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CITY COUNCIL--OFFICIAL.

BOARD OF ASSISTANT ALDERMEN

Regular Session.

CITY HALL, NEW ORLEANS,
September 22, 1868.

The Board met pursuant to adjournment; present: President Kearny and Messrs. Rose, Aitkens, Walker, Pemberton, Camp, Grandpre, Fisher, Pandely, Farrell and Breen.

The reading of the minutes of last meeting was, on motion of Mr. Farrell, dispensed with.

Messrs. Wynne, Morphy and Sturcken, here entered and took their seats.

The following communication from the Street Commissioner was read and referred to the Committee on Streets and Landings, with instructions to report by resolutions on the various subjects alluded to in said communication:

STREET COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE,
Room No. 7 City Hall,
New Orleans, September 22, 1868.

To the Honorable Board of Assistant Aldermen, City of New Orleans:

GENTLEMEN—In compliance with your resolution at the last meeting of your Board, I have the honor to lay before you a report of the work done by this department since my installment into this office, up to this date, together with the amount of necessary expenses incurred.

I also lay before you a statement of the expenditures for the twelve months preceding my administration, eleven of which were under control of Mr. Baker and one under Mr. Field. I refrain from attempting to specify the quantities and localities where the work was done, thinking that not only would it tax your time too long, but that you are well conversant with the subject.

On my assuming the duties of Street Commissioner, on July 2, I continued the working force just as I found it, neither decreasing nor increasing, only making some changes in the deputies, foremen, etc. The work in progress under my predecessor was continued, and only on the close of the month did I make any addition to my force, in concurrence with the advice of the honorable Streets and Landings Committee, and for the very essential purpose of getting all the city work well under control, and as speedily as possible, in a first rate condition; and then by reducing the force, render the expense of this department very much lighter.

During the month of August some new work was undertaken, and some old roads repaired, in a manner that will render them of lasting service to the public, and the amount of work done will, I think, be considered very satisfactory by good judges, especially when taking into consideration the immense difficulties caused by the long-continued daily rains; and while on this subject I would respectfully mention that it has not been my practice to reduce the time of the men in rainy weather, on noticing the readiness with which they worked when opportunity occurred, and reflecting on the privations they had to undergo in consequence of a depreciated currency.

I will now give you in as concise a manner as possible a general idea of the work that has been done under my charge. Besides doing all the usual cleaning and repairing the streets of the city, the following extra work has been done, say in the First and Fourth Districts: Two extra gangs have been employed on the Liberty street plank road, a large portion of the planks have been taken up, and the stringers removed, have been dug deep and converted into a substantial and serviceable ballast road. The sound plank taken up has been used to repair the central part of the plank road, rendering that part serviceable which before was impassable, the whole of which was done by desire of the honorable Committee on Streets and Landings.

A large extra gang has been kept steadily at work in getting the paved streets of the above districts in good order, all of which will soon be completed in a first rate condition.

Especial pains have also been taken in making a new ballast road on Melpomene street from Howard street out to the dredging machine, in so a substantial manner that it will cost but a small outlay to keep it in repair for years to come.

An extra gang has also been employed in the Fourth District, wheeling sand from the river for future use.

In the Second and Third Districts an extra gang has been employed in repairing all the ballast roads from Canal street to Toulouse, which were very much out of order; and all the intersections of the following streets with Claiborne, have been taken up and substantially repaired, viz: Canal street, Customhouse street, Bienville, Conti, St. Louis, Toulouse, Carondelet Walk, St. Peter, Orleans and St. Ann streets. A large amount of work has also been done on all the streets of the back portion of the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Wards; ditches have been dug deep, the road raised to the proper grade, and the side walks attended to; all of which work would appear to have been neglected for at least twelve months.

An extra gang has also been employed in wheeling sand from the river for future use.

The Third District is the only one in which the street bridges are under my control, and from that district there are few or no complaints. The work has all been carefully attended to and thoroughly done; yet still the bridge gang has found time to build a new house for the Third District Poundkeeper, in place of one that had become entirely untenable.

With regard to the bridges which are attended to under a contract, I regret to say that I cannot give so favorable an account; indeed, as a general rule, it may be safely considered that work done under contract is never so faithfully executed as the regular *city work*, which, though it may appear to cost a slight degree more at the moment, is always cheaper in the end, on account of durability.

The complaints at last became so numerous that I had to place a gang of men on the contractor's work, which will be charged to his account; at the same time I deemed it my duty to cause an official notice to be handed him, allowing him thirty days to bring up his work to the proper standard required by his contract. The thirty days have now elapsed and the work is still much behind hand. I am, therefore, reluctantly compelled to give my opinion that from some cause the contractor is unable to fulfill the terms of his contract, and respectfully ask your honorable body to take some action in the matter, and also favor me with your advice.

I deem it my duty to inform you that the contracts for cleaning and keeping in repair the unpaved streets of the First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Tenth and Eleventh Wards, are all complete and deposited in my office, and the contractors commenced working under them about ten days ago. The names of contractors and amounts, etc., are as follows:

First Ward, James J. O'Hara, $14,500 per annum, expires July 5, 1870.

Second Ward, James J. O'Hara, $15,500 per annum, expires July 5, 1870.

Third Ward, Joseph Artigues, $34,600 per annum, expires July 5, 1870.

Fourth Ward, Gabrielle Correjolles, $13,400 per annum, expires July 5, 1870.

Fifth Ward, Gabrielle Correjolles, $13,900 per annum, expires July 5, 1870.

Sixth Ward, Gabrielle Correjolles, $9900 per annum, expires July 5, 1870.

Tenth Ward, William Henry, $11,600 per annum, expires July 5, 1870.

Eleventh Ward, William Henry, $9200 per annum, expires July 5, 1870.

Total $122,100.

With regard to these contracts I would respectfully remark that had I been the least aware of the probability of their being executed, a very large outlay might have been saved in my last month's payroll.

Immediately on my becoming aware of their existence I caused an official letter to be addressed to the honorable the Board of Aldermen on the subject, but not receiving any instructions I permitted the contractors to commence their work. Still having some doubts as to their legality, in not having received the approval of your honorable Board, I asked the advice of the City Attorney and others who seemed to sustain my views, all of which I respectfully submit.

While on the subject of contracts permit me to observe that there is some inconvenience and loss attending them, which does not appear to be appreciated by those who do not practically have to deal with them.

One of the inconveniences is this: A person contracting to supply the city with all the material of a certain kind required, may not happen to have the kind or quality or quantity required on hand; of course they are desirous to do all in their power to please, and promise day to day to supply; in the meantime the hands are either kept partially idle or doing unnecessary work. A case in point has just occurred to the superintendent of bridges, who has, in a measure, lost the time of his gang for four days waiting for material.

The same thing sometimes occurs in my department with regard to requisitions for materials, which seem to meet with somuch delay in their travels through the offices of the committees that lost much time and inconvenience is the consequence.

I will now close by informing you that in addition to the statement now handed you of the general expenditures of this department from July 1 to September 22, 1868, I have also caused a separate and condensed statement of the amount of my payrolls for the months of July and August last, which I hope may prove of some assistance in your deliberations.

I am, gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
JOSEPH MURPHY,
Street Commissioner.

The Treasurer's report for the week ending September 19, 1868, showing receipts $14,413 27, expenditures $9903 25, balance on hand $383,279, was referred to the Finance Committee.

The following communication from the City Attorney was received:

OFFICE CITY ATTORNEY,
Room No. 13 City Hall,
New Orleans, September —, 1868.

To the Honorable Board of Assistant Aldermen:

GENTLEMEN—In response to your resolution requesting the opinion of the City Attorney on the construction of the act of the Legislature, approved September 5, 1868, entitled "an act to enable the city of New Orleans to procure a loan of money," etc., I beg to say that I think it clear the bonds issued by virtue of the said act cannot be sold at less than par. The act authorizes the city to borrow $1,000,000, provided that not more than ten per cent. interest is paid for the same. If a sum less than one million dollars be obtained for the bonds which bear $100,000 interest per annum, it is obvious that more than ten per centum interest is paid on the actual money received and thus the condition would be violated upon which the Legislature granted to the city the power to negotiate the loan.

Respectfully,
HENRY J. LEOVY,
City Attorney.

The following communication from the Controller was received:

CONTROLLER'S OFFICE, CITY HALL,
New Orleans, September 22, 1868.

To the Honorable Common Council:

GENTLEMEN—I have the honor to report that according to ordinance No. 1011, New Series, and after due legal advertisement in the official journal, I adjudicated on the sixteenth instant, a contract for fitting up the Seventh District Court to William McVittie, security John McVittie, for nine thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars ($9750).

I have further to report that according to resolution 1002 I have this day adjudicated the contract for the extension of the Ninth Street Market to J. M. Howell, security F. W. Bohning, at nine thousand four hundred and twenty five dollars ($9425.)

All of which is respectfully submitted.
Your obedient servant,
J. O. LANDRY, Controller.

The Controller's statement, showing checks drawn by the Treasurer from August 26 to September 22, 1868, amounting to $1172 50, was read and referred to the Finance Committee.

The following communications from the City Surveyor were received:

SURVEYOR'S OFFICE,
Room No. 19 City Hall,
City of New Orleans, September 22, 1868.

To the Honorable the Common Council, Board of Assistant Aldermen:

GENTLEMEN—Upon examination, I can not find objection to the extension of stall No. 2 to stall No. 4, in the St. Mary's Market, this change not interfering with the circulation in the least possible manner.

I remain, respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
L. SURGI, City Surveyor.

SURVEYOR'S OFFICE,
Room No. 19, City Hall,
City of New Orleans, September 22, 1868.

To the Honorable the Common Council, Board of Assistant Aldermen:

GENTLEMEN—It becomes my duty to inform you that several of the wharves and portions of levees have been more or less damaged since the receding of the river.

As there is no longer danger for an increase of damage, it is very important for the interests of commerce that the repairs should be made as soon as possible.

From a careful examination of the work to be done, I am happy to think that the necessary repairs to the wharves and levees will not exceed this season the sum of sixty thousand dollars.

I remain, gentlemen, respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
L. SURGI, City Surveyor.

The following report of the Surveyor, submitted in conformity with a resolution of the Common Council, relative to the drainage system, was received and ordered incorporated in the published minutes of this body:

To the Honorable the Common Council of the City of New Orleans, Board of Assistant Aldermen:

GENTLEMEN—By a resolution of the Common Council the City Surveyor is requested to report a plan for the through and complete drainage of the city, to remedy the numerous evils resulting from the present incomplete system in use.

Before suggesting any plan, permit me to call your attention to the fact, that, in virtue of a law passed in 1858, the drainage of the city of New Orleans, and a portion of the parish of Jefferson, is in the hands of commissioners, who have sole control and authority over the lands of three Districts described in their charter.

A brief history of the drainage of New Orleans will enable you to understand how it is, notwithstanding the existence of such a law, that the city of New Orleans has to expend such a large amount of money for draining purposes when such a work is intrusted to the care of three boards of draining commissioners.

As early as March, 1835, a charter was granted for a period of twenty years to the New Orleans Draining Company; it had for its object to drain and reclaim, by means of canals and ditches, the lands comprised between the upper limit of suburb Livaudais; the line of the New Canal to Lake Pontchartrain; along the shore of said lake to Bayou Chehon; from Bayou Chehon in a straight line to the Fisherman's Canal, thence to the Mississippi river.

One of the articles of said charter provides "that the extent of territory above described, could be divided in fractional parts, each forming a separate section; and upon the completion of the drainage of such section, it was to be turned over to the city of New Orleans, to be worked and kept by said city.

Drainage has been partially applied to only four sections of the extent of land described in the charter of the New Orleans Draining Company.

Section first, comprised within the river, St. Peter street and Canal Carondelet, Bayou St. John, and Esplanade street. It was begun in 1836, and transferred to Municipality No. 1 in 1846, the First Municipality paying $33,000 to the New Orleans Draining Company.

Section No. 3, comprised within the river, Esplanade street, Bayou St. John, the Marigny Canal, and Elysian Fields street, was transferred to Municipality No. 3 in 1846 for a small compensation.

Section No. 2, comprised within the river, Julia street and the New Canal, the Metairie Road, Bayou St. John, Canal Carondelet, and St. Peter street, was begun in 1844, and transferred to Municipality No. 1 in 1850, in conformity with the charter of the New Orleans Draining Company, the inhabitants of said section paying $27,000 for the drainage.

In 1846 the drainage of the section comprised within the river, the upper line of the city, the Claiborne Canal, the New Canal, and Julia street, was undertaken by Municipality No. 2, and was carried on by said Municipality until consolidation, since then it has been kept and worked by the city of New Orleans.

In 1858 the Legislature passed a law for the purpose of draining and reclaiming the swamp lands in the parishes of Orleans and Jefferson, and dividing these lands into three districts, as follows:

First District, all lands within the river, Julia street, New Canal, Lake Pontchartrain, Bayou St. John, Carondelet Canal and St. Peter street.

Second District, all lands within the river, St. Peter street, Canal Carondelet, Bayou St. John, Lake Pontchartrain, Lafayette Avenue, to the river bank.

Each of these districts has a Board of five commissioners intrusted with the carrying out the objects contemplated by the law, within their respective districts.

The work is to be completed within ten years from 1861, and the Commissioners are not authorized to spend over $350,000 for the complete drainage of each section.

Had the lawmakers been persuasive with the localities, and the value of the lands intended to be reclaimed, that clause forbidding the expenditure of over $350,000 would never have been inserted in the law, and the boundaries of the several districts would have been fixed otherwise than they are.

In consequence of the limit to expenditure, and as the area, configuration and facilities for drainage are not equal in each district, the problem to solve by the Commissioners is rendered very difficult. In the First and Second Districts they went bravely and heading to work; in the Third District they wisely stopped after the first step.

Let us see what has been accomplished up to the present day.

FIRST DRAINING DISTRICT.

This district contains an area of nearly 5400 acres, divided into two separate sections by the Metairie Ridge. One section is bounded by the river, Julia street, the New Canal, the Metairie Ridge, Bayou St. John, Canal Carondelet, and St. Peter street, and is one of the best improved portions of this city.

The other section covers the land between the Metairie Ridge, Lake Pontchartrain, the New Canal and Bayou St. John, having an area of about 3100 acres, nearly all of which is swamp.

The first of these sections (1700 acres in extent) has been drained and cleared since 1836, by the New Orleans Draining Company, at a cost to the property owners of $327,000; it was provided with numerous canals and reservoirs, and has a draining machine on Hagan Avenue, between Bienville and Conti streets. The drainage of this section, which formerly gave full satisfaction to its inhabitants, has been very much neglected since its transfer to the city. For this reason, and on account of the numerous improvements made since eighteen years, in the shape of buildings, pavements and banquettes, the engines and canals are no longer adequate to perform the task required. No work has been done on this section except to collect taxes for the intended drainage.

The Commissioners have devoted their attention to the second section, nearly all swamp, but yet very little has been accomplished. Two canals on Taylor and Harrison avenues have been dug; another of about seventeen acres long, on the center of Orleans street, is in progress. The amount expended up to the present time for the drainage of the First District can not exceed $40,000.

The Commissioners, from want of proper advice, or of practical knowledge, wherever they assumed the direction and control of the work, seemed not to have understood the task before them.

The drainage of a large city like ours is of two different kinds, and the cost of each is vastly different.

The uninhabited or rural portion does not require as much work at the urban portion, because the land, being open and porous, absorbs the rain water in large amount, and the combined action of the sun and wind soon evaporates and dries up what remains on the surface.

The inhabited or urban portion is just the reverse; the soil there is covered with buildings, the yards are bricked or flagged, the streets paved and lined with banquettes, whose gutters will carry the rain or the domestic water into the draining canals as fast as they reach them.

From the preceding description you will perceive at once there a distinction must be made between the different sections composing a draining district; in the rural sections a surrounding levee and a few ditches are all that is required for good drainage; in the urban sections, beside levees, which are always necessary to keep off the surrounding waters, numerous canals and reservoirs, large enough to receive the greatest flood without overflowing their banks, are required, and also the aid of powerful draining machines to remove the water as fast as it accumulates in the reservoirs.

If the Draining Commissioners had taken this view of the subject, which is the only rational one, their task would have been much easier, and the cost of drainage of the swamps between the lake and the Metairie Ridge could have been reduced to less than one-fourth of the present price.

I fear that the Commissioners' undertaking will prove to be a failure, and my reasons for this fear are as follows:

First—They charge the whole district at the rate of three and three-tenths mills per superficial foot, which brings the whole cost of drainage for the First Draining District to $776,642, instead of $350,000, which ought to be the maximum cost, as contemplated by the law of 1858.

Second—The tax of 3 3-10 mills per superficial foot brings the cost of drainage for every square of ground of 300 feet, whether swamp or highly improved, to $297. The owners of the swamp lots, which are hardly worth one-fifth of the amount claimed, will not be able to pay it, and should the commissioners be able to accomplish their work, this property would not sell at forced sale for one-half of the amount claimed.

Third—The property owners in that part of the district comprised within the Metairie Ridge, New Canal, Bayou St. John, Claiborne street and Carondelet Canal, having paid once $327,000 to the New Orleans Draining Company for their drainage, will resist the payment of an additional sum of $244,371 levied upon them by the First District commissioners for a similar purpose.

Fourth—The best and most valuable portion of the first draining district lies between the river, Julia, Claiborne and St. Peter streets, and has an area of about 600 acres. The cost of drainage being the same throughout the whole district, the contribution for this part will amount to $86,248, and excepting the amount which may be paid by a few ignorant persons in the other sections, will form the only available means of the first draining commissioners for defraying the expense of a draining system contemplated upon the receipt of $767,642.

Having demonstrated the impossibility for the Commissioners of the First Draining District to complete their undertaking, let us see whether it would not be possible by combined action with the city of New Orleans to accomplish an improvement so important to the welfare of our citizens, and I think the following plan will answer the purpose:

I will maintain the division of the whole district in two sections, as made by nature.

The first section will cover the land within the Metairie Ridge, the New Canal, Lake Pontchartrain and the Bayou St. John.

The work required to keep a permanent rural drainage, and its probable cost, will be as follows:

A levee along the New Canal, Lake Pontchartrain, and the Bayou St. John	$46,660
A canal 60 feet wide at the top and 8 feet deep, in the centre of Orleans street, from the Metairie Ridge to the Lake, serving as a reservoir for the second section, and as a drain for the first	40,000
A draining machine at the Lake	20,000
	$106,720

The second section, comprised between the river, Julia street, the New Canal, the Metairie Ridge, Bayou St. John, Canal Carondelet and St. Peter street, will be drained by the means of the following canals, and two 200 horse power engines, placed on Hagan Avenue, between Bienville and Conti streets:

Canal on Claiborne street, 25 feet by 3 feet	$ 3,754
Canal on Canal street, 40 feet by 8 feet	10,909
Canal on Galvez street, 20 feet by 6 feet	3,537
Canal on Broad street, 25 feet by 6 feet	4,993
Canal on Hagan Avenue, 60 feet by 10 feet	4,444
Canal on Carrollton avenue, 40 feet by 8 feet	5,166
Canal on Poydras street, 40 feet by 8 feet	3,012
Canal on Banks street, 30 feet by 5 feet	4,677
Canal on Orleans street, 60 feet by 8 feet	3,391
Canal on Carondelet Walk, 15 feet by 4 feet	980
Cost of two dredge boats	28,000
Cost of two engines and buildings	80,000
	$ 55,803

The capacity of the reservoirs in this section will be over 13,886,000 cubic feet, so that, with proper sized bridges, the sidewalks and lots will be above water during the heaviest rains. Another and still greater advantage to the property owners will be, the dispensing entirely of filling the lots, which has cost so much money, and given so little advantage.

The contribution required by this system from the land owners would be:

For the first section—79-10,000 of a cent per foot.

For the second section—6 4-10 mills per foot, or $1 92 per lot of 25 feet by 100 feet.

SECOND DRAINING DISTRICT.

This district comprises the upper portion of the city of New Orleans from Julia street, and that portion of the parish of Jefferson between the upper limit of New Orleans and the upper line of the city of Carrollton, and the Jefferson and Pontchartrain Railroad to Lake Pontchartrain, including the lands from the Metairie Road to the lake between said railroad and the New Canal.

It has an area of 7450 acres, a river front of seven and one-half miles, contracting to a breadth of twelve arpents at the Metairie Ridge; from the ridge to the lake it forms a parallelogram of nearly two and one-half miles in length by a width of about ten arpents, average.

The whole surface, except a small portion, is divided into streets and squares, with only seven avenues running from the river to the rear, and, with the exception of St. Charles street, (location of the Carrollton Railroad,) has no large street or avenue running parallel with the river, between the river and Claiborne street.

There is a very marked depression in the land between the river and St. Charles street, extending nearly the whole length of the city, and from forming a perfect pond of that part of the district.

On account of its peculiar shape, its topographical features and its divisions into squares, the drainage of this district will prove to be a very difficult and expensive problem to solve.

The Second Draining District is under the control of five Commissioners, two appointed by the Mayor of New Orleans and three by the authorities of the parish of Jefferson.

Since the year 1860, when the Commissioners began the work of drainage, they have displayed a great deal of energy and perseverance in carrying on the work, and have caused to be dug over ten miles of canals, whose capacity as reservoirs is equal to 16,382,120 cubic feet. They are now completing the building of a substantial draining wheel, driven by a 100-horse power engine, and they deserve the thanks of the community for the faithful and economical manner in which they have disposed of the money paid over by the property holders, and, as far as I know, it is the first instance in our city of a corporation executing work as cheap as the best contractor could have done.

The area of the Second Draining District in superficial feet is 323,603,339.

The cost of draining is 00,16 per superficial foot.

The amount claimed by the Commissioners is $519,365, instead of $350,000, the maximum fixed by law.

Notwithstanding the zeal of the commissioners, the work as carried on by them will also prove to be a failure. The cause is that the reservoirs and canals are too far in the rear of the district, and that their capacity is not the hundredth part of what is required to contain the amount of water falling during a heavy rain, and in consequence the only land which will be benefited by their work will be that part of swamp between Claiborne street and the rear of Carrollton, in the vicinity of the draining machine, where nobody lives.

Who is to blame for this result?

First—The Legislature who framed the law ordering certain works to be done and during their value, without having obtained an opinion from the State Engineer, Mr. Louis Hebert, as to the practicability and value of such a work.

Second—The Commissioners, for having acted like the Legislature. Had they consulted a competent engineer (and the State gives them means to do it, say $27,000) they would, like their colleagues of the Third District, have never attempted to perform a task so much above the means placed at their disposal by the State.

On account of its peculiar configuration, its large river front, and in order to save property owners from the cost and trouble of immense filling between the river and St. Charles street, the drainage of the Second District must be done on the urban plan, that is, to have a number of canals and reservoirs adequate to the area to be drained, without regard to absorption or evaporation.

This mode, of course, will be very expensive at first, but it carried out properly, will in the end be comparatively cheap.

In addition to the canals already made, numerous others, still larger, will be required, and the streets and avenues, where they will be located, will have to be widened to such an extent as to become, in a few years, beautiful walks and boulevards, affording new and pleasant rides to our population, and also increasing immensely the value of property, not only in their whole extent, but also in their vicinity.

The following described canals are proposed to complete the draining system of the Second Draining District, and to afford, during heavy rains, a prompt and complete drainage to the front lands as far back as Carondelet street, this being the most valuable and most settled portion of the district.

CANALS RUNNING PARALLEL WITH THE RIVER.

1. On Chestnut street, from Louisiana avenue to Carrollton, sixty feet wide by eight feet deep.

2. On St. George street, from New Canal to the upper line of Carrollton, sixty feet wide by eight feet deep.

3. On Claiborne street, from New Canal to Dublin street, in Carrollton, sixty feet wide by eight feet deep.

4. On Galvez street, from New Canal to Nashville avenue, sixty feet wide by eight feet deep.

5. On Broad street, from New Canal to Nashville avenue, sixty feet wide by eight feet deep.

6. Hagan avenue, from New Canal to the intersection of Fourteenth street, Carrollton, sixty feet wide by eight feet deep.

CANALS RUNNING PERPENDICULAR TO THE RIVER.

1. On Melpomene street, from Dryades street to the intersection of Washington street, sixty feet wide by eight feet deep.

2. On Louisiana avenue, Jefferson City, from Chestnut street to Broad street, sixty feet wide by eight feet deep.

3. On Napoleon avenue, from St. George street to Broad street, sixty feet wide by eight feet deep.

4. On State avenue, from Claiborne street to Hagan avenue, sixty feet wide by eight feet deep.

5. On Nashville avenue, from Chestnut street to Claiborne street, 60 feet wide by 8 feet deep.

6. On Foucher from Chestnut street to Hagan avenue, 60 feet wide by 8 feet deep.

The capacity of the above described canals will be 28,654,000 cubic feet, which, added to the capacity of the canals already made, will give a grand total of 54,936,120 cubic feet for the reservoirs of the second draining district.

These canals once made will, with the assistance of two powerful draining machines, keep the district always perfectly dry, and enable people to settle and live on lands which are now, and since the first settlement of the country, known as swamps and morasses of the worst description.

The cost of such a drainage will not exceed a total sum of $600,000 or 185-100 mills per superficial foot. The cost of widening the streets and avenues is not included in the above estimate, because the increased value of the adjoining property, after the proposed improvements, will, in my opinion, more than repay the expenditure.

If the cost of filling the low places between the river and St. Charles street be deducted from the above amount, as said filling will be no longer required, the drainage, instead of being, apparently, a burden to the community, will, on the contrary, be found to be the realization of an immense saving.

THIRD DRAINING DISTRICT.

This district is described, in the law of 1858, as forming a part of the Second and Third Districts of the city of New Orleans, having the following boundaries, to wit: the river, St. Peter street, Carondelet Canal, Bayou St. John, Lake Pontchartrain and Lafayette avenue.

The commissioners appointed to superintend the drainage of this district, after having disposed of the $27,000 appropriated by the State to each of the districts for preliminary expenses, have abandoned the work, without accomplishing anything, except making a general plan of their district, and paying $20,000 to the city of New Orleans toward the building of a draining machine on the Gentilly road, at the intersection of London avenue.

As nothing has been done toward the drainage of this district by the Commissioners, I suggest the propriety of changing the boundaries as fixed by law, in such a manner as to exclude from it the land between the Gentilly ridge, Lafayette avenue, Lake Pontchartrain and the Bayou St. John up to the Metairie Road, and include in the drainage of New Orleans that desirable portion of the Third District between Lafayette avenue and the lower limits of the city, having a front on the river of nearly three miles; reserving for a more propitious time the drainage of the lands fronting the lake between the Bayou St. John and the westerly portion of the line of the Fisherman's Canal.

The new boundaries of the third draining district, as I propose them, will be as follows: Beginning at the river, along St. Peter street and Carondelet Canal to Bayou St. John; along Bayou St. John to Marigny Canal; along Marigny Canal to Gentilly road; along Gentilly road to Lafayette avenue; along Lafayette avenue to Florida Walk; along Florida Walk to Bayou Bienvenue at its intersection with the Fisherman's Canal; along said canal to the river, and along the river to St. Peter street.

This new district covers an area of 5560 acres of the best land, equal in beauty and fertility to any in the other districts; over one-fourth of its area is pretty thickly settled and well improved, another fourth is sparsely inhabited, and the remainder perfectly wild, owing to the want of proper drainage.

Since 1836 several attempts have been made toward the drainage of the Third District. Since 1848 two sections of it are under the care of the city of New Orleans, which is working at great expense two draining machines located within their limits.

Unfortunately for the denizens of these sections, they have as yet derived no material benefit from the undertaking, and the only result thus far has been to shake the faith of the public in the possibility and practicability of artificial drainage.

By a compromise which took place lately, between the city of New Orleans and the Carondelet Canal and Navigation Company, the drainage water will not be permitted to be thrown into Bayou St. John after the first of February, 1869.

In virtue of the above, the Orleans draining machine will have to stop work shortly, and the one at London avenue will hereafter have to drain the two sections from Canal Carondelet to the Pontchartrain railroad. The location of this draining machine has been unfortunate; it stands on one of the highest points of the Gentilly Ridge, and consequently is of very difficult access to the waters pouring toward it during heavy rains from the neighboring low lands. They reach it only by means of a narrow canal cut through the ridge, which forces them to spread over the land below, where they remain so long that it renders cultivation impossible.

On building the London avenue draining machine, a place has been prepared to receive an additional engine and wheel. Should they be temporarily put up, they will have to be removed, as well as the whole building, to a better selected location.

To remedy the present evils and perfect the present system in use, and also extend the benefits of drainage to the section of land extending from the Pontchartrain railroad to the Fishermen's canal, and from the river to Florida walk and Gentilly road, it will be necessary to widen existing canals, and also to open new ones, whose object will be to drain, reclaim and render fit for habitation and culture the whole of the 5360 acres of land contained in the new draining district. The main part and new feature of this project, giving at once an immediate result, will be the cutting of a large canal or reservoir on Florida avenue, 16,280 feet in length, 60 feet wide and 8 feet deep, beginning at the intersection of Marigny canal and the Pontchartrain railroad, and ending at its junction with bayou Bienvenue on the lower side of the city.

Bayou Bienvenue empties into Lake Borgne, and is one of the main natural drains of the lower section of the city, from Esplanade street down to Terre aux Boeufs.

Such a canal could be completed to a width of 30 feet in nine months, by means of two dredge boats, working at both ends, and would afford immediate relief; the other half could be completed in nine months more, and at the end of eighteen months the city would be in possession of over three miles of a canal, equal in size to the New Canal as first dug, and far more beneficial to the population, at the trifling cost of about $2,000.

After the completion of the above canal, numerous others will also be necessary to complete the system of drainage of the Third District. Some will be made by the dredge boats; others already existing will, besides cleaning, require widening and deepening. This work must be done by hand, and the canals, thus improved, will at once be used in conjunction with the Florida avenue Canal.

LOCATION AND DIMENSIONS OF PROPOSED CANALS.

1. Claiborne street, from Carondelet Canal to Elysian Fields street, 30 feet wide by 7 feet deep.

2. Claiborne street, from Elysian Fields to Fisherman's Canal, 40 feet wide by 8 feet deep.

3. Broad street, from Carondelet Canal to Marigny Canal, 35 feet wide by 8 feet deep.

4. St. Bernard avenue, from Claiborne street to Broad street, 35 feet wide by 8 feet deep.

5. Marigny canal, from Bayou St. John to Elysian Fields, 60 feet wide by 8 feet deep.

6. Elysian Fields, from Claiborne to Marigny canal, 35 feet wide by 8 feet deep.

7. London avenue, from Gentilly road to St. Bernard avenue, 30 feet wide by 7 feet deep.

8. St. Anthony street, from Gentilly road to Marigny canal, 30 feet wide by 7 feet deep.

9. Washington avenue, from Goodchildren or St. Claude avenue to Florida walk, 30 feet wide by 7 feet deep.

10. Franklin avenue, from Gentilly road to Florida walk, 30 feet wide by 7 feet deep.

11. Lafayette avenue, from Villere street to Gentilly road, 30 feet wide by 7 feet deep.

12. Florida walk, from Elysian Fields Fisherman's canal, 60 feet wide by 7 feet deep.

13. Clouet street, from Claiborne street to Florida walk, 40 feet wide by 8 feet deep.

14. Jeanne street, from Claiborne street to Florida walk, 40 feet wide by 8 feet deep.

15. Manuel street, from Claiborne street to Florida walk, 40 feet wide by 8 feet deep.

16. Hancock street, from Claiborne street to Florida walk, 40 feet wide by 8 feet deep.

The capacity of the above named canals will be equal to 29,420,144 cubic feet.

The cost of the whole work contemplated, including the building of two large dredge boats, and the erection, at the junction of Bayou Bienvenue and Florida Walk Canal, of a substantial brick building containing two two hundred and fifty horse power engines with the proper boilers and draining wheels, will not exceed $800,000; 1 5-10 mills per superficial foot, or $3 75 per lot of twenty-five feet front by one hundred feet in depth.

RECAPITULATION

Of the cost of draining, as contemplated in the above:

First Draining District	$262,500
Second Draining District, proportion of New Orleans	193,500
Third Draining District	360,000
Grand Total	$816,000

This sum of $816,000 can be relied on as the amount for which the work described in this report can be done.

With the aid of six steam excavators placed on suitable boats, it could be completed within a period of five years, in the meantime affording daily relief to the property in proportion to the progress of the work.

If the city of New Orleans had control of these works (as it ought to have) a yearly appropriation of $165,000, (which could be easily realized from the savings made in only one branch of the public service), would, in that short period of five years, change the whole aspect of New Orleans, bring into cultivation millions worth of property, and perhaps double its population, by affording to settlers any amount of land fit for habitation and manufacturing purposes.

The whole theory of artificial drainage (the only one practicable here) can be illustrated and resumed in a few words.

First—It is by means of canals and reservoirs, to keep below the surface of the soil the accumulation of waters.

Second—Is by means of pumps or draining wheels to remove the waters lodging in the canals and reservoirs, so as to keep their capacity constantly unimpaired.

These two objects being attained, the problem is then solved, and the immediate consequence is to dispense entirely with the incomplete and ruinous mode of filling now in use.

Should this report meet your approval and the kind consideration of a community so deeply interested as ours is in the drainage system, I shall be amply repaid for the trouble and labor I have had to undergo in preparing it.

I remain, respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
L. SURGI, City Surveyor.

Mr. Wynne obtained a suspension of the rules to introduce the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted on its several readings, and transmitted to the Upper Board for concurrence:

Resolved, That the Surveyor be and he is hereby instructed to have the sidewalks on the Front Levee, from the Sugar Refinery to the United States Barracks, laid anew with two planks, each twelve inches wide and two inches thick, making a footway two feet wide, provided the cost does not exceed five hundred dollars.

Mr. Camp obtained a suspension of the rules to introduce the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted and sent to the Upper Board for concurrence:

Resolved, That the Surveyor be and he is hereby requested to furnish the Common Council with a plan of all the parcels of land remaining unsold from the opening of Claiborne street.

The following resolution from the Upper Board was concurred in unanimously on its several readings:

Resolved, That whenever any resolution or ordinance vetoed by the Mayor shall have been passed by the necessary two thirds vote of both branches of the Common Council over said veto, it shall be and is hereby made the imperative duty of the Secretaries of the Boards of Aldermen and Assistant Aldermen to append to such ordinance or resolution a certificate setting forth that such ordinance or resolution was passed over the Mayor's veto by a majority of two thirds of both branches of the Common Council, as required by section twenty-seven the city charter, and consequently becomes of a law, which certificate the Secretaries of the Boards of Aldermen and Assistant Aldermen will attest with their respective signatures; Provided, That the Secretary of that branch of the Common Council in which the ordinance or resolution originated shall enroll said ordinance or resolution, and transmit the same to the Mayor for publication, after having appended the certificate provided for in the foregoing resolution.

Mr. Wynne offered the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted on its several readings:

Resolved, That the Street Commissioner be and is hereby authorized to build a bridge on the west side of the corner of Louisa and Girod streets, Third District.

The Committee on Streets and Landings submitted the following report:

COMMITTEE ON STREETS AND LANDINGS,
Board of Assistant Aldermen,
City of New Orleans, September 22, 1868.

To the Honorable the Board of Assistant Aldermen:

GENTLEMEN—Your committee have the honor to report upon the following subjects referred to them, viz:

Upon the petition of owners of property paying taxes and licenses, representing that they have just cause to complain of the existence of that "nondescript bazar" situated between the Meat and Vegetable Markets in the Second District, as a public nuisance, an encroachment on the public road; and further, that its existence has a depreciating effect on more than two millions of taxable property, your committee would report favorably, and offer the necessary resolution for adoption.

Upon the petition of residents of that portion of the Third Ward bounded by Canal, Common, Galvez, and Broad streets, praying that wooden sidewalks be laid on all the streets intersecting the aforesaid locality, your committee would report unfavorably, said petition not being in conformity with section 119 of the city charter.

Upon the petition of property holders on St. Andrew street, praying for the construction of brick sidewalks with cypress curbing, to be made on the southwest side of St. Andrew street, between Liberty and Claiborne streets, your committee would report favorably, and recommend that the petition be published according to law.

Upon the petition of property holders of Seventh Ward, Third District, praying that plank sidewalks be laid on Dorgenois street, between LaHarpe and St. Bernard avenue, your committee report favorably and offer the necessary resolution for adoption.

GERALD FARRELL,
Chairman;
G. PANDELY,
H. F. STURCKEN,
W. W. WALKER,

The following resolution accompanying the report of the Committee on Streets and Landings, was unanimously adopted on its several readings:

Resolved, That the Surveyor be and he is hereby authorized to construct wooden sidewalks on Dorgenois street, between La Harpe and St. Bernard avenues, provided the cost of the same does not exceed the amount of five hundred dollars ($500).

The following communication from the Streets and Landings Committee was adopted on its several readings by the following vote:

Yeas: Messrs. Kearny, Rose, Aitkens, Walker, Camp, Strucken, Grandpre, Fisher, Morphy, Pandely, Wynne, Farrell and Breen.

Nay: Mr. Pemberton.

WHEREAS, The numerous complaints of property holders paying taxes and licenses, of the Bazar, situated between the Meat and Vegetable markets, as a public nuisance and detrimental to the public interests; be it therefore

Resolved, That the Street Commissioner be and he is hereby authorized and instructed to remove, or cause to be removed, after one months notice, all sheds and all stands, stalls, or other incumbrances now obstructing the levee, streets or sidewalks between the Meat and Vegetable markets of the Second District.

The following resolution, offered by Mr. Strucken, under a suspension of the rules, was referred to the City Attorney for his opinion and report:

Resolved, That one of the main causes of the depreciation of city money and of