

November 29- Special Hearing on Budget.

Joseph A. Mattingly stated the organizations settled on a Memorial library because it would be a memorial for the dead and a source of pleasure and benefit to the County. This would be a memorial for World War 11 and all veterans, and since no outward sign of respect has been paid to those who did serve, it might be well if this request were granted."

Roland Duke said the memorial is valuable, close to his heart. Out of the '30 boys from the County who did not come back, one was his son. He was also president of the St. Mary's Reading Room and Debating Society and his heart is in this project. He said he could see no reason for going to a referendum for 2/5 of a cent. This Board has the privilege of setting the rate for 5 or 10¢ more. Adding that amount would not raise the taxes too much. He said for so long this County was at the tail end of everything and now it has a chance and he would like to see it get away from that position. Mr. Frank Bailey said the County is still at the end in a number of things.

Mr. Sterling who was acting atty for the Board remarked that he had represented the Am. Legion Post 54, he recalled quite well when this matter came up before the Board, the entire Post went whole heartedly for the Library Memorial and so far as he knows it hasnt changed its feeling.

Mr. Frank Bailey stated the Bd didnt know what it would take to run the Library. Mrs. Davidson replied that the library association had had a hard time. She is willing to make up any deficiency for a year or so. She is doing the building over at her own expense and at the end of 3 years if it isnt in working order she will take it back.

Mr. LaBat said "Is there anyone here who could tell us a reason not to have a Public Library?" Mr. Frank Bailey replied "We dont know why." anyone should have a reason for being against it. We are all in favor of it, but we will wait to let the people decide if they want it."

Mr. LaBat said "you state you feel you cant deny the Old age pension, can you sit there and deny your children and my children books to read and the availability of the library. If you cant see denying Old Age pensions I cant see how you can deny us the library."

Mr. F. Bailey said "if a man is hungry and begging and in need, dont you think that is different? Do you think what you put in your head from a book will fill you here (stomach) when you are empty? You ask for \$2000 for a library and the County Welfare asks for \$4000 for the poor. We wont agree to the library." All members of the Board agreed to this. Mr. Bailey said if he had the money to give for the library and he would be the one to get the blame for it, he would give the money. People would be down on the Board for such a decision. 1500 names dont represent the entire county."

SPECIAL MEETING

Nov. 29, 1949

The Board met today for Public Hearing on the Proposed Budget for 1950. All members were present. In the absence of Atty. J.H.T.Briscoe- who is in Charles County as State's Attorney- W.O.E.Sterling acted as attorney.

About thirty citizens attended the hearing.

The most important question appeared to be the fact that no provision was made for a Public Library fund, which would have been \$.002 on each tax \$1.00. The Board had expressed their intention to having this question answered by referendum at the election in 1950 and would make no provision until then. When advised they had received petitions signed by over 1500 taxpayers, the Board replied that that number did not represent the majority of taxpayers in the County. Mrs. Howard Davidson, Mrs. Fernando Cuniberti, Mr. Stuart LaBat, Mrs. LaBat, sr., Mr. Elliott E. Burch, R. B. Duke, Oliver Guyther and J.A. Mattingly spoke in favor of the Library, especially is it important to many because it is a world war memorial, as well as a source of information and pleasure. The Commissioners remained firm in their decision to have the vote of the people on the matter.

Mr. R.B.Duke advised he understood two of the County's volunteer fire departments were not being cared for in the Budget. On examination it appears that the five volunteer organizations of the County are on the Budget.

Oliver Guyther questioned the amount asked by Welfare for it's 1950 allowance. He pointed out that in 1946 State, Federal and Local funds used for Welfare amounted to over Nine Million dollars, in 1948 they were over thirteen million and for 1950 they would total over seventeen million. Mr. Frank Bailey, who is a member of the St. Mary's County Welfare Bd., informed that he felt the sum was not too large to assist those in need. When it was brought to his attention that the Welfare allotment could be curtailed and with the curtailment use it as a Library Fund base and thus secure for the people pleasure and culture from reading, he added that when one is hungry the memory of a good story was not very filling. He said a large amount of the money allotted to Welfare was for Old Age Pensions, and as long as he was on the Board he would prefer to use it aid the old, and dependant children of which there are many in the County. He doesnt feel that money used for the poor is being thrown away. He further stated that St. Mary's County would not aid able bodied people, and there was plenty of work they could do eithout receiving funds from Welfare.

Mr. Elliott E. Burch asked whether a representative from the State Unemployment Compensation office came to St. Mary's

and he was advised that such a representative does come twice each month. Mr. Bailey then produced a check which he had received from Welfare for his mileage during the month of October, which totaled \$.98. He explained that members of the Welfare Bd. were selected from a group of names and were appointed for a term of 3 years. Mr. Guyther then stated he was not critical of the Commissioners, he just wondered if it were wise to allot such a large sum for Welfare work.

Capt. M.R. Bailey said he approved the amount requested as did Mr. J. Frank Bailey.

Mrs. Howard Davidson, Pres. St. Mary's Mem. Library Asso stated that she had purchased and was doing over Tudor Hall at her own expense and it was hoped the building would be accepted for the Memorial Library. She requested the Board to appropriate the sum of \$.002 per tax \$1.00, and further stated if more money than this taxation would yield, after being matched by the State were needed for the next two years she would personally be responsible for that amount. The Board still refused to reconsider their decision.

Mrs. Davidson informed that they were ready to plaster at Tudor Hall and the water supply had been shut off for some time due to an accident when the public parking lot was installed. The Board has made several efforts to have this remedied, and instructed their secretary to contact Mr. Kenneth B. Duke to have the matter attended to and a bill sent the Board which they will pay. (A letter was written and a telephone call made to Mr. K.B. Duke in this connection and he agreed to have same attended to.)

Mrs. LaBat, Sr., said the County Commissioners were empowered to increase or decrease the Budget and she commended the Bd. for the many improvements in County buildings etc., which it has made. She said the Board had the confidence of the people of the County and she feels they would agree with their decision to levy a tax for the Library and all will stand with the Commissioners. Mr. Frank Bailey said again the Board would do the will of the people.

Mr. Burch mentioned the many organizations represented on the petitions signed and sent to the Board and felt they would all approve the decision of the Bd to levy the tax. He stated that when a meeting was held in connection with the County Library Mr. K.B. Duke was head of the meeting and all organizations represented were in accord.

Mr. LaBat said "we have 2000 names who want it, have you 500 who dont?"

Mrs. LaBat said "it is an immediate necessity, why make the County wait for two more years, when they really need it now?"

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Mr. Bailey said he had a conscience and he had to clear it, and when he did it made him feel better. Rev. Hildebrand How do you do it sir?" and Mr. Bailey replied I cannot have the people mad with me for a thing like the library. I feel they must approve it."

It was the unanimous decision of the entire Board to wait for the referendum.

Debt Service.

Mr. Guyther questioned the amounts in Debt Service.

Bernard Duke said he noted that the Liq. Bd. Inspector was paid \$2400.00, clerk \$1200, stenog \$600. Mr. Sterling who is clerk to the Liq. Bd explained that law required the Liq. Bd. to meet once a month. It meets more often than that and when the need arises they employ a part-time stenog to take the testimony, but the applicant always has the right to take an appeal to the Circuit Court and therefore they need the testimony to present to the Court, so it can see on what grounds the Liq Bd. takes the action it took. The stenog is very necessary and she takes the testimony the same as Mrs. Jackson was taking that today, though she was not representing the Board of Commissioners, but Miss Dent.

5½% from Slot Machines

When asked how the 5½% recd from Slot machine tax was accounted for it was explained that the State Comptroller doesn't send the money in except thru "Admission Tax" Mr. Guyther had phoned Balto on the 28th for the amount paid to St. Mary's County and they had given him the figure \$23,334.00 up to Sept 30- the County Commissioners had no such sum, and the amount received thru Admission Taxes had reached \$16,859.36. A phone call was made direct to the Deputy Comptroller Mr. McCuster who replied that Mr. Guyther had figures from July 48 to Sept 49- whereas the County had received checks from Jan to Oct 49, only. The State Comptroller's office was then requested to make all further payments of this tax in a separate check which they agreed to do. The secretary was instructed to write a letter to Mr. McCuster and make this request.

Bernard Duke asked how the contracts were paid on parochial school buses, and he was informed by mileage @ 20¢ per mile, average.

Mr. Guyther said the Cash Balance on hand was \$204,055.00 and taxes could be reduced to 1.22. It was explained that from the Cash on hand the price of Great Mills High School would be taken in the event the amount could not be used from the State School Loan appropriation. This information the County does not have. Also, the taxes are not due and collected until July 1st, and the County has to have a cash balance with which to work until the taxes are collected.

Roads.

The amount of \$2,000 per month allocated to State Roads Com for maintenance for County roads was questioned as all felt the

County roads are in pretty bad shape.

Frequently it was brought to the attention of the Board that they could use some of the cash on hand for the library fund, but their reply was always the same- let the people decide.

Mr. LaBat said in view of what Mr. Guyther had pointed out that the taxes could be reduced at this time, would they consider the Library appropriation at this time? Everyone knows the County is getting plenty of money, everyone knows you can afford the money- we can afford it.

State Roads.

The Board was asked if they felt they were getting their money's worth on the road work being done. Mr. Bailey explained that he had attended a meeting of the State Roads Commission in Annapolis, when the Commissioners were asked if they desired to have control of their own roads upkeep and they decided to let the SRC continue, as the SRC had men, and machinery and it would be took big a job for the Commissioners. Since then the Bd had purchased 4 pieces of machinery and he felt it might be well for the Bd to take over the county roads.

Public Health Quarters.

Mrs. Davidson then pointed out that the Health Dept is in miserable quarters and asked if the Bd intended to build a home for them as the County couldnt get a decent health doctor here because they lacked a place fit for them to work. The Bd. said that was in the future.

Bernard Duke said he would like to make a remark before he left. It had been pointed out that taxes could be reduced and also that the Commissioners didnt see fit to give a sum for the library. Since taxes didnt have to be raised couldnt the Bd still give the money for the library which would benefit generations to come. He said he represented the St. Mary's County Teachers' Asso- and was a member of the S.M.C. Civic Asso- they have one thousand paid members -and would like to go on record as asking for the library.

Mr. LaBat asked whr the budget wasnt published and Mr. Sterling read Sec 53, Laws of Special Session which provided that only the date and time of Pub Hearing need be published and that at least 3 copies of the proposed Budget must be available in the office of the County Commissioners for anyone to read and discuss. The date of signing the Budget is Dec. 1-1949.

Board adjourned at 1 p.m.

Check order #1200 - Mrs. Ada Barker \$18.00