HOME TELEPHONE MEETS WITH REBUFF

Committee of Supervisors Refuses to Consider Its Application for a Local Franchise.

The petition of the Home Telephone Company for an immediate hearing on the subject of its application for a franchise was denied yesterday by the Joint Finance and Public Utilities Committee, and unless a resolution can be passed through the Board of Supervisors calling upon the committee for a report the proposition is dead, so far as the present Board is concerned. The time remaining before the expiration of the terms of the outgoing Supervisors is too short to make the attempt to pass such a resolution likely to bear fruit.

The motion which put the Home Telephone Company for the present out of the running was made by Supervisor Boxton, who said that, inasmuch as Chairman Braunhart was of the opinion that the present Board, if it advertised for bids upon the franchise, would bind the incoming Board to grant the franchise to the highest bidder, the committee had better not report the application back to the Supervisors unless compelled to do so.

Dr. D'Ancona was the only one to record a negative vote, and he explained his action by saying that the Board of Supervisors was a continuous body, notwithstanding any changes that might be made in its personnel, and that it was the duty of the committee, in his opinion, to take some action, affirmative or negative, in view of the fact that the Home Company had presented its application for a franchise as long ago as last June.

Judge J. T. North was present to present the company's side of the case, and he reiterated the statement that it would pledge itself under a $250,000 bond to expend $4,000,000 within three years of the granting of their privilege.

BRAUNHART'S OPPOSITION.

Chairman Braunhart, who yesterday made his first public appearance since his recent illness, listened with considerable impatience to the arguments of Judge North. He said that the Board could act only under the Broughton act of 1901, which would make it mandatory upon the incoming Supervisors to grant the franchise to the highest responsible bidder, if it were once offered for sale. Any Supervisor attempting, "by his vote, to block such action, he said, would be liable under the law for a misdemeanor.

Braunhart was sure that the framers of the charter had intended that the city should gradually acquire the ownership of public utilities.

"Moreover, the new Board of Supervisors was elected upon a municipal ownership platform," he added, and he proceeded to handle the directors of the Home Telephone Company without gloves and to question the good faith of its proposal to spend $4,000,000 in the city.

"The persistency of this applicant is worthy of a better cause," declared Braunhart, "but the best place for its application is in my tin box. I think the city should own every public utility." He charged the Home Company with presenting letters written by stockholders who had received stock at a discount.

WILL REAPPRAISE HIGH SCHOOL SITE

Original Valuation of the Bell Property Is Called Excessive by the Real Estate Experts.

The location of the new Lowell High School was one of the subjects considered by the Public Utilities and Finance Committees in their joint session yesterday, and reappraisement of the property known as the Bell site, at Octavia, Sutter and Bush streets, was ordered in the hope that a plot 275 feet square may be secured for a sum in the neighborhood of $150,000. The Bell property proper measures 275 feet on Octavia street, 214½ feet on Sutter street and 175 feet on Bush street, and is too small to meet the requirements of the School Board. The original offer was $175,000, the appraisement being but $153,000.

Considerable discussion was caused by the consideration of the Alamo square site for this school, Dr. d'Ancona saying that, while a beautiful location, it is not suited for school purposes. He also said it might cause litigation to erect the school so far from the place indicated by the bond act. Commissioner Altmann asked if there was any more danger from litigation than from the choice of a lot near Golden Gate Park for the Polytechnic School, when the people had voted the bonds for a school near the corner of Larkin and Pine streets. Dr. d'Ancona thought that there might be litigation over that selection also.

The City Attorney was instructed, in a resolution passed by the committee, to condemn three lots adjoining the Spring Valley School at Broadway, Larkin and Hyde streets, if the holders would not sell for the appraised valuation.

LETTER NOT FROM MOODY'S PEN

There is declared to be no foundation in fact for the telegram from Washington stating that Attorney-General Moody had written a letter to United States Attorney Devlin criticising Judge J. J. de Haven. According to the story, the criticism was of Judge de Haven's charges to the juries in the cases of Cress, Unger and George Wright, custom-house employes accused of embezzling Government coin.

The story that Judge de Haven's course in the trial had been made the subject of adverse criticism by the Attorney-General naturally caused quite a stir in legal circles until it was found that there was no basis for it. Both the Judge and Mr. Devlin refuse to discuss the matter, but the latter will go as far as to say positively that he has received no such letter.

The rumor may have had its foundation in a story going around to the effect that Collector of the Port Frederick Stratton received a letter from the Solicitor-General of the Treasury criticising Judge de Haven, and turned it over to Devlin. Mr. Devlin declined to either affirm or deny that he had received such a letter. Mr. Stratton was out of town yesterday.

RESTAURANT KEEPERS FOUND VIOLATING LAW.

Health Officer Ragan Orders Arrest of Four Venders of Objectionable Milk.

City Chemist H. D. Gibbs and City Bacteriologist F. G. Canney presented a report upon the analyses of ninety-six samples of milk to the Health Board ...

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