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The Luzerne County  
NO. 1 WILKES COLLEGE, WILKES-BARRE, PA

## LCPC AND LCUCDC

In recent months two organizations, Luzerne County and the Luzerne County United Community Development, have come into being. It might, therefore, be the opportune time to discuss the place and purpose of these agencies - one a governmental body, and the other, a citizen group. Because so much has been broadcast concerning the two groups, the poor local of primary purpose of this article is to answer a number of questions frequently asked.

Let us begin with planning.

Planning is essentially a method by which foresight is applied to the development and redevelopment of communities. Public and private, will not be overlooked.

The time is right now to set this area's "broken bones" like no zoning, house-afire, subdivisions, and remedied will prevent this area from being as pleasant, as profitable, as secure a place to live, as we know. It will not bother with planning because one man's factory is another man's thoroughfare may be another man's park. While they seem to be growing without growing pains, it's the pain of growing that hurts.

It is possible, through a well conceived and well planned program, over a period of time to prevent, alleviate, or eradicate many of the worst problems that plague us. Although we may have parks, lack of schools, parks, and playgrounds, and other things, they are, in reality, all parts of a single problem: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

The planning process and its techniques do not require a great deal of money to spend more tax dollars but rather to obtain the greatest efficiency and lasting physical development of the community.

# The Luzerne County News-letter

VOL. VII. NO. 1 WILKES COLLEGE, WILKES-BARRE, PA. JANUARY 15, 1958

## LCPC AND LCUCDC

In recent months two organizations, Luzerne County Planning Commission and the Luzerne County United Community Development Conference, have come into being. It might, therefore, be the opportune time to explain to local officials the place and purpose of these agencies - one, an official governmental body, and the other, a citizen group. Because so much misinformation has been broadcast concerning the two groups, the poor local official is lost. The primary purpose of this article is to answer a number of questions which are frequently asked.

Let us begin with planning.

Planning is essentially a method by which foresight can be brought to bear upon the development and redevelopment of communities, so that future needs, public and private, will not be overlooked.

The time is right now to set this area's "broken bones" before they knit (broken bones like no zoning, house-afire, subdivisions, etc.), which if not remedied will prevent this area from being as pleasant, as convenient, as healthful, as profitable, as secure a place to live, as we know it can be. We must bother with planning because one man's factory is another man's stench, one man's thoroughfare may be another man's park. While the towns in this valley seem to be growing without growing pains, it's the pain that follows the growing that hurts.

It is possible, through a well conceived and well executed planning program, over a period of time to prevent, alleviate, or entirely remove many of the worst problems that plague us. Although we may list poor street systems, lack of schools, parks, and playgrounds, and others as separate evils, they are, in reality, all parts of a single problem: UNPLANNED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

The planning process and its techniques do not constitute a method of finding ways to spend more tax dollars but rather are a process designed to obtain the greatest efficiency and lasting benefit from each dollar spent for the physical development of the community.

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All the planning problems of a town are not necessarily solved by action of a town alone. A residential area near the town limits cannot be protected from the establishment of a piggery in an adjacent municipality. Joint or cooperative planning will help to avoid such difficulties. In an attempt to solve these problems, legislation has been enacted to permit planning over a larger area, such as a county. Several months ago, the County Commissioners took a commendable step forward by the establishment of Luzerne County Planning Commission to deal with matters relating to the physical and economic growth of Luzerne County.

Because the responsibilities of the LCPC cut across all the functions of local governments in the County, it needs a qualified technical staff. This 9 member commission has the responsibility of developing a master plan for the County, which must be comprehensive in the sense that all physical elements are studied and planned together as related components of one general plan.

Civic spirit sometimes breaks out in acute "projectitis." Much time and effort are thrown into single projects which overlook the principle of first things first. Planning determines the logical sequence of improvements, and prevents careless decisions like those of a man who buys whiskey and speedboats before life insurance and adequate food for his family. A county planning commission is not the alter ego for a county parking authority, a county sewage authority, or a county urban renewal authority. These are typical capital improvements that properly belong on the borough, township, or city level.

In many areas where significant progress is being made in such projects as urban redevelopment, the planning agency works in intimate association with the redevelopment agency charged with that purpose. It may perform the studies that lead to redevelopment. In any case, whether it is the widening of a road, locating a swimming pool, building a bridge, clearing land for parking, the planning agency seeks to have it coordinated with the comprehensive plan. A quickie crash planning program done in order to secure funds for a particular phase of planning for a particular part of the county disregards and ignores one of the most important don'ts of planning - THE WORK OF PLANNING CANNOT BE DONE OVERNIGHT.

Local officials will find that the LCPC will stand to advise them on many of their capital improvements projects.

At all times throughout the process, the interest and participation of the public must be sought by the technicians developing the master plan. Because of the broad function of the LCPC, it needs the combined judgment of in-

formed and civic-minded citizens. "Preparing" and "maintaining" the plan requires the cooperation of the public in order to insure understanding and support for it. Any successful program seeks far greater participation of the public than the minimum called for by legal procedures.

Therefore the Luzerne County United Community Development Conference.

A completely developed master plan in which the public took no part would stand little chance of approval and moreover, would probably be inadequate in many ways. The number one Do in planning is to secure the support of the public by a definite program to inform the public of the needs and objectives, and by continuing to keep the public informed. This the Conference can do for the LCPC, because the Conference is a broad based organization whose constituent membership leads to every citizen in the County.

This Conference composed of member organizations interested in planning, has been created to cooperate with the LCPC in the development of a master plan and to encourage in the implementation of the components of the plan.

For the local councilman, commissioner, supervisor, or school director, there need be no fear that either the LCPC or the LCUCDC will usurp his power to enact ordinances. It has been and will always be in him to enact. These two groups will merely guide public capital improvement programs so that you, the locally elected officials, can get the credit for sponsoring projects for community betterment.

#### McKEESPORT PLANT TURNS TRASH INTO FERTILIZER

Approximately 500 representatives of local government and industry recently assembled in the City of McKeesport, Pennsylvania, to inspect a new plant which is designed to change garbage and trash into a marketable fertilizer. The plant was designed and built by the Organic Corporation of America, 247 Fort Pitt Boulevard, Pittsburgh 22, Pennsylvania.

The company describes the process as a combination of pulverization plus enzymes, or "hot fermentation", and reports that the plant will transform the refuse into a dry granular fertilizer in a period of time ranging from 14 days to 21 days. The plant is designed to receive glass, wooden boxes, tin cans and easily processed refuse.

Trucks discharge the refuse into a loading dock. A conveyor belt carries the refuse across a set of magnets which remove most of the metallic material. The arrangement of the conveyor belt allows excess liquor to be drained away after the refuse leaves the magnets. The refuse then passes through a pair of Gruendler grinders. The grinders pulverize it to a size which facilitates decomposition. The pulverized refuse is inoculated with enzymes before it enters the fermentation area. In the fermentation area temperatures range from 140 degrees F. to 175 degrees F. during the transformation period. After the decomposition cycle has been completed, the refuse is transferred into a hopper and fed across a screen. The portion which passes through the screen is bagged for sale, and the remainder is returned to the grinder for reprocessing.

The plant in McKeesport is designed to receive 140 tons of refuse daily. The cost of the plant is approximately \$350,000. The company is currently offering to build plants under two general proposals.

Under the first proposal, the company builds the plant on municipally owned property, which the company leases for a period of ten years. At the end of the ten-year period, the property reverts to company ownership. The municipality delivers the garbage and trash to the plant and pays for the disposal of the garbage and trash.

Under the terms of the second proposal, the company furnishes a complete plant which is ready to operate and which is paid for by the municipality. The municipality then leases the plant to the company and delivers all of its garbage and trash to the plant. The municipality is not charged for dumping privilege.

#### THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

When a stenographer halts dictation, the chances are she is spell-bound.

It is the little things that count, for they are the ones that quickly multiply into big ones.

#### PUBLICATION

This News-letter, published monthly as a community service, originates in the Institute of Municipal Government of Wilkes College. Notes and inquiries may be addressed to Dr. Hugo V. Mailey, Institute of Municipal Government, Wilkes College, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

# The Luzerne County News-letter

VOL. VII. NO. 2 WILKES COLLEGE, WILKES-BARRE, PA. FEBRUARY 15, 1958

#### CLASS

The following communities are represented in the borough officers and commissioners course: Dallas, West Wyoming, Luzerne, Larksville, Swoyerville, Laflin, Hanover Township, Sugar Notch, West Pittston, and Ashley.

Approximately thirty students are attending the class

#### LECTURES

Police of the following municipalities have been attending the traffic lectures for police: Ashley, Danville, Courtdale, Exeter, Forty Fort, Hanover Township, Kingston, Milton, Nuangola, Palmerton, Plains, Watstown, Wilkes-Barre, West Pittston, and Wyoming.

Subjects discussed are "Traffic Flow", "Drunken Drivers", "Revocation of Licenses", "Stolen Cars", and "New Traffic Legislation."

#### TRAFFIC

Using figures as compiled and published by the Highway Research Board from the Highway Capacity Manual, an ordinary thirty-foot street, with parking on both sides, has a carrying capacity of approximately 700 cars per hour of green light. The same thirty-foot street, with parking limited to one side, has a carrying capacity of 1,100 vehicles per hour of green light. With parking removed entirely from the street, this carrying capacity is increased to 1,600 vehicles per hour of green light. Taking the same thirty-foot street and now considering one-way traffic movements, it is found that one-way with parking on both sides has a practical capacity of 1,200 vehicles; one-way with parking on one side 1,600 vehicles; and one-way with no parking 2,400 vehicles. These figures simply serve to point out the ultimate maximum carrying capacity of a street and what will eventually have to be done in the communities in order to move the heavy volume of traffic that can be expected in the foreseeable future.

## ORDINANCES

Many municipalities require that proposed ordinances be read aloud three times in successive council meetings before a vote is taken. According to the National Institute of Municipal Clerks, Fort Smith, Arkansas, in the interest of conserving the energies of the clerk, is trying a voice-saving practice. The clerk reads the ordinance aloud once at a meeting, records it at the same time, and plays it back at the next two council meetings, thus filling the requirements for reading the ordinance.

Better still, give each councilman a typed copy of the proposed ordinance and dispense with the two subsequent readings.

## YORK

The York City Parking Authority, the York City Planning Commission, and the York Redevelopment Authority are jointly planning a project for the removal of "cores" of three square blocks on the perimeter of the downtown district to provide space for parking plazas, which will accommodate 1,000 cars. The blocks which have been surveyed for the proposed plan are located between Beaver Street and Pershing Avenue from King Street to College Avenue, between Queen and Duke streets from King to Princess streets, and between Queen and Duke streets from Philadelphia Street to Gay Avenue. The estimated cost of the project is \$85,000.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

Pride! Suspicion! Fear! These are the real obstacles to any solutions of metropolitan problems. There are methods of intergovernmental cooperation available now.

One method is the contractual agreement, whereby a number of communities can not only get together for a joint undertaking, but one community may contract with another and buy services which it could not itself afford. Much of the chaos and duplication now existing among communities would be eliminated.

The most important power that Pennsylvania municipalities have is the General Cooperation Law. Under this Act, any two or more municipalities may join in the performance of any functions which each of them could undertake alone.

Under other laws, counties, cities, boroughs, and townships may jointly own and operate airports. They may unite in establishing a free library. They can enter into agreements for the construction of sewer systems, for joint purchasing and for recreation. Interjurisdictional agreements are permitted in services such as water, police, and fire protection, and garbage disposal. Act 481 also permits joint agreements for the collection of taxes levied under this Act.

## SPEED ZONE

The State Highway Department has found 191 illegal speed restriction zones and 69 illegal extensions of speed zones.

In most cases the illegal restrictions were found to be warranted, but not necessarily for the speed designated. Most common are 25 mile-an-hour zones where Department standards would call for 35 mile-an-hour zones.

In some cases, illegal 35 mile-an-hour zones are found to meet the requirements for the new 40 mile-an-hour zones. The 1957-1958 General Assembly authorized establishment of 40 mile-an-hour zones.

Recommendations are being made by traffic personnel in the Department's 11 districts to raise the speed restrictions in some legal 35 mile-an-hour zones to 40 mile-an-hour, and in some legal 25 mile-an-hour to 35 miles an hour.

The Department also is receiving reports of speed zone restrictions put on the books from 1938 to 1940 but which have not been posted for several years. Recommendations are being made to cancel these restrictions.

## TIMING

Timing is important when dealing with the public. Why, for example, change a street to one-way operation in late spring or summer when business is falling off and merchants can claim that the move drives away business? A town avoids unnecessary trouble if it makes the change in the fall when business is improving. Similarly, why raise water rates in the summer when the demand for water is high? Instead, change the rates in winter when use is low.

### WHAT'S NEW?

HANOVER TOWNSHIP - Commissioners have provided a police pension fund, to which police will contribute 5% of their salaries. Police may continue in service if they so desire.

ASHLEY - The borough council will have about \$5,000 less revenue than it had in 1957 due to a drop in coal valuation.

FORTY FORT - An examination for police to set up an eligibility list will be conducted at town hall.

EDWARDSVILLE - A tentative borough budget retains a 17-mill levy.

WEST WYOMING - Pay increases have been granted to borough employees.

DURYEA - The borough will finance the \$18,000 Canal Street restoration project with a short-term loan.

DUPONT - The council intends to operate on a \$21,000 budget with a 19-mill levy.

LARKSVILLE - An old bond issue of \$11,500 may be retired this year if the council can cut expenses.

PLYMOUTH - The tentative budget has been set at \$156,297.

NANTICOKE - The city has been notified by the State Health Department to appoint a qualified health officer, such as a doctor, undertaker, nurse, etc. in order to meet the state directive.

DALLAS - The tentative budget provides for \$4,500 toward a playground.

WILKES-BARRE - The city will advertise for bids for temporary repairs to the disks.

### THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

Before you've passed your prime is when you should prime yourself for the future.

Either take medicine when you're run down or get the license number of the car.

### PUBLICATION

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# *The Luzerne County News-letter*

VOL. VII. NO. 3 WILKES COLLEGE, WILKES-BARRE, PA. MARCH 15, 1958

Wilkes College Library

### LCPC

The true function of the Luzerne County Planning Commission is the formation of and continuous development of the overall comprehensive plan. The carrying of various elements of the plan into effect is entirely a matter for operating governmental agencies. The Planning Commission plans and advises; the existing governmental structures must look to and be guided by such plans and advice to a large degree if the work of the Planning Commission is to pay any return on the effort invested.

The Planning Commission when established and staffed at a regional or county level also becomes the logical agency to develop for specific communities those specific planning phases required regarding major rehabilitation projects. For the community undertaking such projects the County or regional planning commission with its basic information and knowledge on the overall area provides a competent and the least costly agency with whom to contract for preparation of many elements of the "workable program" required by federal agencies for federal aid in such rehabilitation projects.

Other elements of the required "workable program" such as administration, regulatory measures, financing, and local citizen participation must by their nature be the responsibility of the specific municipality undertaking such rehabilitation projects.

The existence of a County Planning Commission does not obviate the need for local commissions in the cities, large boroughs and townships. Development or execution of broad land use recommendations made by the County Commission will rest with local governments guided by local planning commissions. The local commissions working with the County Commission help serve to keep the County Commission tied to the realities of the situation.

### TOWNSHIP ASSOCIATION

Stephen Yanoshak, chairman of Hanover Township Board of Commissioners, was elected president of the First Class Townships Association of Luzerne County.



Other officers elected: First vice president, Clem Falchek of Plains; second vice president, George Kovalich, Newport; secretary, Andrew J. Garber, Hanover Township; treasurer, James McCarthy, Hanover; and solicitor, Attorney Joseph F. Gallagher, Newport. Peter Klebish, who has been a member of the commissioners board 23 years, is immediate past president of the group. In 1959 Klebish will be seated as president of the State Association.

#### ATHENIAN OATH

"We will never bring disgrace to this our city by any act of dishonesty or cowardice, nor ever desert our suffering comrades in the ranks; we will fight for the ideal and sacred things of the city, both alone and with many; we will revere and obey the city's laws and do our best to incite a like respect in those above us who are prone to annul or set them at naught; we will strive unceasingly to quicken the public's sense of civic duty. Thus, in all these ways, we will transmit this city not only not less, but greater and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us."

Newly elected officials might ponder this oath that the officers of the ancient city of Athens took.

#### FIRE PROTECTION

The National Board of Underwriters fixes standards for fire protection facilities including the number of pieces of apparatus necessary. These standards are generally considered to be maximum standards and are met by few communities.

The Board fixes the standards of the distribution of fire companies according to the table below:

<u>Type of District</u>	<u>Engine Company</u>
Mercantile or manufacturing	3/4 mile
Closely built residential	1 1/2 miles
Scattered residential	3 miles

The pumper formula is .85 plus 0.12 multiplied by the population of the municipality. In a town of 6,000 the pumpers necessary would be 1.57; in a town of 7,000 the pumpers necessary would be 1.89. Obviously, these figures should be rounded out to two full pumpers.

Fire companies should have two supplies of hose, one in use and one equally good in reserve. A service of 7 to 10 years, if not more, should be expected from fire hose if cleaned and dried immediately after use. There are many instances where fire hose has lasted 15 years. Ordinarily, communities of 6,000 to 7,000 people have a maximum of 10,000 feet of hose.

Hydrants should be able to deliver 600 gallons per minute, with a loss of not more than 2 1/2 pounds in the hydrant and total loss of not more than 5 pounds between the street and main outlet. Hydrants should be placed with consideration of their possible use as reflected in the hazards of the locality. Hose lines more than 400 to 500 feet long are inefficient and a source of delay.

IS YOUR TOWN OVERPROTECTED OR UNDERPROTECTED? ARE YOU SPENDING TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE MONEY? WHY NOT CHECK YOUR BUDGET AND SEE.

#### RIGHT OF WAY SIGNS

The Department of Highways this year will experiment with "yield right-of-way" signs to determine their effectiveness as traffic control devices.

If the signs prove effective, before they become a permanent traffic fixture along the Commonwealth's highways the General Assembly will have to make provisions for them in the Vehicle Code. Yield right-of-way signs are used in other states to eliminate unnecessary full stops for vehicles entering a main highway from a subsidiary road.

The signs are triangular in shape and each side is 30 inches. Letters are black on a reflectorized yellow background.

Locations for the signs will be non-right angle intersections where visibility is good and where traffic volumes on the main and subsidiary roads are light enough to permit smooth merging of traffic.

#### "BABY" STREET SWEEPERS

Municipal officials have found that the chief asset of a "baby" street sweeper is the ability of the sweeper to maneuver on narrow streets and between parked cars where the larger sweepers do not fit. The American Public Works Association reports that although the sweeper can't reach all the refuse and litter that a man with a broom can reach, it can approximately cover 13 curb miles per day, a distance which compares with a human sweeper's 2.5 miles per day. a vacuum attachment sucks up debris and keeps down dust. The machine weighs 1,200 pounds and can carry 700 pounds of waste.

### ACT 433

Upon petition of any borough council or five percent of the electorate the court of quarter sessions may order the wards in the borough abolished and call for the election of seven councilmen at large, initial terms of office of these councilmen are to run so as to not shorten the terms of the incumbents and to regularly allow election of three or four members in alternate years, for two year terms.

When the court decree abolishing wards is made after a primary election the nominations for the newly created at-large council may be made by the political party committees.

Act 433, approved July 17, 1957, (section 2) amends sections 601 and 602 and adds sections 817 and 818 to "The Borough Code", effective September 1, 1957.

### PATROL CARS

One-man patrol cars are used in 85 per cent of United States cities over 10,000 population for regular patrol work according to the 1957 Municipal Year Book just published by the International City Managers' Association.

Of 1,137 reporting cities, 245 use one-man patrol cars exclusively, and 720 cities use a combination of one and two man patrol cars. Nearly two-thirds use one-man patrol cars on all three shifts during a 24-hour period.

### THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

Any one can do more than he thinks he can, but that's usually less than he thinks he does.

Specialization has reached such a state today that patients have to learn to diagnose themselves before they know which specialist to call.

Just to make sure that crime doesn't pay, the government should take over and try to run it.

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# The Luzerne County News-letter

VOL. VII. NO. 4 WILKES COLLEGE, WILKES-BARRE, PA. APRIL 15, 1958

Wilkes College Library

### DINNER

APR 21 1958

Sixth Annual Dinner for Luzerne County Local Officials will be held Monday May 5, 1958 at the Wilkes Commons. Join in the fun and see your fellow officials receive awards. Make your reservations with the Institute at VA-44651.

### FIRE MENACE CHECK

The State Justice Department has ruled that State Police fire marshals may inspect a building suspected of being a fire hazard without the obtaining of permission from the owners.

The ruling, drafted by Frank P. Lawley Jr., Deputy Attorney General, said the inspection, however, must be conducted at a reasonable hour.

The State Police cannot use this act as a vehicle to search a dwelling or other building for stolen property or other contraband. The purpose of this act is to prevent a fire menace.

If the building is suspected as a fire menace, the inspection would not violate the constitutional prohibition against unreasonable searches and seizures.

### HOW DO YOU DO IT WRONG?

Don't go after tax delinquents. They are voters, too.

Don't encumber appropriations accounts. You're not a C.P.A.

Always buy from the local merchant. His prices may be high, but he pays taxes.

To heck with centralized purchasing. Who knows better than a council committee what the needs are?

Levy special assessments? You can't win friends that way. Pay for improvements out of the general fund.

Don't invest your idle funds in short term government notes. It complicates the bookkeeping. Besides, the federal government is a poor risk.

Buy every item individually as you need it. Otherwise you'll have to keep inventory and provide for bulk storage.

Let department heads spend their full appropriation while they have it. Who knows what tomorrow will bring?

Forget the budget after it is adopted. It's not worth the paper it's printed on.

Don't bond employees who handle money. Most people are honest.

Avoid modern mechanical equipment to increase efficiency. You might have to cut your payroll.

Don't tag parking meter violators. You'll antagonize the shoppers.

Why budget for capital improvements? Bond houses need your business.

Always select the lowest bidder on a contract. He may not be responsible, but he's sure cheap.

Don't keep cost records. You've guessed right in the past, Haven't you?

Why set aside money for emergencies or contingencies? You can always borrow at a reasonable rate.

Vote "Yes for services, "No for taxes. You'll get reelected.

#### BUDGET PROBLEMS

It's not news that as the nation's cities and suburbs grow, so do their budget headaches. No one has found the alleviating potion to this situation either. Below is some of the clear thinking noted in the Kentucky City Bulletin (monthly publication of the Kentucky Municipal League).

Causes of rising costs are listed by the Bulletin as (1) the public demand for more and more municipal services, (2) the imposition by the state upon the

municipality a greater number of administrative functions, (3) the enforcement against municipalities of higher standards in such as matters as sewage disposal, etc. (4) the need for highway construction and other capital improvements occasioned by the growth of municipalities and annexed territories and (5) the pre-emption of certain fields of taxation by the state to the exclusion of municipalities.

All these costs have pyramided until many municipalities are having difficulty making a budget, concludes the Bulletin.

Several considerations are mentioned. (1) Cities and towns are more and more realizing that state laws related to taxation are antiquated and that another look should be taken at the debt limit which was established many years ago; (2) that property is not fairly assessed for taxation purposes; (3) that additional sources of revenue must be obtained for municipalities; (4) that certain state taxes and revenues should be shared with municipalities; and, (5) that the fiscal relations between state, county, and municipality must be studied and coordinated.

#### FALLEN LEAVES BRING PROFITS IN CANADA

Fallen leaves cost a dollar a bag in Toronto, Canada, and there are more buyers than bags.

The leaves which litter the city in the autumn, block gutter and drains and harass the street-cleaning department are now carefully composited and treated for some 80 pounds of fine leaf mould, the best humus obtainable.

Previously collecting and hauling leaves for disposal in dumps outside of Toronto had been a considerable expense for the department.

Now this expense is fully compensated by the production of a saleable product. Also, the Toronto park department has available at no charge all the humus it needs for city parks and gardens.

Initially the leaves are stored at six points conveniently located about the city to minimize hauling time. During the winter and early spring the leaves are moved to the central leaf-mould processing station as time and available equipment allow.

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### WHAT'S NEW?

WILKES-BARRE - City Council has authorized an urban renewal survey costing some \$15,000.

PLAINS - Settlement was made in a damage suit against the township as a result of an auto-fire truck crash.

EDWARDSVILLE - The police department will continue the policy of curbing the nightly visits of out-of-town teenagers. Council and police are well on their way to approving a police pension fund.

KINGSTON - Council has agreed to regrade a sanitary sewer in the Third Avenue section.

FORTY FORT - All meetings of community groups held in the Town Hall have been cancelled due to damage to part of the building.

SWOYERVILLE - The street department has completed the pumping project in the community.

LARKSVILLE - Boro tax rate has been increased 1 1/4 mills to offset loss of coal valuation, for a total of 2 3/4 mills.

PLYMOUTH - The boro has lost approximately \$50,000 due mostly to decline in adult population. The burgess and the chief of police are deadlocked on certain parking restrictions.

WEST WYOMING - Council is considering zoning in order to plan its future growth.

DURYEA - Approximately half of the adult population pleads inability to pay per capita taxes.

NANTICOKE - The City is making arrangements to remove the trees near the library to provide parking for the new library.

### THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Most books are forgotten within a year, especially by folks who borrow them.

About the only rich people who really wake up and find themselves rich are boxers.

# The Luzerne County News-letter

JUN 13 1958

VOL. VII. NO. 5 WILKES COLLEGE, WILKES-BARRE, PA. MAY 15, 1958

### THE DINNER

On Monday, May 5, 1958 at a dinner in the Wilkes College Commons, attended by 150 local officials and guests, 18 councilmen and commissioners received Certificates of Attainment for completing a prescribed course intended to assist them in performing better their duties and functions. In addition, 19 local officials were rewarded with a Service Award by the Political Science Department of the College for their untiring efforts and lengthy service to their communities.

This is truly a demonstration of the teamwork which exists between higher education and local government, between the academic gown and town. The teamwork exemplifies an increased awareness of the general usefulness of colleges in American life. Town and gown teamwork for the betterment of Luzerne County seems certain to grow stronger. The Institute of Municipal Government, only one small part of the College, will continue to lend a hand toward that betterment. Time was when the ivy tower was not for the local officials. Although some of us of professorial rank wrote monographs, theses, and books on municipal problems, we were told by local officials that we knew nothing about local governmental problems when we attempted to promote the town-gown relationship.

While the objective of bringing more college students into politics merits praise, the surest way for people of this nation to safeguard local home rule is by bringing more local politicians onto college campuses.

This occasion was a real tribute, though a small one, to the work that the local officials of Luzerne County are doing. Don't stop learning. Come join us some more. It is the only way that you officials can learn to provide your community with that wholesome atmosphere that makes it attractive.

### CERTIFICATES

Fred H. Miller, Acting Executive Director of the Public Service Institute, presented certificates to Michael Kilcoyne, Hanover Township; Ellen McGrady and Mary Slesinski, Laflin; John Elko, Larksville; William Craze and George Soback, Luzerne; Stephen Gavlick, Swoyerville; John Wooten, Sugar Notch; Howard Baird, Robert Campbell, Max Lake, Carl Rosencrance, George Weiskerger, West Pittston; Frank Bubblo, John Mizin, Ted Pawloski, Joseph Salvo, West Wyoming.

### AWARDS

Dr. Hugo V. Mailey presented service awards as follows: Henry Kritzberger, burgess of Courtdale, 20 years; Harry Keiser, fire truck driver in Hanover Township, 31 years; William I. Martin, Kingston, Burgess for third term, councilman and street commissioner; Nicholas Beretsky, Larksville councilman, 17 years; Anthony Szyborski, Nanticoke street worker, 23 years.

Ernest Kehl, burgess of Nescopek, 11 years, councilman for 10, justice of the peace for 6; Attorney Joseph F. Gallagher, Newport Township Solicitor, 17 years; Joyce Kearney, Pittston employe, 14 years, presently assistant director of accounts and finance; Mario Rocconi, Plains Township, three years of service; I. J. Hosey, Plymouth councilman, 27 years; Rep. William Curwood, councilman, burgess, and tax collector of Shickshinny.

John Jarzenbowicz, Sugar Notch councilman, 12 years; John Mizin, West Wyoming councilman, 9 years; Albert F. Maier, White Haven solicitor, 23 years; George Clark, Wilkes-Barre street engineer, 50 years; Arthur W. Evans, Wilkes-Barre sewers engineer, 50 years; Edward J. White, Wilkes-Barre controller, nine years; Jack Dempsey, Wyoming Burgess, 12 years.

### GIFT

Alan Bare, President of the Luzerne County Boroughs Association, and Stephen Yanoshak, President of the Luzerne County First Class Township Association, each presented a check to Dr. Eugene S. Farley, Wilkes College President, so that the Institute of Municipal Government can continue its work as an asset to the area. It is the hope of the fervent supporters of the Institute that this may be just a beginning.

### HENRY D. HARRAL

"We are determined to coordinate our highway programs with other Commonwealth objectives in the fields of industrial development, conservation, recreation, flood control, and the like. We are determined to fit our efforts into regional, county and municipal plans for their social and economic well being, expressed through their master plans for land use. We wish to integrate our highways construction into city and regional programs in the fields of urban renewal, of public housing, of local streets, of industrial development, of recreation, of water supply and of waste disposal."

"We cannot do local planning but we can mesh into it. You will be interested to know that we are working with, are in continuing contact with the municipal and regional planning agencies in many regions. Through our new office of Planning and Research, we will expand our contact with your planning agencies and with those throughout the state."

"That is, of course, we will mesh our efforts with local plans and will expand our contacts with planning agencies if there are local plans, in existence or in the making, and if there are active local, county and regional planning commissions for us to work with."

"I repeat, we cannot do local planning. We would miss our state-wide objectives if we tried to. You, that is, local officials, have in the past derided the State Highway for its lack of advance planning and its aloofness from local plans."

"Now that we have made our move, you must be prepared for our cooperative march forward. I am greatly pleased to hear that Luzerne County has now established a Planning Commission. You, in the boroughs and the townships should have your local planning agencies to do your detailed local planning within the framework of a county plan. We will do our best to tie-in our highway plans and programs with your local and county plans."

"We need you and you need us. Let us go ahead together for the betterment of this region."

### TESTING

The I. M. G. has just embarked on a new venture to assist local civil service commissions. In addition to helping commissions to prepare an adequate civil service ordinance, I. M. G. will also do the examining. This latter is done in cooperation with the College Guidance Center which has for more the 10 years done testing for: Admissions, Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, State Council for the Blind, Bureau of Rehabilitation: Social Security Disability Determination, Nursing applicants for the Wilkes-Barre General Hospital, Nesbitt, Wyoming Valley, and Pittston Hospitals, Private clients, Commercial and Industrial such as Miners National Bank, Deposit and Saving Bank, Linear Inc., Veterans for high school equivalency diplomas through the administration of G. E. D. and U. S. A. F. I. examinations.

Plains Township was the first to avail itself of the service. I. M. G. offered police and fire exams, a mental maturity test, and a personality test. A full report was made to the Plains Commission so that it may better be prepared to appraise applicants for jobs.

## SECTION 701

A number of Pennsylvania municipalities are making good use of federal grants for planning under Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954. The Federal Guide to Urban Planning Assistance Grants are available from the Bureau of Community Development, Department of Commerce.

The development of a master plan, financed by the Section 701 for boroughs and townships, would stifle the flash-in-the-pan ideas which often pop up in borough halls and become political footballs. Under this Section, 50% of the cost for assistance will be paid by the borough and 50% by the federal government. Boroughs and townships need not contribute their share in hard cash either. Any administrative or technical service that local employees can contribute count as the local share. As an example, there is an opportunity for a town to receive a \$10,000 survey for perhaps less than a 1000.

The logical consultant for the performance of such individual community surveys would be the Luzerne County Planning Commission. It will be fully equipped with technical personnel to do the work. Moreover, local recommendations can be integrated with a County Master Plan.

Covered by the surveys under 701 are land use analysis, economic study, traffic study, and a community facilities study.

Uniontown, Emmaus, State College, Springfield Township and many others have done it just this way. Planning in Pennsylvania communities as come of age. These are all "down-to-earth" communities which see a better future for themselves as a result of expenditures of local time, energy, and funds teamed with federal grants.

To those many communities in Luzerne County (names censored) that planning, zoning, etc. are too expensive, it can be done quite economically if you will contact Donald Livingston, Regional Supervisor, Bureau of Community Development, Scranton Office.

Why not find out how the City of Scranton is receiving \$80,000,000 (yes, that's correct) for practically nothing.

## THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

Janitors might be called floor flushers.  
The best way out is always through.

## PUBLICATION

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# Wilkes College Library The Luzerne County News-letter JUL 11 1958

VOL. VII NO. 6 WILKES COLLEGE, WILKES-BARRE, PA. JUNE 15, 1958

## REPRINT

This article is a reprint from the Local Government Newsletter published by the Institute at the University of Pittsburgh.

"We've got it made," said Councilman Green. "Looks as if another new shopping center is going in. And it will be a beauty--half a million dollars, 600,000 square feet of sales area. We have three shopping centers within a mile radius of this one, but this will top them all. Perfect location, landscaped buffer strip, best design I've seen."

"What does your planning commission think of the proposals," someone asked.  
"Planning commission? If we left this sort of thing to them, we probably wouldn't have any centers at all. They're good fellows--don't misunderstand me, but sometimes they are fuzzy headed. They would recommend against a zoning change, if the developer couldn't prove the center was needed to serve the people in the area. They would actually cut us off from all that tax money."

"How much tax money?"

"With assessed values at about 50 percent of market value, that means we would add \$250,000 to our assessment rolls. With a nine mill levy, we would collect about \$2250 a year in real estate taxes alone. Add the earned income tax from the center and we'd be in good shape financially".

"But most of the stores would be incorporated and you can't collect a red cent from a corporate profits," observed a member of the group. "Besides, a lot of the employees would live in some other community levying a wage tax. You'd be lucky to collect \$2000."

"Your'e not sneezing at a couple of thousand extra dollars, are you?"

"No, but what about the expenses? In our town we paid plenty for rebuilding sewers and installing traffic lights because of a new center. We still have to add extra police during rush hours. How about costs like these?"

"We had estimates made by experts," said the councilman. "Their figures

differed but they all agreed the zoning change would give us a lift tax wise. They considered the revenue---expenditure picture and even figured what our taxtake would be if we kept the area residential. Besides, if worst comes to worst, we could always put on a mercantile tax. With an estimated gross of two and a half million a year, we could get about \$3750. Add to this what we'd take from the other centers and you can appreciate the real potential.. All of our centers are making money--not as much as they did at first maybe, but try to find a parking space sometime. So how can we lose ?"

"Someone's going to lose," popped up one of the group. I'm no market analyst, but there's just so much money to be spent in the retail stores in any area. The people are already spending somewhere, and I suspect a good part of it is in existing centers. You're gaining population fast, and maybe the market is big enough to justify more stores, but would'nt it be better to make sure? Besides, I can show you a number of existing shopping districts that have been badly hurt by a new facility--and some smaller centers that have shut down--even though the market seemed big enough to give all the retailers a profitable share of the total business.

"There seems to be a kind of 'Gersham's Law' that can be applied to competing shopping districts," he continued. "The better center tends to drive out of business the ones that are not so good. I'm not in favor of stifling healthy competition, understand. But I think we have a community investment to protect too. What are we going to do with the established districts? If we set them go to pot, we're going to end up with the mess of commercial slums. What happens to our tax revenues and out expenditures then?"

And so the discussion continued. The gentlemen's statements raise a number of interesting questions, but most of these can be saved for another time.. For now, it's enough to say that on second exposure, the tax return advantage of the proposed center begins to lose much of its glitter. Yet, if the proposal is denied, at least some of the existing centers may remain over-crowded. Council will be subjected to pressure to permit ribbons of extensions of commercial zone along the highway, or alternatively, to permit the erection of a new unified facility, even at the risk of causing one or more of the older centers to fail. No one can argue that it is a purpose of zoning to limit competition or to protect submarginal business, although---and quite appropriately--- zoning ordinances invariably result in restricting competition, and certainly are not unlawful because of it.

So what's the answer? Should the application for the proposed shopping center be granted or should it be denied? There perhaps is no answer, at least there is no easy answer. But there sure is a moral.

A comprehensive plan, including studies of population and economic prospects of the area, would have made it possible to evaluate the adequacy of existing

shopping facilities and determine the foreseeable needs for additional centers in terms of both cost and location. Problems associated with competing centers within shopping distance of one another could have been avoided. A single, appropriately located, regional facility with a number of scattered neighborhood convenience shopping areas might have been one solution.

"Might have been," is little help now. But these problems recur, and sensible solutions to day-to-day riddles that councilmen, commissioners, and supervisors face can be advanced only if there is a framework of positive policies and objectives within which they can be tested. And this is the purpose of the comprehensive community plan--to express for the foreseeable future a system of municipal development policies, together with the means for carrying them out.

#### RECENT COUNCIL MANAGER DEVELOPMENTS

According to a January 1958 publication of the International Managers Association 104 municipalities adopted the council-manager plan in 1957. Only five cities abandoned the plan. Huntington, West Virginia (population-86,353) was the largest city to adopt the plan. Referendums on the continuation of the manager plan were held in 24 cities and voters in only seven of these cities decided to abandon the plan. Nevada and Tennessee enacted laws during 1957 extending to all counties the opportunity to appoint a county manager.

California now leads with 179 places under the Council-Manager plan, with Pennsylvania ranking fifth with its 86 places, Bristol Township (population-50,000) being the largest municipality being operated under the plan and Sewichly Heights (population- 679) being the smallest. Of the cities with a population between 50,000 and 100,000, slightly over 50 % have the Council-Manager plan, 47% of all the cities with populations over 25,000, and 41% of all cities between 10,000 and 25,000. There are more Council-Manager cities than either Mayor - Council or Commission governed cities in the population group 50,000 to 100,000.

#### WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION NOW COVERS AUXILIARY POLICE

By Act 71 of the 1957 General Assembly, workmen's compensation insurance coverage has been extended to include auxiliary police. These municipal employees are now entitled to receive compensation for injuries received while engaging in official duties, answering emergency calls, and training activities. Although the law was amended a year ago, many boroughs and townships have not as yet changed their policies to include auxiliary police. To avoid confusion and to keep problems of non-compliance with the Act from arising, a review of present workmen's compensation coverage would seem in order.

## FILTHY STREAMS

Mine acid stream pollution was cited as a major factor keeping water--starved industries from locating in the economically distressed coal counties of Pennsylvania. William Voigt Jr., executive director of the State Fish Commission, speaking at the sixth annual clean streams conference called by the Pennsylvania Chamber of Commerce, stressed the need for more research to solve the problem of pollution created by acid water flowing from mines into streams.

"New industry will find it difficult to become established in the areas heavily polluted by mine acid, particularly if they require relatively clean process waters. Our generally fine transportation system may make it possible for them to import raw or semi-finished materials from other places, but the water must come from local sources."

## BRITAIN

For years it's been a well-established custom in Britain for the contractor to furnish five years of free maintenance on all hot--mix asphalt surfacing jobs.. But, recently England's municipalities have shown a marked tendency to demand only a 12-month maintenance guarantee. The reason? Modern asphalt pavements are now expected to give maintenance free service well beyond the five--year period and this limitation has lost its meaning. **Faults, if any,** are expected to show up in the first year.

## THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

Lack of wealth is easily repaired;  
but poverty of soul is irreparable.

A college degree does not lessen the length of your ears;  
it only conceals it.

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# The Luzerne County News-letter

AUG 1 1958

VOL. VII. NO. 7 WILKES COLLEGE, WILKES-BARRE, PA. JULY 15, 1958

## LOCAL TAXATION

In a study released by the Bureau of Municipal Affairs of the Department of Internal Affairs, important matters of local finance are revealed. For municipalities in Luzerne County, this study has more than the usual meaning of evaluating their own operations, especially since this whole area in Luzerne County is making a valiant attempt to attract industry and thereby recover some of the lost 35,000 people who departed since 1950.

Because of the dependence of local government finances upon real property, assessments should be uniform, equitable, and a relatively high ratio of market value. Uniformity and equity do not need explanation. Relatively high ratios of assessed values to market values are desirable because assessed valuations are the criteria upon which local debt limits are now based. Market values furnish a more realistic basis for the calculation of debt limits and tax revenues than do assessed values. There is one qualification for this, and that is, assuming that the increased revenue is for more adequate services and not to maintain the present inefficiency in local governmental services.

If the personal property and occupations taxes are to be retained, it is imperative that their administration be improved, leading to not only an increase in monetary returns, but also to more equitable taxation. The problem administration and collection of this kind of tax has plagued many municipalities in this area.

Further diversification of the tax base is needed in municipalities which have limited taxable property resources. Two possible methods of diversification are: (1) greater use of the taxing powers granted by Act 481, and (2) cooperative arrangements with other local units in an effort to stretch resources. The later course of action may enable a number of local units to provide services which they would not be able to pay for if they acted alone. Advocacy of the latter is not new with this NEWSLETTER.

The minimum population of boroughs used in the study was 5,000. Based on this criteria, the following boroughs in Luzerne County were used: Forty-Fort, Kingston, West Pittston, Exeter, Ashley, Larksville, Edwardsville, Plymouth, Swoyerville, Luzerne, and Duryea.

A market value per capita table is used to rank the 177 boroughs reporting in



the State. This basis is useful in that it gives some indication of the relative wealth of the boroughs.

On a table showing market value per capita, Forty-Fort and Kingston are ranked as average, and all others are either below average, low, or very low (Plymouth, Swoyerville, Luzerne, and Duryea). This not only reflects the economically depressed condition of the area, but it is also an indication of the real financial capacity of a community to offer governmental services, important to attracting industry (such as schools, sewers, etc.)

A low burden of taxes per 410,000 market value is always a favorable factor in a municipal financial profile, and a high burden is always an unfavorable factor. It may not necessarily follow that when the burden is low, the capacity to finance is great, or that the service is of superior quality, or that it is efficiently administered. A low tax burden could also be attributed to the low number of services rendered.

The borough tax burden in Swoyerville was found to be low, and below average in Luzerne, Forty-Fort, Exeter, and West Pittston. It was average in Kingston, Plymouth, and Edwardsville and above average in Ashley. In Larksville and Duryea, it was labeled high.

The picture for school district taxes is about the same. The tax burden is below average in Forty-Fort, average in Exeter, Kingston, and West Pittston, and above average to very high in Swoyerville, Luzerne, Duryea, Plymouth, Edwardsville, Ashley and Larksville.

If the rank and classification is reconstructed for total taxes, Forty-Fort, Exeter, Swoyerville, Exeter, Luzerne, West Pittston, and Kingston are classified as average. The others are all above average with Ashley labeled as very high.

Again, it must be stated that an average tax burden does not necessarily indicate that services are rendered to residents and industry, or that when rendered is of high quality.

Borough	Market value per capita	Borough taxes	School taxes	County and Institution taxes	Total taxes
Ashley	low	above average	very high	high	very high
Duryea	very high	high	high	average	above average
Edwardsville	low	average	high	above average	above average

Borough	Market value per capita	Borough taxes	School taxes	County and Institution taxes	Total taxes
Exeter	low	below average	average	average	average
Forty Fort	average	below average	below average	average	average
Kingston	average	average	average	above average	average
Larksville	low	high	very high	below average	high
Luzerne	very high	below average	above average	average	average
Plymouth	very low	average	high	above average	above average
Swoyerville	very low	low	above average	below average	average
West Pittston	below average	below average	average	average	average

It is important to remember that no one community stands alone in an area. They sink or swim together. No one can call itself "lily-white". People and industry are not attracted to a particular town as much as they are to a region or an area. For us here, the Greater Wilkes-Barre area or Wyoming Valley, or better still, Luzerne County which progresses or decays. And that picture is not encouraging. Improvement is not only advisable, but necessary to survival. Without evaluating or appraising the quality of the service, the communities as a whole in the study can not afford to offer or render many governmental services, and those are rendered cost too much in many instances.

### ZONING

The Borough of Crafton in Allegheny County amended its zoning ordinance by changing a five-acre tract of land from "Residential District D" to "Commercial District"

In a manner more praiseworthy for its frank approach than for its legal authority the appellant in a case argued that as an owner of a commercial building in the "original commercial district", he is entitled to protection against competition being established in a new area. This, as far as can be determined, is a new concept concerning the purpose of zoning. The appellant is certainly not entitled to protection against competition by means of a zoning ordinance.

#### ACT 52

The formula used to determine the amount of payments to be paid from liquid fuels tax proceeds to cities, boroughs, towns, and townships for road, street, and bridge purposes is defined to fix the population base as the latest available official census figures "determined on or before the first day of January in the year the money is to be paid to the municipalities." The basic formula for determining the amounts payable to individual municipalities from the total available allocation now reads: "Six-tenths of this allocation divided by the total miles of public roads and streets which are maintained by municipalities, multiplied by the number of miles in the particular municipality, plus four-tenths of this allocation divided by the total official population of the municipalities as of January first of the year in which the money is to be paid to the municipalities, multiplied by the official population for the particular municipality as of January first of said year."

#### ACT 193

Vacancies in the office of borough manager are to be filled by the borough council for indefinite terms, eliminating two year terms for borough managers, but preserving the right of a majority of the borough council to remove the manager at their pleasure.

#### THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

Behold the turtle: He makes progress only when he sticks his neck out.

It takes less time to do something right than it does to explain why you did it wrong.

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# The Luzerne County News-letter

VOL. VII. NO. 8 WILKES COLLEGE, WILKES-BARRE, PA., AUGUST 15, 1958

#### SEPTEMBER MEETING

The September bi-monthly meeting of local officials sponsored by the Institute of Municipal Government will be held on Wednesday, September 24, 1958 at 6:30 P.M. in the Wilkes College Commons. Mr. Edward Heiselberg, Planning Director of the Luzerne County Planning Commission, will speak on the planning rules prepared for the Commission. This meeting will be held in conjunction with the Luzerne County United Community Development Conference. A dinner will precede the meeting scheduled at 7:30 P.M. This is the third such meeting, two others having already been held at Hazleton and Pittston. Therefore, every city, boro, and township official in Wyoming Valley should make an effort to be present.

Proposed regulations of the Planning Commission will apply in every municipality in the County which does not now have such regulations. Whenever a municipality does not adopt subdivision regulations, the County becomes the authority to act and set minimum standards on the subdivision of property. Since very few municipalities in the County have such regulations, the County regulations will apply in almost all of the 73 units of governments. Land developers in every community must then abide by the County Planning regulations or suffer the penalties. So that local officials may plan with the County Planning Commission the development of their communities, a series of these meetings have been scheduled throughout the County. Therefore, every community in Wyoming Valley should be represented at this third meeting.

#### POLICE COURSE

There has been a growing demand for the basic police course in view of the fact that many communities have within recent years selected new officers for their forces. The Institute of Municipal Government and the Public Service Institute have arranged for such a course to be offered at Wilkes College beginning this Fall. The course is intended to give police an intimate acquaintance with the rights, duties, procedures, and techniques in police work. Some of the topics that will be considered are the Pennsylvania Penal Code, types of crimes, criminal procedure, observation and patrol, firearms, self defense, first aid, and traffic. Classes will meet once a week for 24 weeks, running concurrently with the College calendar. In all probability, there will be both a day and an evening class in order to accommodate police working different shifts. A certificate of attainment will be awarded to those who successfully complete the course.

### PETER KEBLISH

Peter Keblish, township commissioner from Newport Township, was elected State President of the Pennsylvania Association of Township Commissioners, succeeding Walter Bybee of Mt. Lebanon Township in Allegheny County. Mr. Keblish follows in the footsteps of John Wordowski and Thomas Hoban, both Hanover Township Commissioners, who also served in the state presidency. In his own township, he has been a commissioner for five years and chairman of the Board of Commissioners for twenty three years. He was also the President of the Luzerne County Association of First Class Townships for one term.

### COOPERATION

The most unique arrangement in intergovernmental police cooperation exists among the boroughs of Wyomissing, Shillington, West Reading, and Spring Township.

All regular policemen of Spring Township, Shillington, and West Reading have been appointed members of the police department of Wyomissing. The ordinances of the four municipalities provide that all regular police are authorized to accept appointments as police of the other three units. The police of Wyomissing are paid \$1 a year by the other units of government.

This type of cooperation could well be adapted to many other areas both large and small. Savings could be tremendous. Where several municipalities use a patrol car each to cover their jurisdictions, it could well be that cooperative action might reduce the total number of cars necessary.

### NEW APPROACH TO HIGHWAY SAFETY

Five communities in eastern Delaware County are sponsoring an entirely new idea for the promotion of traffic safety. The plan, a completely new idea and a contribution to safety, is an endeavor to reduce highway accidents, loss of property, and loss of life. The members of the participating police departments believe that the use of uniform, conspicuous vehicles, and the strict enforcement of traffic laws will greatly aid in attainment of this goal.

Low sleek station wagons are painted white with lettering in green, the colors of the National Safety Council. On the front hood in letters six inches high is the word "POLICE", and on the rear of each car is the name and telephone number of the department to which the car belongs. On each front door is the "Highway Safety Patrol" insignia.

To maintain a uniform outward appearance the exterior equipment on each of the vehicles is identical. The sirens are mounted under the hoods of the cars and the radios are mounted in the spare tire well. The antennas are clamped to the left of the rear bumper. Revolving dome-type red lights are mounted on the roof 12 inches from the edge of the windshield.

The interior of each car is equipped with safety belts for the driver and passenger in the front seat and with a safety padded instrument panel and safety padded sun visor. The cars have safety-sure brakes, safety rims brakes, and safety bodies. The station wagons have a large hauling capacity that they will be useful on many occasions. The "Safety Patrol Cars" will patrol a total area of 31.05 square miles.

### MUNICIPAL BOND SINKING FUNDS

The 1941 session of the General Assembly enacted a Municipal Borrowing Law which was designed to provide financial advice and guidance to the political subdivisions of the Commonwealth. The statute concerned itself with such fiscal activities as: borrowing of money; the authorization, issuance and sale of general obligation bonds; and the maintenance and utilization of sinking funds. The statute also imposed certain responsibilities and duties upon the Department of Internal Affairs.

The Municipal Borrowing Law directs the Department to make an examination of the certification of the certification of proceedings for the purpose of (1) determining whether the contemplated debt is within the constitutionally imposed limitations, and (2) whether the proceedings are in conformity with existing laws. If the Department finds that the proceedings are in accordance with the Constitution and law, it shall, within twenty days after the receipt of the proceedings, approve and notify the municipality or authority of this fact.

Of course, the law stipulates that if the Department, for some reason or other, disapproves the proceedings, it shall, within twenty days after receipt of them, certify its disapproval to the issuing body. The Municipal Borrowing Law directs the Department of Internal Affairs to inspect and investigate the sinking funds of these municipalities. For this purpose, the Department may require the treasurer or other officer of any municipality to furnish copies of annual financial and other statements showing the conditions of such sinking funds and the amounts of outstanding debt, together with the rate of interest and dates of maturity. There is reason to believe that the purpose of the inspection and investigation obligation is to make sure that the law has been obeyed, that all accounts are accurate and balanced properly, and that actual funds which the books show ought to be on hand are on hand.

So that the Department of Internal Affairs can better perform its legal duties to inspect and investigate municipal sinking funds, a bond report form has been prepared. This form, which will be employed by the Department's field men as they check funds, seeks information which will enable the Department to determine the soundness or condition of a sinking fund.

The field representative will seek such information as: amount of the bond issue; rate of interest of bond issue; annual retirement of principal; date to be retired; and amount paid into sinking fund to date. They will also check such items as: earnings of deposits; amount in sinking fund at time of inspection- less earning of deposits; amount of interest paid to date and amount of principal paid to date. An attempt will also be made to determine whether the bonds are being retired on schedule and whether the bank balances agree with those reported by the appropriate local official. It is expected that the answers submitted in response to these inquiries will enable the Department of Internal Affairs to fulfill its legal obligations. The field force has been instructed to make a random survey of municipal sinking funds. The field personnel will make their investigations in various unspecified political subdivisions in the Commonwealth. When an inspection has been completed and the sinking fund has been found to be in order, the public will be appraised of this.

#### THE MILWAUKEE PLAN

Under the Milwaukee plan, motorists who park on the street overnight are assessed to pay for street parking facilities. The Milwaukee Police Department sells permits for the overnight parking privilege at \$4 a quarter - \$16 a year.

The car owner parks his vehicle on different sides of the street on alternate nights. On even-numbered days, he parks on the even-numbered side, and on odd-numbered days, on the odd-numbered side. This permits clearing of both sides of the streets after snowfalls, of which Milwaukee has many in the course of a winter. The Wisconsin city, which has a population of about 700,000, adopted the plan in 1950, and in the first two years collected enough from the overnight parkers to buy nine sites for off-street parking. Revenues from this tax may be applied only to provide parking facilities in residential areas. In downtown Milwaukee, revenues from parking meters pay for midcity parking lots and garages.

#### THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

A sure way to get off on the wrong foot is to step on somebody's toes.  
Money may talk, but it never gives itself away.

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# The Luzerne County News-letter

VOL. VII. NO. 9 WILKES COLLEGE, WILKES-BARRE, PA., SEPTEMBER 15, 1958

## RESERVES FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

In the 1957 session of the General Assembly laws were enacted which significantly enlarged the power of cities of the third class, and of townships of the first and second classes, to build up reserves for future capital expenditures. Boroughs already had such enlarged powers under an act of 1955.

More specifically, this recent legislation expands a power which these units of government, along with all other municipalities of Pennsylvania have possessed since 1943. In that year the legislature authorized all municipalities to create special funds for post war use. The purpose for which these funds may be used is broad, embracing both capital outlays and current expenses, but the means by which they may be built up are most restricted; only used appropriations and year-end general fund surpluses may be placed in them. In other words, the funds must come into being, not by plan, but by fortuitous circumstances. The expanded power now accorded to boroughs, cities of the third class, and townships, enables them to "appropriate moneys from the general.....funds to be paid into the capital reserve fund or place in the fund any moneys received from the sale, lease, or other disposition of any.....property or from any other source unless received or acquired for a particular purpose." Obviously these units of government have practically a free hand in building up their capital reserve funds.

On the expenditures side, the restrictions are greater than those imposed by the Act of 1943. As the term "capital reserve fund" indicates, expenditures from it may be only for capital purposes, more particularly, for "the construction, purchase, or replacement of or addition to municipal buildings, equipment, machinery, motor vehicles or other capital assets." This restriction is found in all the laws. In the laws for cities of the third class and townships, the expenditures from the capital reserve funds are further restricted to the capital purposes "specified at the time of the creation of the fund"; but a proviso permits the use of the fund for capital expenditures other than those initially specified if the local legislative body by a four-fifths vote declares "that the original purpose or purposes have become impracticable, inadvisable, or impossible or that conditions have arisen... which makes other capital expenditures more urgent than those for which the fund was created."

As to the administration of the funds, the 1955 borough law is silent, but the 1957 laws for cities of the third class and townships expressly entrust this

matter to the local legislative body, that is, to the councilmen, in the cities, the township commissioners in townships of the first class, and the township supervisors in townships of the second class. The 1957 laws also stipulates that the money in the funds, when invested, "shall be invested in securities designated by law as legal investments for sinking funds of municipalities."

This legislation holds out great opportunities to the local governments to which it applies. First, it will make it easier for them to finance public improvements on a pay-as-you-go basis. In the past about their only escape from borrowing for capital purposes has been to finance them directly out of current revenues. This could be done with minor and annually recurring capital outlays, but not with major non-recurring ones. In a small community, moreover, most capital outlays fall into the major non-recurring category. Even a new fire station may be a major improvement for a borough or township of less than 10,000 inhabitants and the financing of it may be beyond the community's current revenue capacity. Now, however, borrowing for it is no longer the only alternative; it may be financed by saving for it, that is, by building up a capital reserve fund.

Secondly, this legislation will enable local governments to change their financial status from interest payers to interest receivers. When a community borrows for a public improvement, it must pay interest on the debt as well as pay the debt. When it acquires the improvement directly out of current revenue, it avoids paying interest because it creates no debt. When it saves up for the improvement by creating a capital reserve fund, it not only avoids borrowing and the payment of interest, but it actually earns interest on the savings until they are needed for the improvement.

It is not urged here that capital reserve funds should be used as a substitute for all other methods of financing capital outlays or even in particular situations for any one of them. They should be regarded rather as another method now available for capital financing. Each local government must act in the light of its own circumstances. If a community has a large but callable high interest-bearing debt, it would obviously be wiser for it to speed the reduction of that debt than to start building a capital reserve fund. On the other hand, if the community has no debt or has a non-callable debt, it would do well to create a capital reserve fund as a means of getting ahead faster than it could by relying solely on debt reduction. The ideal way for a community to face a business depression is with an unencumbered borrowing capacity and ample capital reserves.

### CAPPED SEWERS

A capped sewer is one laid underground without any trunk sewer ready to receive the sewage produced by the properties to be served. The capped sewer

is laid before the streets are paved, is plugged at its lowest point, and stands ready to be opened and put into service when trunk sewers are built into it. The properties to be served by the capped sewer must have a second disposal facility constructed to take care of the sewage produced until trunk lines reach the capped line.

Should a municipality require a developer to install capped sewers as one of the improvements to be made at his expense before his land subdivision is approved? Has the municipality the right to include capped sewer requirements in its land subdivision regulations?

The answer to the second question is not settled at the moment. A part of its answer is in the response to the first question. For the present, this can be said as to the municipality's right to impose capped sewer requirements. Marple Township, a township of the second class in the Philadelphia region, has required capped sewers, has had them installed, and has been upheld in the court actions attacking its provisions.

The advantages of capped sewer requirements loom quite large to a municipality experiencing rapid growth. Needed extensions of the municipal sewer system can proceed in an orderly, non-explosive way. Sewer extensions can be geared to an orderly financial program within the resources of the municipality. Capped sewers are laid before the streets of a new development are constructed. The requirement of capped sewers may constitute for the municipality one of the more potent of its "development timing regulations". Capped sewer requirements serve in some small measure to regulate the geographical sequence of development.

To secure these advantages, a municipality assumes obligations. It must press toward the earliest possible extension of its trunk sewers to the point of connection with the capped sewers it has forced to be constructed. It may later find the planning, financing, and construction of the trunk sewers quite distasteful or burdensome. And while the municipality could probably not be forced to fulfill its commitments, still it would face moral condemnation, particularly from the residents of the new subdivision. The municipality may be accepting some responsibility for the unused sewers. Water may collect in them; sand or dirt may clog the idle pipes; roots may separate joints and disrupt the lines. The burden of some rehabilitation may face the municipality at the time of future joining.

A big advantage to the purchase is the grouping of all his home costs into a single package. He will not be faced later with a sizeable assessment for sewer installation. Most buyers strain their financial resources in their purchase of a home. The added cost of the temporary sewage disposal facility makes little difference in his mortgage payments, and he has geared the size of these payments to his income. A later assessment for sewers, on the other hand, is likely to affect greatly the financial arrangements of new home purchasers. This is so much so that it is common to find homeowners without sewers bitterly opposed to sewer extension even though they recognize the benefits which sewer connections would give to their properties.

Capped sewers requirements appear to have much to offer to the municipality which will use them. They seem to be in the public interest with little harm done to any private interest. If this is so, capped sewers should continue to receive court approval.

#### P.M.L.F.A.

The 1958 dates for the Pennsylvania Municipal and Local Finance Officers meeting will be Friday and Saturday, October 17th and 18th. Insofar as we are able to determine, these dates will not conflict with any other meetings of interest to Luzerne County local government officials. Plan to attend.

#### COMPETITIVE BIDDING

Boroughs and townships may make contracts or purchases in amounts not in excess of \$1,000 without advertising for competitive bids (the ceiling was formerly \$750). Contracts and purchases of certain categories of maintenance work, services, patented items and insurance continue to be exempt from all advertising and competitive bidding requirements.

#### THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

The greatest glory of a freeborn people is to transmit that freedom to their children.

Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity.

#### PUBLICATION

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## The Luzerne County News-letter

OCT 30 1958

VOL. VII. NO. 10 WILKES COLLEGE, WILKES-BARRE, PA., OCTOBER 15, 1958

#### PAVEMENT CUTS

Today our municipalities are faced with many new problems which are directly attributed to the mechanization of the society in which we live. One of these problems is to reduce congestion in public streets by controlling their use. In regulating our streets, we usually consider the surface traffic only, and fail to take into consideration the subsurface traffic.

Because the facilities carrying the traffic under our streets are hidden from view, many municipalities either are little concerned with them or have enacted ineffective regulations to control the use of the public's streets. This failure to exercise proper control leads to practice which cause serious damage to the roads, inconvenience to the public, and the needless expenditure of municipal funds. Action on the part of local government officials to regulate the installation or repair of underground facilities is necessary for proper control.

The most efficient way for a municipality to regulate an activity is to require permission to be secured before any action is begun. Usually, permission is granted by the issuance of a license or permit. Since municipal streets are public property and their maintenance and care are the direct responsibility of the political subdivision, any opening or excavation of a street should be allowed only after a permit has been issued. Except for street openings made by utilities owned or operated by the municipality and for pavement cuts made in streets maintained by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or county, a pavement cut will contain such a control. Municipal utilities are granted exemptions from the permit requirement because they are government operations. In these cases formal regulations, such as a permit, are not necessary and any internal controls required over such operations can be developed and effectuated by other means, particularly through administrative organization.

Should the political subdivision desire to assess these legitimate charges, such as restoration and inspection costs, against a utility, the assessment can be done by periodic interfund transfers or by the creation of a working fund.

The responsibility for issuing street opening permits and for enforcing the other provisions of the ordinance is vested in the officer in charge of the muni-

cipal highway department or operation. Depending upon the administrative organization of the municipality, the responsibility might be delegated to the secretary, manager, engineer, or some other administrative official.

Permit fees, inspection charges, and restoration costs are assessed against the permittee and payable at the time the municipality grants the permits. Each municipality should determine the amount appropriate for it to charge. However, the amount of the permit fee finally established should be enough to reimburse the political subdivision for any administrative expense incurred in issuing and processing the application and permit form.

Other financial provisions call for the permittee to provide a maintenance bond and to furnish a certificate of insurance indicating that he is adequately insured against liability and property damage claims. For those municipalities who adopt the alternate restoration provision, the ordinance requires the permittee to post a performance, rather than a maintenance bond. These insurance and bond requirements are considered essential if the objectives of a street opening ordinance are to be accomplished, particularly as they relate to the protection of the public's interest and the protection of the borough or township from any financial loss. Adequate insurance coverage by the permittee will afford protection to individuals and properties that might be injured or damaged while the work authorized by the permit is in progress. The municipality also is protected against any tort claims that might be filed against it should damages or injuries result from the work. Bonding requirements are now considered an important aspect of any public works activity especially in those political jurisdictions interested in securing a guarantee that work authorized by them has now been performed in accordance with their plans, regulations, and specifications.

Inasmuch as the size of pavement cuts will vary, the amount of the maintenance bond and insurance coverage required should reflect the danger or hazards involved and the cost of repairing the opening.

Work plans must accompany each application for a street opening permit. The enforcement officer should insist that any plan be sufficiently detailed to permit the effective administration of the pavement cut ordinance and applicable regulations and specifications. For instance, all plans should show at least the exact locations and dimensions of proposed openings.

After a permit is issued and work begun, the municipality should be vigilant of the street opening. Inspection is the one means of control available to a municipality to ensure compliance with its pavement cut ordinance and regulations. Recognizing the importance of the inspection function, the ordinance suggests a daily inspection of the openings by the superintendent or one of his agents and a final inspection before the permittee is issued a certificate indicating that the opening has been made and backfilled according to specifications.

(continued in the next issue.)

BOX SCORE  
Major 1958 National Legislation Affecting Local Government

BILL

	<u>HOUSE</u>	<u>SENATE</u>	<u>STATUTE</u>
Housing-Urban Renewal (S. 4035)	Rejected	Passed	
Area Redevelopment (S. 3683)	Passed	Passed	Vetoed Sept. 6
Urban Planning Assistance (H.R. 13466)	Died in Committee		
Community Facilities Loan Program (S. 3497)	Rejected	Passed	
Highway Construction (H.R. 9821)	Passed	Passed	PL 85-381 Vetoed Sept. 2
Federal Airport Act (S. 3502)	Passed	Passed	
Mass Transit Loans (H.R. 11816)	Died in Committee		
Mass Transit Study (H.Res. 231)	Killed in Rules Committee		
Water Supply Act (S. 3910)	Passed	Passed	PL 85-500
Water Pollution Control (H.R. 13420)	Killed in Rules Committee		
Civil Defense (H.R. 7576)	Passed	Passed	PL 85-606
Pilot* (RFC Properties) (S. 3677)	Passed	Passed	PL 85-579
Pilot* (S. 967)	Died in Committee (both Houses)		
Technical Amendments Act (Police subsistence) (H.R. 8381)	Passed	Passed	PL 85-866
Excise Tax (Local Government Tax exemption) (H.R. 7125)	Passed	Passed	PL 85-859
Pass through (of tax exemption to shareholders) (H.R. 8702)	Died in Committee		
Commercial Bank (underwriting of revenue bonds) (S. 2021)		Died in Committee	
Tax Avoidance (S. 6)	Died in Committee	Passed	
Tax Withholding (H.R. 6745)	Killed in Rules Committee		
Hospital Construction (Hill-Burton, 5-year extension) (H.R. 12628)	Passed	Passed	PL 85-680
Public Health Education Grants (H.R. 6771)	Passed	Passed	PL 85-544
Juvenile Delinquency (H.R. 652)	Died in Committee (both Houses)		
Surplus Property (H.R. 5460)	Died in Committee		
5-year Census of Population (H.R. 12414)	Died in Committee		

\*Payments in Lieu of Taxes

THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

Research is to see what everybody else has seen, and think what nobody else has thought.

The big shots are only the little shots who keep shooting.

PUBLICATION

This News-letter, published monthly as a community service, originates in the Institute of Municipal Government of Wilkes College. Notes and inquiries may be addressed to Dr. Hugo V. Mailey, Institute of Municipal Gov't., Wilkes College Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

### WHAT'S NEW?

LARKSVILLE - A 25 mile speed limit has been posted along Route 11 between Kingston and Larksville.

WYOMING - The burgess insists that the one hour parking regulations along Wyoming Avenue be enforced.

AVOCA - The council expects to have \$20,000 for its road program next summer by adding together its 1958 and 1959 allocations.

PLYMOUTH - Council is still stalemated on whether to oil and chip or completely resurface borough streets.

DALLAS - The burgess and the chief of police are making a study of traffic control in the borough.

LARKSVILLE - Council is considering a junkyard ordinance, though rather belated to control present conditions.

PITTSTON - The council may create parking authority to look for off street parking facilities.

DUPONT - Council might look into the possibility of a town center.

HANOVER - The board of commissioners is now considering the addition of a patrol wagon to the equipment of the police department.

NEWPORT - Because of the part payment of the township's biggest taxpayer, many projects such as paving of streets the township may forego.

EXETER - Council has obtained about 6 acres of land to be used for a sanitary landfill.

FLAINS - Township commissioners are awaiting approval from the State Highway Department for permission to post speed regulations.

NANTICOKE - Despite the loss of 44% of Glen Alden's taxes, the City is ending the year in sound financial condition.

EDWARDSVILLE - A new sewer line will be constructed for the shopping center on the Narrows.

KINGSTON - Council action on a bond issue for a town hall, a garage and a swimming pool is still pending and uncertain.

COURTDALE - The council approved the repair of the fire company radio monitor receiver and its relocation from the borough building to the residents of the fire truck drivers.

## *The Luzerne County News-letter*

VOL. VII. NO. 11 WILKES COLLEGE, WILKES-BARRE, PA., NOVEMBER 15, 1958

### PAVEMENT CUTS (CONTINUED)

Backfilling operations must be done in the presence of an inspector, therefore, prior notification of the intent to backfill must be given to the superintendent. For major street openings or excavations, the superintendent is authorized to provide a full-time inspector on the site of the project. Without such protective measures to guarantee compliance with specifications, the excavations or openings could be inadequately backfilled resulting in an unstable subgrade which probably will settle and cause damage to the restored street. In keeping with the objective to protect the municipality from any financial loss, the ordinance imposes all inspection costs upon the permittee. Such costs are calculated at the time the permit is granted and are based on cost schedule developed by the superintendent.

Any street opening will inconvenience some residents or members of the traveling public, but it is not realistic or sound to prohibit all pavement cuts. The enactment and enforcement of proper regulations will do much to minimize the inconvenience. The ordinance should regulate the dimensions of pavement cuts; require access to private driveways; mandate the use of barricades, lanterns, and other safety devices; limit working hours; make the permittees responsible for cleaning streets dirtied by the flow or deposit of excavated materials; and authorize the superintendent to attach conditions to any permit as may be reasonably necessary to prevent property damage or injury to individuals.

Notifying abutting property owners or tenants of a proposed pavement cut is another suggested means useful in minimizing the inconvenience and reducing the number of complaints. Generally, the occupants of abutting properties are the ones most adversely affected by street openings. It is they who are subject to the noise, dust and other inconveniences. But if the occupants are informed of a proposed opening, they can prepare for the trouble ahead by covering outdoor furniture, by finding a place to park their automobiles, by delaying the planting of new shrubbery, and by doing whatever else is necessary to lessen the effect of the street opening on their normal daily routines.

To conserve the paving surfaces of new streets, pavement cuts should be prohibited in them except in emergencies or upon the payment of a penalty



charge. The amount of the penalty assessment is on a sliding scale based upon the age of the street, the newer the street the greater the charge.

In the interest of fairness, municipal authorities, utilities, and property owners should have an opportunity to make repairs or change in their subsurface installations before a street is repaired or improved and before the penalty charge is assessable. To effectively control openings in new streets, it is important that the municipality take whatever administrative steps are necessary to reduce the number of openings which might be made despite the penalty assessment.

Because utilities and authorities usually are not required to furnish maps showing the locations of their facilities beneath the streets, most municipalities find themselves inadequately informed about these subsurface structures. The lack of up-to-date information about installations can hinder the effective control of pavement cuts. Damages to existing underground facilities often will occur or unnecessary or excessively large openings frequently will be made.

A comprehensive street opening control program requires that a municipality have some knowledge of subsurface structures. Utilities and authorities must submit a set of maps showing their underground installations and file, periodically, corrected maps when their facilities are enlarged, relocated, or abandoned. Through the use of these maps a municipality will be able to advise a permittee of the location of the underground facilities existing in the vicinity of his proposed cut.

The permittee in turn can take the necessary precautionary measures to protect these installations. The maps also will prove useful to the municipality when it plans to improve or repair a street. As the municipality will know the utilities and authorities maintaining subsurface installation in the right of way, the task of notifying them of the proposed improvement is made much easier.

When a utility or authority relocates its underground facilities, it often leaves the abandoned installations in place beneath the street. Neither the owner nor the municipality usually want to go to the expense of opening the street to remove the old pipes or other structures. The abandoned facility may remain in the street for years without causing the municipality any trouble or expense. On the other hand, installation may eventually collapse and cause the street's subgrade to settle. Any necessary street maintenance or repair that results from the grade settlement must then be done by the political subdivision. The municipal expense incurred is a financial burden which rightfully should be charged to the owner of the abandoned underground structure. Abandoned installations of a type which may cause grade settlement or other trouble are to be

removed at the expense of the owner when the street is repaired or improved. If the owner refuse, the municipality is authorized to remove facilities of this type and to bill the authority or utility for the expense.

Although a pavement cut ordinance is a prerequisite for the orderly maintenance of existing streets, this type of ordinance does not purport to control or regulate the installation of underground facilities in streets of newly developed tracts of land. A pavement cut ordinance is not a preventative measure. To satisfactorily regulate subsurface installations, a municipality should adopt a comprehensive program - one that is concerned with the control of facilities in existing streets and with the installation of facilities in new streets. This is particularly true if the political subdivision jurisdiction has undeveloped tracts of land. A review of existing subdivision regulations should be made to determine whether they adequately regulate the installation of underground facilities. Any municipality which has not as yet adopted regulations governing the development of land should consider it imperative to take immediate action.

#### WARNING SIGNS

Warning signs shall be used for the purpose of warning traffic of hazardous conditions either on or adjacent to the highway. Warning signs require caution on the part of the motorist and generally call for a reduction of speed. Adequate Warning Signs are of great assistance to the vehicle operator and are valuable in safe-guarding and expediting traffic.

The Pennsylvania Department of Highways has prepared a Manual of Regulations for official traffic signs to which all local authorities should refer. All Warning Signs must be erected in strict accordance with the regulations set forth in this Manual. If Warning Signs other than those listed in this Manual are required, the approval of the Secretary of Highways shall be obtained before they may be used.

Warning signs convey their messages by legend or symbol, color and shape. All signs are diamond-shape with the exception of the Railroad Advance Warning Sign which is circular; the large Arrow Sign which is rectangular and the Advisory Speed Sign which is square. The Clearance Sign, W-228, has a white background with a black message. All other Warning Signs have a yellow background with black border and symbol or message. All signs with a few exceptions are reflectorized. These exceptions are signs which have only daytime significance such as: School, Park Entrance, etc.

All Warning Signs shall be 30"x30" with the exception of a few signs such as: Church, School, Hospital. Where hazardous conditions warrant the use

of larger Warning Signs, the appropriate sign may be enlarged to the desired size in proportion to the standard sign.

Since Warning Signs are placed primarily for the protection of the driver who is not acquainted with the road, it is very important that thought be given to their location and erection. Although this Manual specifies the distance at which signs shall be placed in advance of hazards, there may be instances where physical conditions will require different distances. Trial runs should be made by day and night to determine the most effective location and erection characteristics for each installation. In cities where speeds are relatively low, Warning Signs shall be placed nearer to the point of hazard (150 feet to 300 feet) than that specified for rural highways.

In rural and residential districts, where parking is restricted, Warning Signs shall be erected not less than 6 feet and not more than 10 feet from the edge of the pavement or the roadway. The center of the sign shall not be less than 42 inches above the crown of the roadway.

In residential and business districts, where parking is frequent, Warning Signs shall be erected so the center of the sign is not less than 8 feet above the top of the curb, or crown of the pavement and the edge of the sign adjacent to the curb is not less than 12 inches back from the face of the curb.

All signs smaller than 4' x 6' shall be placed 90 degrees to the roadway. Larger signs shall be angled away from the roadway. This position will prevent the occurrence of a glare on the sign as the motorist approaches it, but will not reduce its reflective qualities.

Warning Signs are mounted on single Channel Bar Posts. Oversize Warning Signs, that is, 4' x 4', or larger, shall be mounted on two or more Channel Bar or wooden posts.

#### THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

Keep skid chains on your tongue. Always say less than you think.

Make promises sparingly and keep them faithfully no matter what it costs you.

#### PUBLICATION

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## *The Luzerne County News-letter*

VOL. VII. NO. 12 WILKES COLLEGE, WILKES-BARRE, PA., DECEMBER 15, 1958

#### TAX LOSS

Fourteen communities in Luzerne County are affected by the compromise reached between the Glen Alder Corporation and Luzerne County permitting a reduction of approximately 23% in coal land assessment valuations over a 2 year period. The 14 communities will lose an estimated \$173,298 in tax receipts for 1958. In addition about \$40,545 will be lost by the County and the Institution district.

Some of the communities will have to take drastic measures to curtail expenditures or else increase tax rates to make up the losses. In a number of communities where the Glen Alder holdings are relatively small, there will be little effect on the total structure. Hardest hit as a result of the assessment valuation will be Hanover Township. The coal holdings amounted to over \$15,000,000; the reduction in assessment is about \$1,700,000. This reduction is assessment valuation that the commissioners will suffer a loss of \$24,000 in tax revenue. Newport Township stands to lose about \$11,800. Other communities which will stand to lose tax revenues are Edwardsville, Ashley, Nanticoke, Plymouth, Plymouth Township, Sugar Notch, Warrior Run, Wilkes-Barre, Wilkes-Barre Township, Larksville, Kingston, and Laurel Run.

The decree by the Court will be final unless any of the 14 communities file exceptions to the compromise settlement.

#### WARDS OR AT-LARGE

Once more the question of at-large or ward representation has come up for discussion. This time it involves Edwardsville where petitions have been circulated to eliminate wards. Hearings are presently in progress with a view to recommending a solution to the problem. It was not too long ago that the borough residents witnessed the reduction of councilmen from 14 to 7 at the urging of borough residents.

Since the question has been in the limelight recently and will no doubt be raised in the future, it might be wise to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the two systems.

### Ward System

1. insures a geographical distribution of councilmen.
2. possesses the merit of giving minorities some chance of obtaining representation.
3. promotes integration among voters and enables one party to obtain an effective working majority of seats in the council.
4. the ward system creates a more intimate personal relation between the councilman and his constituents.
5. provides the voter with a shorter ballot.
6. enable the voters to know more about the candidates who seek election.

### At-Large

1. does permit a party's borough wide total of votes to count in determining election results.
2. does not lend itself to gerrymandering.
3. affords the entire body of voters to exercise effective control over the council as a whole.
4. does not narrow but increases the field of available candidates.
5. raises the sights of the councilmen beyond the narrow confines of the ward.
6. does not allow slight changes in the comparative voting strength of competing parties to cause drastic alterations in the complexion of the council.

In 1956, of the mayor-council communities over 5,000 population, 37% were utilizing the ward plan; another 25% were using a combination of the ward and the at-large system; and 38% relied entirely upon the at-large system. With a few exceptions, commission-governed cities used elections at large. Among council-manager cities, only 13% used the ward system; 11% employed a combined system; and 76% elected councilmen at large. It is significant that the at-large reform goes hand-in-hand with the manager adoption.

### TRAFFIC SURVEY

The Smith traffic improvement plan, prepared for the City of Wilkes-Barre, recommends a vastly changed treatment for the West Market-River Street bridge. The plan recommends four channelizing islands to guide vehicles in their proper paths, and a change in traffic signals by substituting the two existing pedestal-mounted signals with overhead and side-mounted signals. The report states that the plan would provide ample space for maintaining the same basic lane arrangement that presently exists. It appears from the drawing of the proposed treatment two triangular-shaped islands, each divided in two to permit crosswalks for pedestrians, would be built on the bridge approach. They would serve as physical barriers to bridge traffic headed either toward North River Street or South River Street, confining traffic to the space between the islands and the curb. The short-cutting left turn movement from the bridge to North River Street, now in use, would

be eliminated. Motorists can still make the turn left, but at a point nearer the two existing signals from an island set up for the purpose. The same would be true for those motorists making a left turn from South River Street going west over the bridge.

The report continues to state that the present signals should be removed because they have caused unnatural movements of traffic. It is the claim of the experts that the side mounted signals should be far more effective.

### PROGRESS

While many in this area have been working hard for the Anthracite Expressway, its proposed route has been condemned by the officials of at least one municipality - Wilkes-Barre Township. The plans call for running the route directly through the heart of the township. Four roads or streets which now provide access to the Township will be blocked off leaving only the tunnel at Northampton Street as a means of entrance. The proposed route will cut off a grade school from a large sector of the Township, rendering it practically impossible for students to reach the school without traveling a long, dangerous, and circuitous route. Any future expansion with Ashley Borough and Sugar Notch is completely eliminated. Many recreational areas will be inaccessible. The plan will also mean the forced removal of several existing commercial establishments.

The moral behind all of this is quite clear. When communities do not plan for their growth, someone else sure does. And except for the voice of the County Planning Commission, what other agency has an outline of future development? It is never difficult to mesh the plans of the Turnpike Commission or the State Highway Department with those of a community's planning commission. This presupposes that the community has a blueprint for its future development.

### THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

Don't wait till the time is ripe; it's apt to be rotten.

Discussion is an exchange of intelligence; argument is an exchange of ignorance.

### PUBLICATION

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DO YOU HAVE ONE?

County	Number of Municipalities	Having Planning Commissions	Having Zoning Ordinances	Having Subdivision Control
Bucks	54	27	32	17
Montgomery	62	29	45	32
Delaware	49	14	47	10
Chester	73	9	25	12
Westmoreland	63	9	3	0
Lackawanna	40	4	1	0
Luzerne	70	11	3	0

THE PUBLIC SPEAKS

Trend-ex conducted a nation-wide poll appropo of the federal highway problem. Two out of three Americans favored Congressional action to eliminate billboards along roads built in the multi-billion dollar federal highway program.

According to the regulation of the Federal Commerce Department no billboard may be placed within a scenic area or closer than two miles to an interchange. In a stretch between two miles and five miles from an interchange as many as six signs may be put up. Farther than five miles from an interchange signs must be at least a mile apart. The new rule will apply **only** if the State adopts the regulation. By complying the State will be entitled to an extra 1/2 of 1% in the federal contribution toward the cost of interstate highways running through its area. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Highways a billboard control measure will be submitted to the General Assembly in 1959. The State will have to determine whether to use the police power of the State or purchase scenic easements.

Perhaps scenic Luzerne County may not become "billboard alleys along the interstate highways."

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