

Springport Bindery
(Rawson Library)
Springport, MI 49284

No millage decision

Tentative budget up \$100,000 over '79

The Cass City Village Council Monday gave tentative approval to a 1980 budget of approximately \$772,000, about \$100,000 more than the village spent in 1979.

The council will probably decide at its February 25 meeting whether the village can scrape through this year on its present levy of 13 mills or whether it will have to add another mill on summer tax bills.

"It's probably the tightest budget we've looked at in a lot of years," commented village President Lambert Althaver.

A public hearing on the proposed budget will be held at 7 p.m. at the February meeting, after which the council can make any last minute changes before approving the financial document.

The prime reason for the big increase in spending and the resulting budget squeeze was the council's Jan. 19 decision to proceed with the \$244,110 Garfield St.-Doerr Road reconstruction project.

The federal government is

paying \$181,400 of that, which leaves \$62,710 to be picked up by the village, plus \$15,000 in engineering costs and \$20,000 to the state Department of Transportation to oversee construction, a total of \$97,710. (An even \$98,000 is budgeted.)

Of that amount, \$40,000 is to eventually be paid through special assessments, but the property owners involved have three years to pay.

Thus the 1980 budget transfers \$68,500 from the general fund into the major street fund to help pay for the project. (Other revenue comes from state gas and weight tax revenue, reserves and an anticipated \$15,000 from the first year of the special assessment.)

Of the \$68,500 transferred, \$60,000 came from savings, which only leaves \$15,000 in reserves.

The question the council will have to answer in February is whether the village can squeak through 1980 with only that much in savings. It looks doubtful.

"If we don't go into the new year with more than

\$15,000," Althaver commented after the meeting, "we will be hard pressed to meet our obligations."

A 1 mill increase would bring in an estimated \$17,000.

OTHER THAN THE street project, the proposed budget is pretty-much standstill, with the other major reason for the overall increase in spending being inflation.

General fund revenues and expenditures are projected at \$499,000, up from \$452,425 in 1979. Major revenue increases are in real property tax revenue, up from \$178,487 to a projected \$202,000 (due to new construction and valuation increases) and state revenues, from \$113,042 to \$126,000.

The biggest new expense in the general fund budget is \$30,000 for the village's 50 percent share for four new tennis courts. (The overall park budget is less than last year, however, because a \$41,000 storage building was constructed in 1979.)

The latest word from the state Department of Natural Resources, which controls

the federal funds to pay the other 50 percent, is that it is "reasonably certain" Cass City will get the money. That won't be known for sure until at least April 1. Village Supt. Lou LaPonsie was hopeful the new courts will be ready in July.

In order to save money, it was decided roads in the village park won't be seal-coated, which would have cost an estimated \$14,300.

THE COUNCIL MONDAY approved hiring of Harold Duane Sprague, 23, of rural Caro, as the village's fifth police officer. An Air Force veteran who served with the military police, he has been working as a part-time policeman in Caro. He begins his new duties Friday. Twelve persons had applied.

Because of his experience, he will be starting at the second-year wage scale of \$13,926, but the police budget won't increase by that much. There was \$8,468 spent for part-time police help and overtime last year. The presence of a fifth officer will reduce that

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LOFTY READING -- To create a more relaxed atmosphere for reading, Evergreen Elementary Principal Dorland Kuntz built this reading loft in the school library. Trying it out are members of Mary Jo Mantey's fourth grade class, from left, Dean Whittaker, Tom Gibbard, Troy Galloway, Raquel Rockwell, Kris King (in front) and Brenda Severance. A railing will be added later.

IRS sells assets

Cass City truck operator has string of bad debts

By Mike Eliasohn

The sale Tuesday by the Internal Revenue Service of assets of Alvin E. Werschky in order to collect delinquent taxes is only one of numerous actions taken by creditors of the Cass City man.

Five law suits filed in Tuscola County Circuit Court are seeking a total of \$126,485 plus interest for debts the plaintiffs say Werschky owes them.

In the Tuscola County Register of Deeds office, there are 20 liens (claims against property in order to secure a debt) on file against Werschky, in addition to those for taxes.

The Chronicle attempted

to contact Werschky through his attorney, Richard Trowhill of Bad Axe. The attorney declined to make any comment without permission of his client and expressed doubt that Werschky would want to either, but said he would try to contact him. Neither called the Chronicle back.

The Internal Revenue Service liens add up to \$68,219 in taxes that Werschky owes, either income and social taxes not withheld from employees' paychecks and-or business or personal income taxes not paid.

The state of Michigan has liens filed seeking \$7,760 in unpaid taxes.

The Cass Cityan is or was operator of a trucking firm known as Werschky Trucking or Valley Transport. The business address is 6536 Garfield Street, which is the home of his mother-in-law.

According to Cass City Police Chief Gene Wilson, who along with his men have tried to serve legal papers there on various occasions, Werschky is sometimes at that address, but not living there permanently.

The trucks and trailers owned or leased by him were operated out of a rented terminal in Zilwaukee. According to Tuscola County Weighmaster Fred Hecht, he at one time had four or five trucks on the road.

Werschky had a Michigan Public Service Commission permit to haul sand and gravel and other such bulk materials, primarily used in building construction and road building, within a 75-mile radius of Unionville, with operation beyond that point limited to railway, airport or highway construction jobs.

It was that permit which was one of two assets sold by the IRS Tuesday. The other was a 1973 GMC truck tractor.

Even without the permit, Hecht said, Werschky could continue operating if he still has some trucks by leasing them to another trucking firm, which does have a permit.

The amount of revenue raised from the sale of the

truck and permit isn't public information, according to IRS Revenue Officer Frank W. Batkie.

If the amount raised wasn't enough to pay the taxes due, the IRS can continue to seek other assets to sell. Batkie stressed that "taxpayers are given many opportunities to pay" before the IRS seizes their assets.

A taxpayer who files for bankruptcy is still liable for taxes, according to the officer, but can submit an offer for partial payment of taxes, which the agency may accept. A compromise offer can even be made without declaring bankruptcy.

Werschky has not filed for bankruptcy, according to the federal bankruptcy court in Bay City.

THE BIGGEST LAW suit against the Cass Cityan and his trucking firms was filed Oct. 3 by Summerfield GMC Truck Co. of Gary, Ind. Defendants are Werschky, doing business as Valley Transport, and his wife, Sue. The suit seeks \$81,551 from the defendants, which Summerfield claims is the amount they still owe for leasing of two truck tractors in June, 1977 and a repair bill paid by Summerfield.

Summerfield has repossessed both trucks, according to the suit, one from Werschky and the other from a Wheeler, Mich., truck repair shop after pay-

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Still standing elevators raise village council's ire

The old grain elevators that have stood on Vulcan Street since the 1890s are going to be standing a little longer apparently, and the Cass City Village Council doesn't like it.

Officials of Wickes Agriculture, the owners, had said they would be torn down once the company's new facilities on Main Street were completed. They were done last fall, but the old elevators, considered a hazard, are still standing.

At the council meeting Monday, village President Lambert Althaver read a series of letters between village attorney Clinton House and James R. Suchodolski, Wickes vice-president of eastern operations. The executive's last letter, dated Jan. 16, stated he had requested an okay from Wickes' real estate division to demolish the structures and sell the property. The division is located at corporate headquarters in San Diego.

Suchodolski said he expected that the demolition will finally be completed by summer.

House wrote back Jan. 22 expressing the council's concern and its feeling that demolition "could be done in a short time if an effort were made."

Reportedly, Wickes obtained bids from two local contractors prior to Jan. 1 for the project and that General Telephone is interested in purchasing the vacated property.

On the north side of Garfield Street by the railroad tracks, it was reported that Grand Trunk advertised for bids Friday for demolition of the old railroad station.

In other demolition news, it was announced that after an inspection of the unoccupied house to the west of the car wash, county Building Codes Administrator Paul Lefler has declared it an "unsafe structure."

Owner Larry Peters was given until this Wednesday to inform Lefler whether he will repair the building or have it torn down.

Lefler is to be meeting

within a week with county Prosecutor Artis Noel to determine what can be done about having the old Margaret McNeil house (a covered basement) at Houghton and Brooker Streets demolished. Efforts to have that done have been underway for 2½ years.

SEWAGE PLANT It won't be too much longer before it will be known whether the wastewater treatment plant expansion and sewage plant project can be built for the almost year-old estimate of \$6 million.

Advertising for bids, according to village Supt. Lou LaPonsie, will begin Feb. 25. Bids will be opened March 20 and be awarded by the council at its March 24 meeting.

LANDFILL

In accordance with new laws, the state Department of Natural Resources has proposed a "schedule of compliance" for the landfill.

Assuming the council goes along, the village will have to hire a hydrogeological engineer by July 1, who will

have to have a final report to the DNR by April 1, 1981.

Monitoring wells will have to be sunk at the landfill by Sept. 1, 1981, with samples of ground water under the landfill drawn on a regular basis.

Compliance will cost the village an estimated \$15-20,000.

OTHER ITEMS

Pinney State Bank has donated \$1,000 to be used for construction of the new tennis courts. The donation is in memory of the late Horace Bulen, who was a director of the bank and an avid tennis player.

LaPonsie's annual report to the council reported permits were issued for building five new homes in Cass City in 1979, the lowest number since 1970. In 1970, 10 new homes were built.

There were 115,140,600 gallons of water pumped from village wells in 1979, which was 8,859,400 less than the year before. Economizing by homeowners trying to save water and thus money is thought to be one reason for the decrease.

Charity drive exceeds target

The Elkland-Novesta Community Chest has raised \$14,079, a final accounting shows, according to fund drive President Iris Tuckey.

The amount exceeds the goal last fall of \$13,500. Included is the money already received and that which will be coming in payroll deductions.

The Community Chest board will meet in April or May to decide allocation of the money. Organizations which have not been recipients

of funds from the charity in the past who feel they may qualify are invited to contact its treasurer, Ron Keegan, at 872-2585, for an application form.

Mrs. Tuckey also said the organization is in the process of changing its name to Elkland-Novesta United Way, to conform with the name used by most such organizations in the state and nationally, which is used in nationwide and state advertising campaigns.

There's money in boxtops, expert tells local housewives

Arlene Schweitzer once paid \$7 for \$46 worth of groceries.

Last year, she received a tax-free income of about \$75 a month, all of which comes in the mail.

How did she do it?

She did it by refunding.

The Sebawaing resident was at Rawson Memorial Library in Cass City last Thursday night to share some of her secrets with approximately 25 women. (Indicative of who's interested in refunding, the only non-females in the audience were her husband, son and a newspaper reporter.)

"This is a hobby, but to some people, it's more than a hobby," Mrs. Schweitzer explained. "It's a way to save on grocery bills."

In addition to saving on

grocery bills, there are other benefits, some of which she spread out on a table in front of her. There was a talking doll, jump rope, children's book, tablecloth, T-shirt and two cloth carrying bags, all of which she got free through refund offers.

WHAT IS REFUNDING? It's sending in boxtops, proof of purchase seals, Universal Product Code symbols, pictures of fruit off Jello boxes, etc. (known as "qualifiers") to the manufacturer -- usually of a product sold in the supermarket.

In return, the refunder gets back either cash, a coupon good for cents off or the product free, or merchandise.

That's how Mrs. Schweitzer, a refunder for almost 11 years, made an average of about \$75 in cash per month last year. In addition, she received countless coupons good for savings and free merchandise. The merchandise she didn't need, she sold.

"The most important thing is you got to save everything," she stressed. "The more labels you save, the more money you're going to get."

Everything should be saved even if the manufacturer doesn't have a current refund offer. It may have one in the future.

Next comes a proper filing system. Mrs. Schweitzer's consists of 25 beer cases.

Each is labeled, either with a general category, such as toothpaste or laundry soap, or a specific brand name if it's a manufacturer who has lots of refund offers.

A FILING SYSTEM wouldn't be any good without anything to put in it.

There are various ways to get the refund forms, coupons and qualifiers.

Coupons are found in newspaper and magazine advertisements and printed on cartons. Refund offers are also found in ads and on tear-off pads hanging from grocery store shelves (known as store forms).

Store forms are sometimes hard to find. Some merchants don't put them out and some bad apples among refunders will take all the forms that are left when they get there.

Why take all the forms? Because they can be traded for forms the person does need or -- although it apparently isn't legal -- they can be sold.

Even playing by the rules, which is the way Mrs. Schweitzer believes it should be done, there are plenty of ways of getting all the coupons, refund forms and qualifiers one needs -- often without buying the product.

Mrs. Schweitzer cuts out all the coupons, forms and qualifiers, even for products she doesn't use, because they can be traded.

In addition to buying products and trading, there are other ways to get qualifiers. She was embarrassed to admit it, but until it was closed, she used to go scrounging at the Bay Port dump on the days when it was opened.

She once had her husband stop the car so she could retrieve a charcoal bag she saw lying by the roadside, as she knew the maker had a refund offer.

Laundromats are a source of soap box qualifiers.

She is now paying the 17 Brownies in the troop she leads 2 cents for each label they bring in.

Lastly, there are the refund magazines. As of October, Mrs. Schweitzer has been publishing her own, appropriately labeled "Cash in Your Trash." It already has 450 subscribers nationwide.

The magazines serve several purposes. First, they list all known current refund offers. The January issue of "Cash . . . Trash" lists 103 of them, plus a section listing refund offers just from Proctor and Gamble.

There is also a listing of upcoming refunding conventions -- another source of refund forms, etc. -- some manufacturer addresses to

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COUPON QUEEN -- Arlene Schweitzer's T-shirt is one of the few things she didn't receive free through refund offers. Some of the items she did get free are on the table, including other T-shirts, doll, three carrying bags, children's book and a jump rope.

I WILL BE at the Pinney State Bank Feb. 8 and the Cass City State Bank Feb. 13, to collect \$65. Everett Field, Novesta Township Treasurer.