



**OPENING OF BIDS** for the wastewater treatment plant project drew a crowd of bidders and village officials last Thursday. At the table (photo at left) were, from left, David McPhee of Hubbell, Roth and Clark, village President Lambert Althaver, Clerk Joyce LaRoché and Superintendent Lou LaPonsie.

**\$5.48 million low bid**

## Council ups tax mill; oks sewage plant bid

Cass City tennis players are going to have to put up with at least one more year of lousy tennis courts.

Cass City taxpayers will have to put up with another mill on their summer tax bills.

The good news at Monday evening's village council meeting was that the long delayed sewage treatment plant project will soon get underway, as the council accepted the lowest of eight construction bids opened last Thursday.

The bid of \$5.48 million was only slightly over the estimate on which financing for the project was based, which came as a relief to village officials.

The council had been wrestling the last couple of months with the question of whether the village could get by with the 13 mills for operations it had levied for several years or whether an extra mill was needed.

By a vote of 4-2 Monday, council members decided to levy the added mill. In addition to the 14 mills for operations, 2.5 mills -- the same as last year -- will be levied to pay off the bonds for the local share of the sewage plant project.

The village charter allows the council to levy up to 17.5 mills without a public vote.

Village President Lambert Althaver explained early in the discussion that after having eliminated sealcoating of park streets and extension of some water lines, plus one less person in the public works department and two fewer workers this summer, about the only item left to trim from the budget was \$30,000 for tennis courts.

The village has applied for a federal grant for an equal amount, the total of \$60,000 to be used for construction of four new tennis courts, in place of the two decaying ones in the park now. It won't be known for at least a few weeks yet whether the federal grant will be offered.

Even if it is, however, council members voted to delay the project until future years, unless enough angels are found to donate the local share. The intent all along had been to solicit private contributions to defray part of the local cost.

The two who voted against the millage increase were Dorothy Stahlbaum and Dick Hampshire.

"Sometimes we have to cut some of the things we would really like to do," she commented, "as opposed to going to the people and asking for an additional

mill. "I think it's a very, very bad time to be even asking for one mill."

Hampshire commented that he had yet to talk with anyone in favor of the millage increase and "I think we were elected to represent the people. I can't see adding a mill so 30 to 40 people can play tennis."

Although all the trustees agreed the money for the tennis courts would have to go, four of them also agreed the extra mill was still necessary.

The 1980 budget approved by the council in February (with \$30,000 budgeted for the tennis courts) projected reserves at the end of this year of only \$15,000.

Normally, village Superintendent Lou LaPonsie explained, a carryover of \$50-60,000 is desirable to fund operations until property tax revenue starts coming in each summer.

A carryover of only \$15,000 would mean the village would have to borrow money to get by.

What has made the picture worse since February is the rapid change in economic conditions.

There is \$44,000 budgeted in federal revenue funds, but if Congress decides to end the program at the end of the current fiscal year, Sept. 30, Cass City would lose \$11,000 for the final three months of this year.

In addition, Michigan may lose the \$100 million it receives in federal revenue sharing funds, which would mean a loss from that source

in state shared revenues to Cass City. In addition, the poor economy in the state will mean a loss in state income and sales tax revenue the village will receive.

All told, Althaver projected Cass City might receive \$20-30,000 less in revenue than was projected in the budget.

The extra mill the council decided to levy will bring in almost \$18,000.

### SEWAGE PLANT

The bid accepted by the council of \$5.48 million was that of H.C. Weber Construction Co. of Bay City, the lowest of eight submitted.

The highest opened last Thursday was \$7.39 million. Twenty prime contractors had taken out bid documents.

Now that the construction cost is known, James Hubbell of the engineering firm of Hubbell, Roth and Clark, told the council, total cost of the project, including engineering and other costs, should be \$6.05 million, of which the village's 20 percent share will be \$1.21 million.

The federal government will pay 75 percent of the cost and the state, 5 percent.

The local share, Hubbell said, is about \$50,000 over what the village was authorized by voters in March, 1979, to bond for the project.

"How do we fund the \$50,000?" was the question of Dr. Delbert Rawson.

"I think that is something we will have to study," Althaver responded. He

added that it would be legal to take the money from the general fund, assuming there is money in the general fund.

After the meeting, he explained the council will have this and the next year or two to come up with the \$50,000. Some programs or projects may have to be eliminated, or, "Maybe next year it will be a little better (financially). There are just a lot of things that could happen."

Hubbell pointed out that the last construction cost estimate was made in September, 1978. Weber Construction's bid was only 7 1/2 percent above that, much less than the rate of inflation, and if the one addition to the project since then were eliminated, the bid was only 4 percent higher, much less than the rate of inflation.

Final paperwork must now be submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Farmers Home Administration and state Department of Natural Resources, which should take about 45 days.

Hubbell said actual construction should start sometime between mid-May and June 1. A representative of the contractor said they would be ready to start as soon as the okay was given.

Barring strikes, floods (the site is close to the river), etc., the project is to be completed in 18 months.

Groundbreaking ceremonies to celebrate the start of construction are likely but none have been scheduled yet.

## Eight seek two seats on Cass City School Board

It will be a crowded ballot in the June 9 school election in Cass City as eight candidates are running for the two seats on the school board.

Monday at 4 p.m. was the deadline for candidates to file.

Owendale-Gagetown is the only district where there aren't any election contests as only the two incumbents are running.

The Cass City, Owen-Gage, Kingston and Uby districts will all have millage requests on the ballot, as they have millages expiring, but only the Uby board

has made a decision so far on the amount it will seek.

**CASS CITY** -- The terms of Dr. E. Paul Lockwood and Art Severance are expiring, but only Lockwood of Greenland Road is seeking re-election.

The others running for the two seats open are Fred Matthews, 4871 Hadley Road, Decker; Dan Allen, 5960 Main Street, Deford, who ran two years ago; Walter Zmierski, 6190 Ritter Road; Rev. Harry Capps, 4580 N. Seeger Street; Richard Albee, 6805 Herron Drive; Ben Hobart, Hobart Road, Gagetown, and David

Loomis, W. Cass City Road. There are 3.5 mills expiring.

**OWEN-GAGE** -- Ronald Good, S. Pobanz Road, Owendale, and Donald Cummins, 5490 MacAlpine Road, Gagetown, both incumbents, were the only ones to file. Good is presently the board president.

Eight mills are expiring. **KINGSTON** -- In addition to John Borek Jr., S. Phillips Road, Clifford, and Albert Ruggles, E. Sanilac Road, Kingston, the two incumbents, also running for the two seats are Doug McCool, E. Sanilac Road, Kingston,

and Wesley Scott, English Road, Silverwood.

Fifteen mills are expiring.

**UBY** -- Incumbent Bernard Puvalowski of Ruth, the board president, is seeking re-election; however, the other incumbent, Evelyn Romzek, is not.

Also running for the two spots on the board are Allan Moses, Mindon City, and Gayleen Lindquist, Uby.

The board has decided to seek renewal of the 8.65 mills that are expiring. It will decide at its meeting Monday on the number of years for the millage.

## Crime increases in Cass City over past decade

Cass City has a long way to go to reach big city crime status, but during the 1970s, the number of crimes and other police matters here increased by a substantial margin.

In 1970, there were 178 crimes reported. According to figures compiled by Police Chief Gene Wilson, the number reached 243 in 1973, 329 in 1976 and last year climbed to 416.

The number of minor complaints increased from 993 to 2,253 during the 10 years.

There are numerous reasons for the increase in crime, according to Wilson.

One is that there are more officers, thus they uncover more incidents of law breaking. When Wilson joined the force as chief 10 years ago (as of May 1), he was one of three officers who worked 50 hours per week.

As of early this year, there have been five officers, who work 42 1/2 hours per week.

When Wilson started here, police were on patrol here from 8 a.m. to 4 a.m. the next day. Now someone is on duty around the clock.

The population of Cass City has increased since 1970, and many new residents are from metropolitan areas, including a few, the chief said, who "aren't so good" (law abiding). He anticipates the declining economy will mean an increase in crime.

The number of services performed increased from 40 to 145 (liquor and vehicle inspections, gun registrations and civil papers served).

The only category to decrease was in enforcement actions, from 1,244 down to 1,196, but that was due to the big drop in parking meter violations issued, which fell from 958 in 1970 to 547 in 1979.

The reason for the decrease, Wilson explained, was his officers haven't had as much time the last few years to check meters as they once did. The trend may reverse now that there is an additional police officer.

Perhaps because of fear over increasing crime, more persons bought handguns. The local police department did not count the number of gun registrations in 1970, but registered 10 in 1973, 15 in 1976 and 22 last year.

The most common crime in Cass City is larceny (including shoplifting). There were 142 reported last year, an increase of 55 from 1970.

Next comes vandalism, 119, compared to 61 in 1970. There were 78 bad checks written last year, in contrast to 11 in 1970.

No burglaries (break-ins) were reported in 1970, but there were 25 of them in 1979. There were seven assaults a decade ago, 20 last year.

There were eight drug complaints investigated in 1970, only two in 1973, 14 three years later and 16 last year.

The number of arrests made and appearance tickets issued totaled 55 in 1970, fell to 30 in 1973, jumped to 66 three years later and to 87 last year.

The number of juveniles petitioned into probate court wasn't counted in 1970. Eight were petitioned in 1973 and 1976, 10 last year.

Careless driving and traffic mishaps increased sharply.

Police handled 158 traffic accidents last year, compared to 84 in 1970, plus 22 minor accidents, versus none in the first year of the decade.

Officers issued 388 traffic tickets last year, 175 more than they issued in 1970. There were 507 drivers who received verbal warnings, compared to 225 in 1970.

Motorists received 164 parking tickets last year, compared to only 18 in 1970 (not including parking meter violations). The most common violation was leaving cars parked overnight on streets during winter.

Motorists didn't get just tickets from officers. There were 120 of them who received an assist of one sort or another last year.

The three police officers in Cass City drove 66,068 miles on patrol in 1970. Last year, the four officers plus part-time help drove 82,061 miles.

Salutatorian with a 3.952 average is Kenneth Martin Jr.

Lori Ewald is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bill Ewald, 6798 Third Street, Cass City.

She is a member of the National Honor Society, has been active in Spanish Club, participated in many class projects and represented the school as a member of the Regional Educational Media

Center advisory council. She attends the First Baptist church and plays a leadership role in the youth activities.

Her future plans include attending Grand Rapids Baptist College.

Melanie Particka lives with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Particka, at 4020 Cumber Road, Uby.

She has been deeply involved in school activities like marching, symphonic and pep bands, National Honor Society, Spanish Club and Medical Explorers Club.

She is the organist at the St. Joseph Catholic church, sings in their choir, and is active in their youth group.

Future plans include attending Michigan State University as a pre-med student.

Lori Teichman, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Teichman Jr., 4657 Hospital Drive, Cass City, has been very active in Campus Life throughout her high school career. For the past two years she was a member of their singing group, Satisfaction. She attends the Trinity United Methodist church and is involved in youth activities there.

A member of National Honor Society, Lori has found time to compete in forensics and to help out in other school projects. She plans to attend Northwestern Michigan College, Traverse City, to study accounting and word processing.

Linda Whittaker and her family live at 4968 Van Dyke Road, Cass City. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Whittaker, a member of the National Honor Society, and member of the high school symphonic, marching and pep bands. She is also a member of the Mizpah Missionary church, Please turn to page 4.



Lori Ewald



Melanie Particka



Lori Teichman



Linda Whittaker

## Property transfer bill gets House ok

By a vote of 76-6 last Thursday, the state House of Representatives approved a bill that would alter the rules under which the state Board of Education can transfer property from one school district to another.

The bill, primary beneficiary of which would be the Owendale-Gagetown School District, now goes to the state Senate.

If property owners seeking to have their land transferred to another school district are turned down by their county intermediate school district board of education, they can appeal to the state board.

Barring a reversal by the state Supreme Court in Owen-Gage's final appeal in the Goslin property transfer case, present state law says that the state board can approve (or reject) transfer of any parcel that is 10 percent or less of the district's current valuation.

A public vote of approval is only required if the parcel is more than 10 percent.

The bill introduced by State Rep. Quincy Hoffman, R-Applegate, would require a public vote on all transfer

requests once more than 10 percent of the district as it existed in 1957 was transferred away.

Amendments approved in the House Education Committee added the 1957 district boundary provision and limited the bill's provisions to districts with fewer than 1,000 students.

On the House floor, Hoffman said, an amendment was defeated which would have virtually killed the measure. It was introduced by Rep. Paul B. Henry, R-Grand Rapids, a former state Board of Education member.

According to Hoffman, Rep. Loren Armbruster, whose district includes the portion of Owen-Gage in Tuscola county, voted for the amendment and later for the bill.

The proposed law now goes to the Senate Education Committee, some members of which have told Hoffman that they are "pretty sure" it will come out of committee and be reported to the Senate floor. "I haven't heard anything discouraging yet."

Hoffman didn't know what position Sen. Alvin DeGrow might take on the measure. "I imagine he might not be too enthusiastic about it."

The Pigeon Republican, whose district includes all of Owen-Gage, is away during the legislature's spring recess and couldn't be reached by the Chronicle for comment.

Although the bill is most beneficial to Owen-Gage, though it won't get any already transferred properties back if the measure becomes law, Hoffman said it could be of benefit to other districts.

He added that he feels his bill reinforces the intent of the legislature when it approved the original law, that the intent wasn't to allow the piecemeal disassembly of a school district by the state Board of Education without a vote of the people.