

WOULD USE GAS TAX TO PAY OFF BONDS

Lobdell Suggests Plan to Board for Next Five Years to Reduce Taxes

Recommendation last week was made to the county board of supervisors by R. M. Lobdell, county superintendent of highways, that approximately \$936,000 in principal and interest due on three highway bond issues be paid from the Motor Fuel Tax for the next five years rather than from direct taxation.

Such a course, he said, would save taxpayers about ten cents on the \$100 assessed valuation.

His recommendation carried the suggestion that the board add the Second bond issue to the 1st and 4th, now being paid out of the gas tax, and retire three issues in this fashion which would leave only the 3rd bond issue on direct taxation.

Urges Slash

Lobdell also encouraged the board to slash the appropriation about 4 cents on the \$100 valuation, which would result, he said, in a total savings of about 14 cents on the \$100 assessed valuation as far as road costs are concerned.

The payments on the three highway bond issues would bring a demand of approximately \$192,700 annually on the Motor Fuel tax fund, he explained. Over the entire period of five years, Lobdell pointed

out, the income from the M. F. T. on the present basis would fall about \$150,000 of meeting the payments. This lack of income could be met, he said, through drawing upon the gas tax money reserve built up by the county.

Suggests Reserve

Lobdell argued that a sufficient reserve should be maintained by the county at all times to protect a promise made by the county board of supervisors at the time of the vote on the 4th bond issue of \$1,250,000 that it would be paid up out of M. F. T. earnings and not out of direct taxation.

There is a chance, he admitted, that the gas tax money might be diverted to other channels by the general assembly, which would

make a strong reserve fund necessary to protect the pledge made to the public by the supervisors to keep the bond issue out of direct taxation.

"Such a situation would not endure, in my opinion, because public sentiment soon would force the general assembly to put back and keep the gasoline tax money for the purpose it is intended," he explained by the way of assurance that this income would not be torn from the county permanently at any time.

Finance Head Agrees

Assistant Supervisor Arthur W. Vercoe, of Highland Park, chairman of the finance committee, said the committee was in agreement with Lobdell's suggestions and that the county board, in his opinion, would conform with the recommendations as a means of making a sharp cut in the cost of county government.

The entire savings in the budget to be passed at this session will be about \$200,000 to the taxpayers in comparison with last year's appropriation, Vercoe said.

Lobdell also reported on the progress of highway construction in the 90 days just ended. The county, he said, has been offered elm trees to plant on the new Druce Lake-Gages Lake road and he stated that if the planting would not be too costly the trees might be set out this fall.

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