to automobiles both would be largely eliminated if there were more hard surfaced roads. And another thing, it does not take as much gas to travel over hard surfaced roads as it does to butting into chuck holes and ruts on macadam roads. Figure it out for yourself what bad roads have cost you to run your car in maintenance charges.

Quite a number of our citizens, when the question of bonding the county was put squarely up to them to vote on, were opposed to it, and it is only fair to say that they used some good arguments in opposition, on account of the war. They have changed their opinions now that the war is over. But that is not the only reason. They see for themselves and are thoroughly convinced that bonding the State for hard surfaced roads have proved successful and of particular benefit to Tillamook county. This county is benefitted to the amount of \$300,000 from the State Highway Commission, and although it is not a Tillamook project, but of great importance to this county, the improvement of the Grand Ronde road will mean an expenditure of more than \$100,000. It is also predicted that the State Highway Commission will take care of the hard surfacing the additional ten miles as far as Hebo next year. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. We don't have to make a long persistent argument again to convince the people what a good thing it was to bond the state for hard surfaced roads. The above facts are unanswerable, and proves the wisdom of our contention when the question was before the people. However, we would like to ask those who opposed the state bond issue how long would it have taken to construct ten miles of hard surfaced road and improved the Grand Ronde and Three Rivers road if State aid had not been available? These improvements will be completed this year, and there is some prospect of the Three Rivers road being hard surfaced as well.

Good Road Boosters Have a Conflagration at Wheeler.

Frank A. Rowe, of Wheeler, invited a number of prominent citizens to supper at the hotel there Friday evening, but they did not all put in an appearance, the delegation from Tillamook City being Representative C. J. Edwards, Attorney H. T. Botts, and F. R. Beals and Editors Fred C. Baker and C. E. Trombley. The Nehalem bunch consisted of Frank A. Rowe, Thos. B. Watt, Ralph Cady, C. A. Anderson and County Commissioner H. V. Alley and H. H. Hiatt. The supper was a three course affair but lacked the appetizer at the commencement of the meal and the famous Tillamook Cheese to help digest the oyster soup, fried chicken, salad, vegetables and sundry desserts at the close of the supper. It was ad-

mirably served, however, by one of the nicest ladies in Wheeler.

The discussion was of an informal nature, after Mr. Rowe had squared himself why he was now in favor of bonding the county. When the conflagration was over there was not one particle of difference of opinion. Every person present were in perfect harmony as to what was best to be done for the county as a whole. Briefly summed up, this is what was decided upon:

To circulate petitions to bond the county for \$430,000.

Ask the State Highway Commission to designate the road for the highway in the north part of the county as soon as possible, and to accept that as final, which will be done free of cost to the county.

The County Court to obtain proper legal advice from recognized attorneys in preparing the petition.

The matter of where the money from bonds is to be expended to be decided later, to see first what action will be taken by the State Legislature in providing more money. There was a tentative understanding that, owing to the north part of the county not receiving any direct benefit from the state funds and as the south part of the county is well looked after, it would be only right to give the north part of the county from Tillamook City 60 per cent of the bond money.

That an effort be made to induce the State Highway Commission to hard surface the Three Rivers road, it being a matter of economy to do so, doing away with heavy maintenance charges. It was freely predicted that the road would be subject to heavy travel as soon as it was macadam and it was thought best to have it hard surfaced if this could be provided for with additional state and county funds or from the state bonds.

Representative Edwards wanted to know what the gathering thought of a 50-50 proposition, the state to match a county in a like amount up to a certain sum. All present thought that was a good plan and asked Mr. Edwards to support it in the State Legislature. As there is such a big demand for hard surfaced roads he felt sure that the legislature would provide means to obtain a large amount of money, and should the county be bonded it would be in a position to avail itself of some of it provided the 50-50 proposition is carried through.

The matter of taxing gas 1c. per gallon also had the meeting's endorsement.

A meeting is arranged with the County Court at three o'clock on Friday afternoon, when Frank A. Rowe and C. A. Anderson will speak from Nehalem and Attorney H. T. Botts and F. R. Beals will head the Tillamook delegation. As this is an important matter quite a number of the business men of this city should attend the meeting Friday.

Gasoline Tax For Roads.

A large number of legislators have expressed themselves favorably to the idea of taxing gasoline a cent a gallon to raise money for the state road fund, says the Oregon Voter. A bill is now being prepared by James B. Kerr for the State Taxpayers' Association, and unquestionably it will receive legislative support unless some compelling reason is advanced as to why it is neither practical nor good policy.

Two years ago the idea was before the legislature, but nothing came of it, as the weight of legal opinion was that under the Oregon constitution as it then read no special tax could be levied on any commodity in excess of what would be covered by a license fee. A year ago the people voted through the Constitutional Amendment permitting the classification of property for taxation and it is generally agreed that under this amendment gasoline can be taxed.

A number of complications must be provided for. Gasoline is an article of interstate commerce, and therefore it cannot be taxed upon its entry into the state. The time to reach it would be when it is placed on sale. The idea of the supporters of the bill is to tax the wholesale dealers a cent a gallon on each new quantity of gasoline that they are ready to sell. It is conceded that the bill must be worded carefully to avoid coming in conflict with the Interstate Commerce clause of the Federal Constitution. No state has the right to levy excise or customs taxes or in any way interfere with Interstate Commerce. On the other hand, no dealer has a right to offer any article for sale within the state if state law forbids its sale for any constitutional or police reason.

It is contended that gasoline consumers will not grumble over the extra cent that would be added to the price—that in fact most of them would think John D. Rockefeller was getting the money and would blame him instead of the legislature for the increased price. On the other hand, use of gasoline is confined almost exclusively to pleasure automobiles, and the auto users will be glad, it is felt, to have the extra price go into the roads. They would save the extra price in gasoline sav-

ed on the roads after they were paved.

It is said that the amount of gasoline used in the industries is trifling—so small an amount as to invoke no hardship. The industries use kerosene and distillate, as do farm tractors and motor trucks, and the taxation proposal is not applied to anything but gasoline.

More Road Bonds.

So great is the need for more paved roads in every section of the state that a general clamor is going up for the issue of more road bonds. The \$2,500,000 available from authorized bonds and other state road fund income is regarded as insufficient even for 1919, while for ensuing years annual expenditures would have to run into many millions to meet the local demands. Heavy government appropriations are also expected, and the federal funds would have to be matched by state funds, it is expected. It is felt that Oregon should be in readiness to match dollar for dollar in every amount the Federal Government is willing to expend in Oregon for highways.

The idea of financing the state highway bonds from the income from auto license fees, originated by the Oregon Voter, has made a hit, and already has been copied by other states. It is felt that as a class auto owners will submit to another increase of the license fees, providing the proceeds are used for road bond financing. The general talk is in favor of doubling the fees—making a \$12 minimum for cars of the silver class instead of the present six minimum. It is estimated that even without any annual increase in the number of cars licensed, the income from this source on the doubled basis would finance principal and interest for an additional \$10,000,000 bonds over the \$6,000,000 now authorized and partly used.

Ten million dollars to be expended within a few years would mean carrying the state paying program into nearly every county to a limited extent, and for paving most of the worst places along the Pacific Highway and Columbia Highway. It would take nearer \$100,000,000 to put paving on every highway in the state system, but \$10,000,000 would go a long way toward connecting up every county with travelable trunk roads. Once the automobile fraternity awakes to the realization that by doubling their license fees they can provide \$10,000,000 it is believed they will be enthusiastic in demanding the increase.

The general property taxpayer is opposed to bonding for through roads as a rule, although he is willing to stand his share of taxes for county and district road bonds. With the counties and districts relieved of the expense of maintaining the state trunk highways, there will be more money for county and district roads. Yet even this additional money will not be sufficient to put the local highways in the shape they should be in. Under the 6 per cent tax limitation Amendment, higher taxes can not be levied in sufficient amount to relieve the local requirements, so it would appear that bonding is the only course to pursue locally. A number of county bond issues are now in preparation, to be submitted after the legislature commits itself to a policy.

It is probable that there will have to be a special election next summer to provide the state with funds to operate on in its various departments now crippled by high costs due to the war conditions and of the 6 per cent limitation. If that election is held in June, as may be the case, the \$10,000,000 state proposal and a number of county bonding propositions may be voted upon at the same time.

Altogether, it looks as though road financing and building would be one of the biggest subjects the people of Oregon will be facing this year and next year. The roads are needed, and the temper of the people is to get them as quickly as they can be obtained. Opposition to too large a program will make itself manifest in the legislature. In fact, unless the auto owners as a class are willing to pay a doubled fee, there is little prospect that any big bond issue would be authorized, for there is enough opposition in sight to kill anything in the way of good road financing that is not supported by the people who are paying the bills.—Oregon Voter.

It Grows.

In the Eugene Register one reads that at the annual county budget meeting this month there were adopted the report of a taxpayers' subcommittee containing this paragraph: "Recommend that the County Court buy all the machinery necessary to crowd the work this year on all road projects. This is to be a vote of confidence of the tax budget committee to the County Court."

One also finds in the Hood River News the statement that on budget day in that county a number of taxpayers, together with the advisory committee appointed by the county court, considered the road issue. "The sentiment of the taxpayers seemed to be in favor of better roads throughout the county even if it does make taxes a little higher."

Here are evidences of a new sentiment that is beginning to pervade the state. It has doubtless found its inspiration in the practical benefits

realized from the comprehensive state highway building program now in progress.

It was a thing foreseen by those who led the movement for a state bond issue for road work. Trunk lines beget feeders and feeders beget laterals. The benefits of good roads are fully realized only when somewhere some good road is reasonably accessible. Enterprise in road building as in other things must have a beginning. Today taxpayers, who a few years ago were willing to struggle along with ruts and mire rather than increase taxes for the time being, are discovering that there is money sacrificed in difficult hauls to market—more, in fact, than the tax cost of permanent highways. The good roads sentiment is growing. It will show no abatement until the last community of noticeable proportions has been served—Oregonian.

Vinton and Dennis on Good Roads Suits the Oregon Voter.

(From Telephone Register.)

Chapman of the Oregon Voter was a good deal of a critic of Senator Vinton during his campaign for the presidency of the senate, but since it is well determined that Senator Vinton will secure the place the Voter is getting new light on Mr. Vinton's interest in the good of the state. In a recent issue he hurrahs for Vinton as follows:

The Voter confesses it has been skeptical as to the attitude of Senator W. T. Vinton, prospective president of the state senate, on good roads legislation, mainly because of Senator Gus Moser's active support of Vinton following Moser's persistent attempts to discredit the State Highway Commission program. Evidently Vinton has definite ideas of his own on good roads and is not afraid to assert them publicly, judging from the Oregonian's report of his remarks made before the commission last Tuesday. The Oregonian says:

"A happy augury for the good roads plan was found in the unequivocal statement of W. T. Vinton, of Yamhill county, who is generally believed to have votes that assure him the presidency of Oregon's Senate. Any question as to Senator Vinton's stand on highway matters was swept aside when he addressed the commission.

"Declaring that legislators who seek to curtail the powers of the State Highway Commission are deserving of retirement, and affirming his own satisfaction in the good work accomplished by the present commission, Senator Vinton said he is contemplating the introduction of legislation that will materially hasten the era of good roads in Oregon."

"Discussing the nature of such legislation Senator Vinton suggested, as one provision, a tax on gasoline, and as another the increase of automobile license fees, to be devoted to the highway fund, together with other items designed to swell the roads' revenues. It is evident, he pointed out, that the \$6,000,000 bond issue recently voted by the people is entirely inadequate to meet the pressing demands for highway improvement, such as were voiced yesterday by delegates of the various counties.

"Senator Vinton held that the annual revenue of \$350,000, calculated to take care of the interest and retirement of the \$6,000,000 issue, had increased to such proportions that another highway bond issue, of equal amount could be handled by the revenue now available. Through the revenue to be added by such legislation as he proposed, Senator Vinton estimated that still another \$6,000,000 bond issue could be swung—or \$12,000,000 additional."

These expressions are very reassuring to good roads advocates. We congratulate Senator Vinton on having spoken so clearly. We apologize for having suspected that he would try to undermine the good roads program, and assure him that the good roads people throughout the state will be eternally grateful to him for upholding the state highway commission's splendid program. The highway commission has not been able to satisfy everybody with the limited funds available, especially under war conditions, but it has made amazing progress, has accomplished so much and has done it so well that the people who have watched its work feel that it should be sustained vigorously and not be crippled by hostile legislative action.

The Voter further comments on the attitude of Jones and Dennis as follows:

Seymour Jones, representative speaker of the next Oregon legislature, when interviewed at his headquarters in The Hotel Oregon, asserted that he is not opposed to a constructive good roads program. He is not specific as to what he favors. The report that he may appoint W. B. Dennis of Carlton as chairman of the important Roads and Highways Committee tends to encourage hope that Jones will not try to use the speakership to block good roads progress.

We recall, too, that when he voted against the Good Roads Bonding Bill in the last legislature, Jones explained that he did so in his capacity as representative of Marion County rather than voting his individual opinion, which he said was favorable to the bill. Marion county had recently voted down a county bond issue for roads, and in the campaign for that bond issue Jones had given