

Bids Asked for Cascade Electrification

The electrification department of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway at Seattle, Wash., recently sent out specifications for the electrical equipment, including locomotives, generators, etc., to be used in the electrification of the Cascade Mountain division, from Cle Elum west to Seattle and Tacoma. It is expected bids for this equipment will be in by July 1. In calling for bids the company specified that delivery must be made as early as possible, in order that the division may be completed and in operation by Oct. 1, 1918.

Seattle Bridge Conference Results

Some Recent Matters Up for Settlement Between Street Railway and City Reviewed Briefly

The City Council of Seattle, Wash., is considering an ordinance introduced by Councilman Oliver T. Erickson, fixing the rental to be charged the Puget Sound Traction, Light & Power Company for the use of bridges across Lake Washington Canal, at Fremont Avenue, Fifteenth Avenue, N. W., Tenth Avenue N. E., and across the West Waterway at West Spokane Street. The bill tentatively fixes the rental for the use of the Fremont Avenue bridge at \$804 a month, plus the cost of current used for the operation of cars over the bridge at the rate of 1 cent a kilowatt-hour. A. H. Dimock, city engineer, and A. L. Valentine, superintendent of public utilities, in a recent report, recommended a rental of \$7,586 a year, plus one-third of the cost of maintenance, or about \$633 a month. Mr. Erickson's bill also provides that if another street railway or the city itself should use the bridge for street railway purposes a pro rata amount shall be paid by the new tenant of the bridge, based on the number of cars in service.

CITY ABANDONS FIGHT

The city's fight for common user rights on Third Avenue with the Puget Sound Traction, Light & Power Company was virtually abandoned with the submission to the Council of the report of the conference committee, headed by Councilman Erickson, and the reference of the recommendations of the conference committee to the franchise and city utilities committees. The report indicates that nothing was accomplished at the several conferences with the officials of the Puget Sound Traction, Light & Power Company. A. W. Leonard, president of the company, refused to consider any proposition that included common user rights for the city lines on Third Avenue. The recommendations made by the committee follow:

"The corporation counsel, after a careful study, is of the opinion that the city may tender a rental proposal for crossing the Fremont Bridge, but that it could not be enforced, notwithstanding the company has refused to pay any portion of the cost of the bridge. He suggests that two methods of procedure are open for consideration. One is to revoke the company's franchise for failure to comply with its provisions. The other is to formulate a demand for a fair lump sum proportion of the total cost and a monthly contribution for maintenance and operation based on the franchise, and to bring suit in the case of refusal. In order that the company may have a rental proposal to consider, an ordinance of that sort has been prepared for introduction.

"The revocation of the company's franchise has not been considered by your committee. Such action presents many angles. Although the company has refused to comply with nearly all of its obligations, revocation may not be the best method of proceeding. The matter of enforcing a lump sum contribution with monthly charges for maintenance and operation will be considered while the rental ordinance is pending.

"In the matter of securing running rights on Third Avenue, the corporation counsel advises that it may be done by condemnation. This method would be tedious and the terms to be secured are an unknown quantity. Furthermore, we have already secured such rights on Fourth Avenue and would therefore recommend that further negotiations with the company on this matter be dropped."

"Times" Tackles Toledo Traction

Paper Discusses Local Traction Muddle in Terms Uncomplimentary to City Officials

The Toledo (Ohio) *Times* continues to discuss the street railway situation in terms that are far from complimentary to the Street Railway Commission and Mayor Milroy. It urges that something can and should be done at once to settle the controversy and that the city cease to await the pleasure of the commission in making its report to the Mayor. The paper doubts the feasibility of the community plan which has been worked out by the commission and believes that a substantial business proposition of some kind should be presented to the city.

The commission has never made a report of its work to Mayor Milroy and has as yet fixed no time for giving him official information along this line. The *Times* considers this as discourtesy. It argues that both the Mayor and the people are entitled to official information as to what has been done and should not be forced to depend upon newspaper reports. Two members of the commission are, by the way, the heads of Toledo papers.

The *Times* says that excess fares are being collected through the suspension of the workmen's 3-cent hours. This means that \$700 a day is being collected from workmen and transferred to the company's treasury. Of this one-half goes to a fund for the purchase of cars and for improvements, while the other is absorbed in an increase in the wages of motormen and conductors. The *Times* estimates that this excess, since April 10, 1916, aggregates \$287,700, or a return of 6 per cent on a capitalization of \$4,250,000. The *Times* does not criticize the company, but it does argue that the business should be placed upon a substantial and permanent basis of some kind.

PAPER RAPS TOLEDO COMMISSION

In commenting recently on the Street Railway Commission and its work the *Times* published the following editorial:

"The hostile attitude exhibited by Johnson Thursday toward the Rail-Light is so utterly at variance with the attitude of his 'co-commissioners' that it is evident there is no longer harmony within the organization. The *Times* has suspected as much for some time.

"It is apparent now that the 'car commission' as constituted will never agree on an ordinance to be submitted to the people and, this being the real state of affairs, Mayor Milroy should promptly relieve it from further duty. Then, if he is still of the opinion he expressed just after his election, he should try again. If he has kept in close touch with the street car situation of Toledo he should know that conditions are even worse than they were when he first appointed the committee. The car riders are not getting any better service and they are paying more for it. What they want is improved service and lower fares. The Dotson ordinance provided both. It was defeated largely through the efforts of the men who, because they claimed to know how to draft a better ordinance, were called upon by the Mayor to do the work. They have been at it intermittently for seventy-nine weeks and have produced nothing. There is no visible evidence that they intend doing anything. Whether they have deadlocked with Henry or with one another is immaterial. They have been on the job quite long enough to prove that they are either inefficient or disloyal to the city.

"What are you going to do about it, Mr. Mayor?"

On the evening of May 28 the City Council adopted the resolution providing for an amendment to the city charter which will allow the issuance of bonds for the purchase of the street railway property. The plan contemplates an issue of \$1,500,000 of bonds, from the proceeds of which a cash payment will be made. There will be another issue of similar amount which the company will be asked to accept. The amendment to the charter is to be voted on at the August primaries, while the question of issuing the bonds will be placed before the voters at the November election. In the meantime the city will be asked to furnish funds to provide for a valuation of the property.