

Called Meeting of the City Council

Austin Texas Nov 10th 1883
Hon J. W. Robertson Mayor presiding

Present Aldermen Schneider, Metz, Pillow, Wells,
Campbell, Schubert, Underhill, Warren, Driskill
Crooker, Odell, Carrington, Neil, Platt, Erwin, & Bush
Absent Aldermen Hancock, Maas, Holman & Brennan.

The following call of the council was read.
Mayors office

Austin Tex Nov 10th 1883

To the City Council of the City of Austin
Gentlemen:— I hereby call a special meeting
of the City Council to assemble at the city
hall this Tuesday evening Nov 10th 1883, at 8.30 P.M.
to receive the mayors report, with other reports
of committees and city officers, to order an election
for mayor, aldermen, and trustees of the public
free schools, and to transact such other business
as may then be laid before you

Very Respectfully

Your Obedt. Servant.

J W Robertson
Mayor

Mayors office
Austin Nov. 9th 1883.

Gentlemen of the City Council:

It becomes my duty to lay before you a final
report of the public and official transaction of
the City of Austin. Since I had the honor to preside
as its executive and also to present a statement
of the present conditions of its affairs, I assumed
the duties of this office on June 14th 1883, having
as you are aware, but little experience in mun-
icipal matters. At that time the city was seriously
embarrassed for want of funds to carry on
its government. The taxes for the current fiscal
year had been collected and appropriated to
the payment of City bonds maturing January 1st
1884, to the payment of outstand interest bearing
warrants, and to the payment of other pressing
obligations of the City. The treasury was empty.

and the city had no revenue from which to meet its liabilities and expenses until the taxes of 1884 should become collectable, March 1st 1883 it became necessary to borrow money to pay the semi-annual interest on the bonded debt falling due July 1st 1884. The negotiation of the loan of \$38,000, some time afterwards permitted the return to the General and Special funds of the amount already used to discharge pre-existing debts, and enable the City to meet its current expenses until the taxes of 1884, became available.

The bonds, warrants, and other past due obligations absorbed the entire loan. The City was left free of all matured bonded debt and of all floating debt of every character, except some unliquidated claims and under the provisions of the present charter it is impossible that any floating debt can hereafter be created.

I am forced to deal generally and briefly with the several matters of public interest pertaining to the city government, because to enter into more particular recitals would render this report too voluminous.

I have been favored with full reports from the several committees of the City Council and from all the officers of the city, and to these I must refer for more specific details.

The bonded debt of the City at this time is as follows:

Seven percent bonds due January 1 st 1894.	\$33,500.
" " " " " 1895.	20,000
" " " " " 1895.	19,000
Six percent bonds due " 1901	12,500
" " " " July 1 st 1904	<u>40,000</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$125,000.00</u>

The income of the City, from all sources as received by the Treasurer from June 1st 1884 to October 31st 1885, has been as follows:

November 10th 1885

Cash in treasury May 31 st 1884	\$2,885.57
Cash " " June 5. "	2,802.00
Ad valorem taxes paid to treasurer since June 13 th 1884	\$69,326.13
License tax	19,281.75
General fund	10,989.97
Market "	273.20
Cemetery "	1331.00
Proceeds of Bonds	\$8,000.00
Borrowed to pay interest	5,000.00
Refunded in Erwin case	131.70
Total receipts	\$150,002.76

In the items of ad valorem and license taxes above are included a few hundred dollars collected by the assessor & collector, before June 13th, 1884 but not paid over to the treasurer until after that date.

The taxes and other revenues received by the assessor & collector from June 13th 1884 to October 31st 1885 were as follows

Ad valorem Taxes 1884	\$67,503.77
For previous years.	1843.77
1885	481.05
License taxes	18,347.90
Market house	69.95
Cemetery lots	1,218.50
Records Court	9,026.90
Ground rents	583.70
Miscellaneous	716.57
Total.	\$99,987.05

The ad valorem taxes assessed for 1884. were \$68,445.60

In solvent list 704.83

In litigation 237.00

collected on rolls of 1884 \$67,503.77

For the year 1884, the assessed value was

" " 1885 " " " "

Increase in taxable value

The increase being about 5 per cent on the value of the preceding years

The taxes assessed for 1885, at the rate of one per centum ad valorem amount to \$70,023.02, of the taxes of 1885, the sum of \$481.05, has been collected

leaving yet to be collected \$71,541.97.

The collection of this tax is not enforceable until after March 1st 1886, and the taxes to be levied for 1886 will not be available until after March 1st 1887. (Although the fiscal year begins November 1st and ends Oct. 31st of each year, yet owing to the condition of the laws relating to forced collections of taxes, the practical estimate of receipts and disbursements must extend to March 1st of each year.)

The license tax for the current year and extending to March 1st 1887 may be reasonably estimated at \$12,000.

Receipt from the Recorders court and all other sources, may be estimated at \$10,000.

The cash balance in the city Treasury on October 31, 1885, is \$3,048.39.

Out of this amount in the Treasury there has been appropriated to various purposes now under way the sum of \$13,937.19.

Leaving the unappropriated balance \$17,111.20.

To this amount should be added \$4,000 to be realized on the sale of the property of the Fire Department, and to be applied on the \$6,000 appropriation for the new fire department building \$4,000.

Thus making the unappropriated amount in the Treasury \$21,611.20.

This estimate would make the available revenues of the City from all sources and for all purposes, to meet all liabilities and expenditures from Oct. 31st 1885 to March 1, 1887, when the taxes of 1886 will become available as follows.

Ad valorem taxes	\$71,541.97
License	12,000.00
Recorders Court Sect.	10,000.00
Cash unappropriated	<u>21,611.20</u>
Total	<u>\$115,153.17</u>

A liberal estimate of the current expenses of the city for that period, exclusive of street

November 10th 1885

improvements and other public works estimated on the basis of expenses for the past year cannot exceed \$80,000.00

And this will leave an easy margin of \$35,000 for streets Bridges and other public works. While upon this branch of the subject I will mention that under certain contracts heretofore made with the City, by the Austin Gaslight & Coal Company and the City Water Company, these corporations have been claiming the privilege of exemption from City Taxation. Their property was assessed for the year 1884 in common with all other taxable property. The taxes of the city water co. have been paid under protest, but the District court of Travis county, granted an injunction restraining the collection of a part of the taxes assessed against the gas company, and that suit is now pending. I apprehend that no further trouble or complications will arise on this account.

I call your attention especially to the very small delinquent list for 1884 only \$704.83

Appropriations & Expenditures

Total amount of cash on hand June 10th 1884, and received since that date as shown by the Treasurer's statement \$152,002.26

Paid out as follows:

Paid by per cent warrants.	\$214.32.
" Account Hospital	3,759.06.
" " Cemetery.	774.45
" Warrants on general fund.	100,743.04
" on account of interest fund.	109.00
" interest coupons	<u>10,350.00</u>

Total cash on hand. - \$31,048.39

Recapitulation

Received	\$152,002.26.
Paid out.	\$118,953.87
On hand.	<u>31,048.39</u>
Total.	<u>\$152,002.26.</u>

The expenditures, as shown in the report of the city clerk are itemized as follows:

To complete City hospital	154932
Expenses of hospital	271572
Out of beds, old hospital	37300
Expenses of small pox	48510
Charity	48944
Streets and Bridges	2140261
Street Lamps & Gas at city hall	304902
Fund for city Teams	96101
Police	1671065
Fund for city Prisoners	246266
Market house & Calaboose	71605
Salaries & Commissions	1496910
Fire Department	730705
City Water Company	1315000
Judgments	330743
Costs in suits	24645
To repay money borrowed and interest	518542
Printing Stationery & Postage	137857
Cemetery	77445
Sanitary	176050
Miscellaneous	377344
Total warrants drawn from June 13 th 1884 to Oct 31, 1885	\$10689979
Add. interest, compound, fund	1333000
1. amount paid by treasurer on drafts Hospital board	213672
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$11738651</u>

The Treasurer's report shows that he paid since June 13, 1884 the amount of \$118,953.87

The excess of payments over the warrant drawn since June 13th 1884 arises from the payment by the Treasurer of warrants drawn prior to that date but paid afterwards, and the amount of this payment is increased by the warrants issued on and before October 31, 1885, and not presented to the treasurer for payment up to that date.

Streets and Bridges

The total length of streets in the city is 128 7/10 miles
 The total length of Alleys " " 35 9/10 " "
 Length of streets actually opened since June 13, 1884
 11,876 feet or about 2 1/4 miles.

November 10th 1885.

The streets have been opened repaired and graded as follows:

1 st ward	14.186 feet;	cost.	\$1477.80
2 nd "	12.224 "	"	547.71
3 rd "	8.088 "	"	736.75
4 th "	12.072 "	"	779.37
5 th "	19.656 "	"	581.37
6 th "	21.006 "	"	165.50
7 th "	23.567 "	"	472.75
8 th "	11.136 "	"	519.10
9 th "	8.5114 "	"	412.30
10 th "	<u>15.206</u>	"	<u>658.40</u>

Total length 146.025 cost. \$1611.08

This is nearly 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles of streets opened, repaired and graded at a cost of about \$2000 per mile. Much of this work has required deep excavations and heavy filling, and much of it has been blasted through solid rock. The work has been well done and at a cost of less money, I will venture, than any other city in Texas has ever paid for a like amount and character of improvements. The credit of this work is due, in a very degree, to the faithful and untiring services of the chairman of the street committee, Alderman J. Rehder, and to the skill and efficiency of the city Engineer.

The appropriation for this work made prior to 1885 and not used in the several wards, were added to the general appropriation of 1885 of \$500. to each ward, and in some instances there were special appropriations.

Out of these several appropriations there is yet due and to be expended in the several wards the following amounts:

1 st ward	\$165.88
2 nd "	
3 rd "	86.31
4 th "	118.84
5 th "	174.75
6 th "	169.30
7 th "	27.25
8 th "	1.05

9th ward \$ 87.70.
10th " 141.60.

Total \$ 902.88

This improvement has extended over the entire City, and I confidently assert that the streets of the City of Austin were never before in as good condition.

The cost has been trifling in comparison with the convenience of having our highways and drives in decent order.

In future appropriations, I think the amount to each ward should be determined by the extent of its territory, and the amount of work required to put its streets on an equality with all others as far as practicable.

The time has come when our principal business streets should be paved. This may be done without increasing the debt or the rate of taxation, as much as \$20,000. to \$25,000. annually can be appropriated out of the present general revenue to this purpose without detriment to the finances of the City, at this rate it would require only a few years to make Congress Avenue and Pecan Street the finest of roadways without additional burden on the people.

A more efficient system of sidewalks should be adopted. Austin has fewer and poorer sidewalks than any city of its size in Texas. This is caused in a great measure by the want of necessary power in the charter. It can be easily remedied by additional legislation.

Bridges

Number of wagon bridges in the City

Stone arch bridges	7
Iron "	4
wood	32.
Total.	43.

Number of Foot Bridges 36.
Iron 24. wood, (small creek) 11
On streets 318

Nov 10th 1885

Expenditures on Bridges since June 13 th 1884		
Wing wall to bridge	\$1691.76	2089.75
Arch bridge, Mesquite st. with roadway		2089.75
Abutment for bridge, East Chestnut st.		2120.40
Bridge on East Walnut st		171.15
" " West cedar "		500.00
Extension of bridge West Pecan st.		600.00
Arch bridge West Walnut "		300.40
Repairing bridge West Peach "		58.00
Wood bridge San Marcos "		30.75
Wood " Magnolia "		86.20
Iron bridge, abutments & roadway Plum st.		2105.85
Total.		<u>\$7171.76</u>

Foot Bridges

24 iron bridges on congress around with stone settings	\$1107.00
wood bridge Bois D'Arc street	79.00
" " north avenue	84.00
" " Ash street	31.50
Total.	<u>\$1254.50</u>

Miscellaneous expenditures on streets & Bridges

Grading Hickory street	\$712.00
Repairs on sewer foot of avenue	604.75
" " gutters congress avenue	38.50
" " congress avenue & Pecan st. 19. & 10 onwards	124.45
Hardware	380.48
Lumber	447.62
Iron water troughs	210.05
Teams wagons & harness	950.00
Repairs on harness	214.45
Blacksmith work	361.47
Salary of engineer	1,700.00
Engineers fee	100.00
Salary of teamsters	1,680.00
Total.	<u>\$7,365.27</u>

Recapitulation

Streets	\$5611.08
wagon Bridges	7171.76
Foot	1254.50
Miscellaneous	<u>7,365.27</u>
Total.	<u>\$21,402.61</u>

In this connection I would suggest that the iron bridge across Waller creek, on east Pecan street is too narrow to accommodate the increased travel produced by the growing trade and commerce of that portion of the city. This bridge should be removed to Pine street, on the south, and if it is practicable, an arch stone bridge the full width of Pecan street should be erected where the iron bridge now stands. If an arch stone bridge cannot be constructed then a double-width iron bridge should be supplied. Stone arches will last longer than iron bridges, and they rarely need repairs. They cost no more than the iron structures and their construction enables the city to buy our home material and to employ our home labor.

These views are concurred in by the street committee.

Police Department & Recorder's Court.

The police force has consisted of a marshal a sergeant and twelve policemen. The expenses of this department including salaries, has been \$16,310.65. number of complaints made, 2,502, number of arrests 2,110. This covers the period from June 13, 1884 to Oct 31, 1885. and the fines and costs collected and paid to the assessor & collector, amount to \$2,026.90.

From December 10, 1886 to Oct 31, 1887. The number of complaints filed in the Recorder's court. have been 3,028. Convictions 2,070, acquittals 293, dismissed 622 fail to arrest 41.

Amount of fines assessed

\$19,775.00

" " costs

12,031.15

Total.

\$31,806.15

Number of appeals 86. of fines assessed since June 13, 1884 there has been remitted \$343.50

Discharged by Physician

210.00

Appealed to county court

25388.80

Exemptions

21,021.50

work on streets

72131.50

Prisoners who work out their fines on the streets are allowed \$1.00 per day

November 10, 1885

The feeding of Prisoners constitute a very considerable item of expense.

This expense since June 13 1884 has been \$3672.66. under and old contract in force from June 1884 until April 1885. ten months, the cost was \$1747.85 or \$174.78 per month.

Under a new contract made April 1st 1885 seven months the cost has been \$814.80. or \$116.85 per month. A saving of nearly half.

I must add my dissent to the present method of selecting the Marshal and police force. The Marshal is elected by the city council and then under the provisions of the city charter, the council also elects his policemen. The Marshal should be left to select his own policemen, and then he should be held to the very strictest responsibility for their conduct. I want of personal responsibility for the appointment and deportment of the police force and a denial to the Marshal of the power of summary removal, defeats all effort at good discipline and destroys the usefulness of the force.

The people of this city are dissatisfied with the present police management, and this department needs a thorough reorganization. If there are good and true men on the force, and I know there are such, they should be retained on the force. If there are bad or incompetent men they should be removed and their places supplied with competent and worthy men. The people demand and the good name and welfare of the city demands, that there should be a thorough reorganization of the police department and I earnestly trust that it will be made.

Cemetery

As you are aware, the burial ground in the city cemetery is about exhausted. The necessity for additional ground is becoming imperative.

This question was before you when I came into office. I am told it was then of long standing. It is still unsettled. A great number of propositions have been submitted for your consideration but no far

none have been accepted. The opposition of the people in the eastern portion of the City to an extension of the present cemetery, either north or south is entitled to respectful consideration and I am of the opinion that such extension should not be made. I see no reasonable objections to the purchase of the ground on the north east corner, so as to make the Cemetery square, unless that objection be found in the character of the soils and of this I have very serious doubts. It ~~seems~~ seems to be the general desire that a new cemetery be established, to the east and north of the City, on suitable grounds where the drainage will be below the city. A purchase should be made as soon as a desirable location can be obtained.

Water & Gas

Under the existing contract between the City water Co and the City of Quecton. pays the water Co an annual rental of \$100. each for one hundred fire hydrants. and \$50. for two fire hydrants at a cost of \$10.100. per annum. The location of these hydrants does not afford fire protection to more than one half of the city. They can only be located on mains of a certain size and in certain portions of the city. There is twice the number necessary or required for use while other portions are wholly without this protection. The burden of supporting this contract falls on all alike and the benefits should be more equitably distributed. The territory protected would constitute only a village the rental paid would be exorbitant to a city of one hundred thousand inhabitants. This contract was made in 1843. The claim of the water company to be exempted from taxation on account of water furnished for flushing gutters, water troughs &c. has not been allowed, their violation of the constitution of the state and the charter of the city and against public policy to tolerate such exorbitant. But their violating agreements, notwithstanding the increased fairness of their contract that the city shall pay the water Co,

November 1885

the reasonable and fair value of the water used and a contract for the future should be enacted. The supply of water to the people has been greatly improved during the past year, and it is to be hoped that all causes for complaint will cease.

We now have two gas companies, and the price of gas has been greatly reduced, we have the city lighted to the full extent of the mains of both companies and as they are extended new districts will be lighted up. The cost of lighting the city since June 3, 1884 has been \$304.02. When portions of the city are applying for lights and it should be provided as fast as the companies can be induced to extend their systems.

Hospital

The city and County hospital was completed and occupied in the latter part of the year 1884. The contract price of the building was \$10,000, but a very considerable expenditure of money on the buildings and grounds, and in furnishing the building, became necessary before it could be occupied. The running expenses of the hospital to the city since it was opened has been \$2488.82. The city by contract with Travis county, dated May 1st 1884 took entire charge of the hospital for one year the county paying the city as its share of the expenses, the sum of \$2000 in quarterly installments.

The management of the hospital under the City and County Physician, and Dr. Frank P. McLaughlin, the resident physician, and Mrs. Ella Wright, the matron, has been eminently satisfactory. During the fifteen months the hospital has been in operation, 179 patients have been treated. It is a public charity of the noblest order, and promises great results in the alleviation of human misfortune. I desire and I trust that it will receive a liberal support, I must especially commend the patient, devoted services and the efficient management of Mrs. Ella Wright. To whom the City is greatly indebted for placing this institution in its present prosperous condition.

Charities

The committee have endeavored to relieve all cases worthy of public charity. I am gratified to state that there have been but few cases for public charity even during the winter months. The entire expense for this purpose has been only \$489.44, and yet relief has been granted in every meritorious case that has been presented.

Markets

The city market has been abandoned long before I came into office and your body has declined to re-establish it. I do not believe that a general market for the entire city is practicable or just. But there is room for many improvements on the present system. A market place for the sale of wood, corn, hay, and other country produce should be established, and I would suggest that the ground that the ground known as "Market Square," on east Pine street, could be utilized for this purpose.

Ordinances, Suits, &c.

Since I have been in office the following suits against the city have been decided: C. D. Johns vs. the City, judgment for \$1,321.27 and costs, for commissions as city attorney in 1881 and 1882. W. House vs. the City, judgment for \$1,000 and costs, for damages sustained by being thrown in a ditch in 1883, compromise and settled for \$1,500.

M. A. Walton vs. City, judgment for commissions as City attorney in 1882 & 1883, on appeal to the Supreme Court. Council vs. City, judgment for \$100, and costs, for damages to a horse on a street bridge in 1883, satisfied in full. A. B. City vs. City, suit pending for damages alleged to have been sustained by reason of a defect in the street, in December, '84. Austin Gaslight & Coal Company vs. City, suit by injunction to restrain the collection of taxes - still pending.

Other matters relating to suits will appear in the report of the city attorney. I would suggest that the City Ordinances should be compiled and printed, it is almost impossible to ascertain what ordinances have been enacted and what ordinances are still in force, the whole code of Ordinances now existing.

City Printing The amount paid out for printing since June 18, 1884, has been \$1,106.37 for printing, stationery and postage, \$1,259.57. The cost of printing has been reduced 50. percent, in the present system which also makes a convenient and valuable record of the proceedings. I think a synopsis of the Council proceedings, and of Ordinances, and of resolutions introduced and passed, should be published in the City papers.

Fire Department.

The City has four companies of volunteer firemen having an aggregate membership of 155. The force consists of two steam fire engine companies and two hook and ladder companies.

In July '84, the council directed the sale of the lots and building belonging to the fire department in Block No. 69, for the sum of \$7,500. This sale was consummated with the understanding that the fire companies should continue to occupy the old premises until new quarters could be provided for them, or until the purchaser should be compelled to use the property. They are still occupying these quarters. Two of the companies are to be located in the building being erected on the city lots in Block No. 89. The cost of this building and the preparation of the approaches and grounds will be as follows: Grading Hickory Street \$721.40. excavation for foundation 6,235.60. Building \$6000. Total \$7338.00. Of this latter appropriation the sum of \$4,500. is to be applied from the sale of the department property, which has not yet been paid. The cost to the general revenue of the City will be \$2,838. Preparations for the accommodation of the remaining company will have to be made in the near future, and for this purpose \$3,000. will be available from the sale of the other property.

Twenty four fires have occurred in the City since July 9th 1884 involving a very heavy aggregate loss of property, but so nearly covered by insurance that the actual loss is comparatively light. Recently an appropriation of \$2,500. was made to purchase hose for the fire department, and a contract has been made for the purchase of 5000. feet at ninety cents per foot.

which is received the department will be well equipped for any emergency.

I need not speak of the efficiency of the Austin fire department nor of the extent in which its members are held. Their fame extends throughout the state. In the past fifteen years without as well as with the aid of water works. They have never failed to confine a fire to the premises in which it originated. They have rendered invaluable services to the people of this City, and have save millions of property from destruction. The cost of this department since June 13 1884 has been \$7,307.23. The fire department is always entitled to a liberal support from the city government.

Sanitation & Sewerage.

The sanitary condition of the city has not been perfect. But it has been as good as it can be made until other means are applied. During the past year one and some times two or more officers have been detailed specially to see that the ordinances to protect the public health were observed and obeyed. They have served 2,700 notices. The city has been unusually clean during the summer, and in this statement I am supported by the written testimony of a majority of the practicing physicians of the city. They also concur in the opinion that the recent epidemic of dengue was not produced by local causes - that the fever was imported here and did not originate here - that the disease became epidemic soon after its introduction into the city; that it was not produced by digging and excavating the streets and that its nature and causes are not well understood except as developed by its effect. The city has been comparatively free from disease, except the dengue, and I am happy to say that it is just now enjoying a season of unusual good health. I believe the time has arrived when the city must adopt a more efficient system of sanitation. A general system of sewerage, extending over the entire city, would be impracticable, and would require a sum of money beyond our resources.

The necessity for sewerage exists in the lower and more thickly populated portions of the city, and this section should be provided with sewers. Other and cheaper methods could be provided and enforced in the remainder of the city, entirely adequate to the demands. I think there is little difference of opinion upon these points, either among the members of the city Council or among the people. It would be inequitable and unjust to tax the entire City to establish sewers for the benefit of only a part of its people. The City should be surveyed for this purpose and divided into sewer districts and each district should bear the expense of laying and maintaining its own sewers. But neither a district system nor a general system can be inaugurated without additional legislation. The provisions of the present charter are wholly inadequate. Either system will require the expenditure of large sums of money, and this must be raised in one or two ways—either by increasing the bonded debt and increasing the taxes to meet the interest and sinking fund or by local assessment. To accomplish the enterprise by any method will require an amendment of the powers contained in the charter. I would suggest that a survey of the city should be made and maps and plans prepared as a preliminary step, and that the City should be divided into sewer districts, according to the formation of its surface and the natural courses of drainage. Then adopt a system and procure the necessary legislation to carry it into effect. The chairman and members of the committee on sewers concur in these views.

Crime in the City

During the past year a number of most dastardly crimes known to the law have been committed in this city, in some instances murder, and in others murder and rape, and in others murderous assaults with knife, hatchet or pistol. These crimes have been of the most revolting character, attended with evidences of the grossest brutality and perpetrated at the dead hours of night, in nearly every instance upon

unprotected colored females. They have occurred in the most
 unexpected quarters, and have always been involved in
 mystery. The community has been outraged and shocked
 by these crimes, and the city government, however subjected
 to severe criticism sometimes unfriendly and sometimes
 bordering on the malicious, undertakes to say that the
 City authorities, ably aided by the state and county officers,
 have faithfully and earnestly labored to detect the perpetrators
 of these crimes and bring them to punishment, but they
 have failed of success. The council directed me to employ
 detectives and to use all available means to discover
 and arrest the guilty criminals, I employed detectives who
 came with the highest endorsement as honorable and shrewd
 men. They too have failed to detect the guilty parties, at your
 direction, having been baffled at every point, I offered reward
 for their detection sufficient in amount to induce any one
 having information to come forward and make it known.
 No one has come forward. Great vigilance and energy has been
 displayed by private citizens, who have devoted much time
 and labor to bring to light the real criminals, they have
 accomplished nothing. On the first Monday in October the
 grand jury of Travis county, composed of its most
 intelligent citizens white and colored, was organized
 in the District Court, and have been making the most
 energetic investigation of these crimes, calling to their
 aid the whole power of the state of Texas. They too have
 failed to find evidence that would warrant them in present-
 ing an indictment against a single person.
 To say that an honest and faithful effort, by all the means
 at our command, has not been made to bring these murders
 and assassins to justice, is to misstate and falsify the facts.
 No effort has been spared, no means promising success
 have been withheld. The crimes still remain a mystery,
 and their guilty authors retain the secret. It was impos-
 sible to prevent these crimes. They are abnormal and
 unnatural, as compared with ordinary crimes among
 men. No one, not even the expert, skilled in the detection
 of crimes, can find a plausible motive, it is all spec-
 ulation. The mutilated bodies of the victims were found
 all over the parts of the city, where crime was not so common
 as anticipated and beyond the fact of the murders no man was able to penetrate.

November 10th 1885

This seem to be a year unprecedented in the character of its crimes. They have occurred with astounding frequency all over this union. The columns of the newspapers are full of them. It is not confined to Austin nor Texas it is everywhere. I have faith to believe that the authors of these crimes will yet be discovered. No human bosom is strong enough to hold such secrets. Some guilty conscience will unburden itself sooner or later.

I have felt it my duty to you and to myself as well as to the good people of this city. To lay these plain, unvarnished facts before you.

The Public Free Schools.

No institution of the city of Austin deserves more of our fostering care and support than the public free schools. These schools are in the most prosperous condition and are attended with marked success. Our system is not surpassed anywhere in this state, or in the south. It is thoroughly organized well disciplined, and under the management of earnest and skilled teachers.

The number of children in the city by the scholastic census of '84 was as follows:

White 1457 Colored 706 Total 2163.

By the census of '85 we have white 2088 Colored 1015 Total 3103. The attendance in '84 was 2,200. in 1885 six weeks after opening 1,620. The amount of money received from the state in 1884 was \$10,815 in 1885 we received \$16,135.60.

Amount realized from City Tax in 1884 \$77,157.77

" " " " 1885 24007.62.

Total amount expended in 1884 \$31,828.16

" " " " 1885 ~~42,447.77~~

The present city tax for school purposes is 3/8 mills on the dollar, or one third of one per cent ad valorem. This rate has continued for two years, but I am now authorized by the board of school trustees to announce the fact that after this year, that they will not need and will not ask more than one fourth of one per cent. They will when the tax

of 1886 come to be levied ask the council to reduce to 4 of one percent at this rate the city tax will yield about \$15,000. This with the amount to be received from the state, will be sufficient to support our school for ten months in the year. The public free school is one of the greatest, if not the greatest of factors in the development of civilization and in the elevation and advancement of the human race. Every child and youth in this city from the age of 7 to 21 years, of every race and color, may attend these schools with out cost, and he may receive an education equal in every respect to the usual college course. These schools have increased population and wealth to our city and will add to its future prosperity. Let them be liberally supported.

Conclusions.

I have now made a brief reference to the principal subject of public interest in the administration of the city government since the people intrusted it to our hands. I have necessarily omitted many minor details, which will be gathered from the reports of the committee and officers.

I am pleased to say that the city is in a most prosperous condition and is rapidly increasing in wealth and population. Its growth is steady and permanent. The city does not owe a dollar beyond its bonded debt. It has no depreciated warrants in circulation. Its bills are paid promptly. It can buy its necessary supplies and can contract for work upon the same terms and at the same prices as can be obtained by private parties. It has a sufficient sum of money in its treasury, \$1,048.39, to meet all existing appropriation, and to satisfy all liabilities and expenses occurring until the taxes of 1886 become available. Its business has been conducted on business principles and the result is to be seen in the improved condition of its streets.

November 10, 1885

and public works, in its prompt payment of all liabilities, in the large balance left in its treasury to meet future demands, in its restored credit, and in the increasing public confidence it has inspired.

This City has a great future. Its magnificent location, its picturesque surroundings, its invigorating and healthful climate, and its refined and cultivated people invite the stranger to make his home among us. Its development is strong and vigorous, and its public improvements should advance along with its wealth and population. Any public enterprise that will add to the growth and prosperity of the city of Austin and to the happiness and welfare of its people will always command my hearty approval and support.

I hope that before many years we may see a great population dwelling upon these hills; the principal streets all paved; the sidewalks all laid; a splendid city hall crowning these heights; many other improvements commensurate with the development and improvement & importance of the capital of Texas and last, though not least, a fine bridge spanning the Colorado river.

I am very respectfully, your obedient servant
J. W. Robertson, Mayor.

Alderman Campbell moved that the Mayor's message be printed in the Daily Statesman and Texas Forwards, motion lost by the following vote: Yeas Aldermen Pillow, Wells, Campbell, Schubert, Underhill, Carrington & Hill 7

Nays Aldermen Metz, Warren, Griskill, Crooker, Odell, Plath, Ervin & Bruck 8.

Alderman Crooker moved that the Mayor's message be printed in the daily Statesman, Daily Dispatch, Texas Forwards, Austin Wachenblatt, and Austin Citizen. Motion carried by the following vote: Yeas Aldermen Metz, Wells, Campbell

Munckhills, Quiskie, Crocker, Odell, Carrington
 & Irving - 9. Ways. Aldermen, Pillow, Rehner
 Warren, Hill, Platt, & Brush - 6.

Alderman Maas came in and answered to
 his name.

The Mayor introduced the following
 Resolution which was adopted.

A Resolution providing for a general
 election in the City of Austin, on Monday December
 7th 1885.

Section 1st. Be it resolved by the city council
 of the City of Austin. That a general election
 be, and the same is hereby ordered and directed
 to be held in the several wards of the city of
 Austin, on Monday, December 7th 1885, for the
 purpose of electing the following Officers to-wit.
 1. A Mayor of the City of Austin for the ensuing
 two years.

2^d Ten Aldermen in the several wards to
 succeed those whose terms expires, as follows.

First ward. One Alderman in place of J. P. Schneider

Second " " " " " Lewis Hancock.

Third " " " " " B. C. Wells

Fourth " " " " " J. Rehner.

Fifth " " " " " G. Warren.

Sixth " " " " " J. W. Quiskie

Seventh " " " " " J. M. Odell

Eighth " " " " " C. J. Hill

Ninth " " " " " C. Platt

Tenth " " " " " W. Brush.

3^d Three Trustees of the public free schools
 in place of S. C. Ludlow, J. B. Rector and
 A. P. Woodrigger, whose terms have expired

Section Second. The polls shall be opened in the

several wards at the following places to-wit.

1st ward Walsh's drug house 2^d ward Weber & French

stable 3^d ward Market house 4th ward Rumble

store 5th ward Protection Truck house. Sixth ward

Wetbackers Store. Seventh ward Wellers Mill

8th ward County Court house Ninth ward

Wells stable. 10th ward Ed. Walkers house.

November 10th 1886

Section 3rd The following named persons are appointed judges of election for the several wards to-wit:

1st ward O. Archer, Fritz Menzer & Patrick Scott.
 2nd ward C. E. Anderson, Jas. Hickey & J. W. Howard.
 3rd ward Ed. List, E. C. Bartholomew & W. B. Allen.
 4th ward J. H. Woods, A. Wahrenmann, & B. J. Goldbeck.
 5th ward A. Tuss, R. Egging & H. E. Shelley.
 6th ward A. Weeldbacker Louis Marcusa & A. P. Foster.
 7th ward W. M. Melmer, H. L. Spain & Booker Hancock.
 8th ward J. W. Ford, Joe Costa, A. Deffenbaugh.
 9th ward D. C. Dandle, J. L. Cannaway & Wm. Reher.
 10th ward J. M. Mansfield, Sam. Dillingale & M. P. Hall.

Section 4th The Mayor will issue his proclamation ordering said election in accordance with the law and in accordance with the charter and ordinances of the city of Austin.

Section 5th That this ordinance take effect and be in force from and after its passage.

Alderman Campbell introduced the following resolution:

Be it resolved by the city council of the city of Austin. That the street committee be and they are hereby instructed to contract with the Austin Gas Light & Coal Co. to erect and keep light every night, at the same price per month as other street lamps are lighted. One lamp at the A. M. E. Church on San Antonio & Ash Street.
 The motion ^{offered by Alderman Brugh} to amend the resolution by striking out Austin Gas Light & Coal Co. and insert any lighting company, was adopted.

The following amendments were offered.

By Alderman Hill. one lamp near the M. E. Church East Ash Street.

By Alderman Crocker One lamp at the corner of Magnolia Avenue & San Barbara Street.

By Alderman Underhill One lamp at the corner of Colorado & Beach Street.

On motion of Alderman Plath the resolution and amendments were referred to the water and gas committee.

Alderman Platt submitted the following report of the special committee appointed to investigate alleged outrages committed upon Alex Mack also the statement of Hugh Hancock, Chas. Higgins and Callie Mack which were read:

To His Hon. the Mayor and Board of Aldermen
 Your committee to whom was referred a resolution by the City Council to investigate the conduct of the special detectives, while in the employment of the City of Austin; also your committee was further empowered to investigate the alleged outrages perpetrated upon the colored man Alex Mack by the said detectives and city officers, would most respectfully represent that in pursuance of the resolution, we met on the 9th of November 1885. for the purpose of proceeding with said investigation when we were interrupted in said investigation by the City Marshal and subordinates demanding that they be heard. We consented to grant them a hearing and issued subpoena for them to appear on the 10th inst. and authorizing them to make their statements in their own way and manner fully.

At that time they expressed themselves as being satisfied. But on the following day they demanded that an attorney be admitted, also dictating to the committee as to how the committee should proceed in the matter of investigation. The committee not desiring to be dictated to by the city marshal or his attorney, informed him that said committee had permission to occupy the room in which they had assembled and would not be dictated to by anyone. The city Marshal was informed that when witnesses were desired by the committee they would be sent for, whereupon the City Marshal and his attorney left the room. A few minutes after they left policeman Johnson came in to summon us to attend a special meeting of the city council.

Nov 10th 1885

It was suggested as he was present that we should take his statement, and while he was seated at the table writing his statement, the City Marshal came in and said something to him about not making a statement and ordered him to come with him. He arose and started and remarked, well, you see how it is and as it had passed the hour and no witnesses appeared and no subpoena returned we concluded as every obstacle had been striven in our way by the officers we had looked to for assistance in our investigation who had but adjourn and report the facts as far as we were able to obtain them. We present to you the sworn statement of Alex Mack, Hugh Hancock, Sallie Mack (Alex mother) and Ores Hopkins which speaks for themselves. Your committee, not apprised of any law requiring them to admit an attorney while in the performance of their duty investigating a case submitted to them by your honorable body. We are induced to make this declaration from the fact that the City Marshal has attempted to create the impression that we are going to act partially in the investigation. We have been willing to give every and all parties a chance to make a statement. We therefore ask that the city council take such action as they may see proper from the evidence submitted and the committee be discharged. Respectfully,

J. W. Triskie

R. Platt

Committee

H. G. Lee, I. W. Johnson and J. J. Connors submitted a petition and protest against the manner of investigating certain charges against them, claiming that the committee would not allow them or their attorney to be present while witnesses against them were being examined. Alderman Hall moved that the report of the committee and the communication from the City Marshal be recommitted. That the city attorney represent the city and that the marshal be allowed to be present and represented by council during the investigation. Motion adopted.

On motion the council adjourned

J. L. Turrell

City Clerk