

## BUSY TRUSTEES

CITY FATHERS MEET WEEKLY TO GET NEW MUNICIPALITY STARTED OFF RIGHT.

## STREETS TO BE IMPROVED

City Engineer Proposes Plan for Shady Sidewalks—Fire Limit Ordinance Held Over—Telephone Franchise to be Offered for Sale—Ditches to be Protected.

In laying the foundation for a future great municipality, the city trustees of El Centro found more work blocked out for them than could possibly be accomplished by monthly sessions. They have, therefore, been holding adjourned sessions weekly, and it is probable that the press of business will require frequent adjourned sessions throughout the summer.

An adjourned session of the city trustees was held at the City Hall Tuesday night, with all members present except President Pearson. Trustee Brown was elected to serve as president pro tem of the board.

An ordinance establishing fire limits, prescribing the character of buildings within the limits and regulating the storage of explosives and combustibles was presented. Trustee Brown called attention to the effect of the ordinance in preventing the erection of corrugated iron warehouses back of shops, and said it would be a hardship to force merchants to build brick storage places. Corrugated iron, he said, was no less fire-proof than the ordinary brick building.

**No Discrimination.**  
The city attorney said the board could permit iron buildings if it should see fit, but could not confine them to back lots. If it was safe to build of iron back of a shop, it was safe to put up the same kind of building on the street front. An ordinance making a distinction between back and front construction, for the sake of appearances, would not stand as a measure of protection against fire.

No solution of the problem was reached, and the ordinance was laid on the table until the next meeting.

An amendment to the tax ordinance extending time of assessment was given its first reading.

Henry McConnell petitioned for permission to operate a bootblack stand on the sidewalk in front of the Hotel El Centro. Petition was filed.

**Street Improvements.**  
City Engineer H. B. Pearson, Jr., presented a report on the proposed plans for sidewalk and street grade and width. After discussion, the city engineer was instructed to prepare plans and drawings for establishing the official grade for the district from Date canal to the Southern Pacific Railroad; and from the settling tanks to Orange avenue and to report at next regular meeting. The plan provides for twelve-foot sidewalks on business streets, similar to those constructed on Main street. State, Main, Broadway, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth are designated as business streets. On all other streets the distance from property line to curb will be fifteen feet. The plans provide for four-foot cement sidewalks, three feet from the property line, and eight-foot strips to be planted with trees and grass. If property owners co-operate and plant trees along the fence lines, the sidewalks will be shady lanes between rows of trees.

**Franchise for Sale.**  
The Imperial Valley Home Telephone Company, through F. S. Webster, made application for a telephone franchise for the City of El Centro. City Attorney Conkling was instructed to prepare an ordinance of intention to sell such a franchise and present same at the next meeting of the board. During the discussion it was said that the telephone company now using the streets by sufferance had threatened to withdraw from El Centro unless the board should reduce its license tax. One trustee promptly moved that the tax be increased to a figure so high as to insure the early exit of the company. He said the concern could not take his phone out any too soon, as he never had been able to make any use of it. The motion was not taken seriously, but the prospect of losing the services of the old telephone company did not appear to disturb anyone.

**Water-hole Nuisance.**  
Trustee Pellet called attention to the existence of a troublesome and

unsanitary mud slough near the hospital, caused by leakage of the Orange avenue ditch. Teams had broken down the bank, and proper repairs were not made when the bridge was built. The city marshal reported that he had ordered the water company not to turn more than twelve inches of water into the ditch. Property owners protested that deprivation of water would soon cause the loss of trees planted by them along Orange avenue for the public benefit. The marshal was instructed to repair the ditch and abate the mud hole nuisance at once, and the city attorney was instructed to prepare an ordinance prohibiting the driving of wagons across ditches within the city limits. Bridges have been provided, and teamsters must use them.

The board received and approved the bond of R. E. Jauman as city treasurer.

Various bills were presented and laid over to the regular meeting of the board on July 14.

Trustee Hamilton presented a report on the plan to secure land for a septic sewer outfall, and the city attorney was instructed to assist the trustees in forwarding plans for the purchase of land for this purpose.

Board adjourned to meet July 14.

## WATER RIGHTS

(Continued from page 1.)

where water is distributed to users who must buy their water after paying for stock in a subsidiary concern. It was shown during the arguments in federal court that the parent company worked a double deal on water consumers by first compelling them to buy stock from a subsidiary concern and besides pay a water rate made by the parent body and which collected the proceeds both from the sale of stock and from the water rate charged. In consequence of this, when members of the local company desired to extend or make improvements to their irrigating plants they found it necessary to assess the members in order to meet the expense.

**Dictator Defied.**  
For several years this plan of operating irrigating systems in the valley went on. Ranchers were obliged to own one share of water stock in a water company for each acre irrigated. The prevailing rate is 50 cents per acre foot. A number of ranchers owning stock in Company No. 5 finally tired of being bled by paying what they deemed an excessive rate in view of the fact that they were also compelled to pay the price asked by the parent company for stock in their own corporation. They got together and decided to test the rights of the California Development Company to be dictator. Company No. 5 took steps to dispose of 65,000 shares of the unused portion of its capital stock at a price of \$1 per share for the purpose of devoting the proceeds to the enlargement of its irrigating system. When this action was taken the California Development Company stepped in with a claim to ownership of the unused stock of No. 5 and brought injunction proceedings to prevent the shares from being placed on the market.

**Settlers in Control.**  
Judge Wellborn's decision denies the parent company the right to interfere with the plans of its offspring and by said decision the companies owning water stock not issued by the California Development Company or the Mexican concern have a right to dispose of same as they see fit. It practically means that the water rights of Imperial Valley are taken out of the hands of the California Development Company and placed in charge of the settlers themselves.

While the injunction prayed for by the development company was denied by Judge Wellborn, he gave the complainant leave to amend, but it is said the company will let the matter rest where it is and fall back on the rights it asserts under the state law—that is, to charge an amount that will yield at least 6 per cent on its capital stock, plus expenses of furnishing water.

In the matter of rescinding the contract by which the development company agreed to supply water to No. 5 company, Judge Wellborn held that, even though the contract might be illegal, the development company cannot ask for a rescission without offering to return to the water company proceeds already realized under the contract, amounting to \$17,680 for sales of water to July 1, 1906, and sales of 35,633 shares of stock at an estimated value of \$20 a share.

Two contracts are involved, one for the payment of annual rates, and the other for the transfer, in substance, to the California Development Company of the ownership of the stock of the subsidiary companies.

## STILL BUILDING

Work Begins on Brick Block for big Plumbing Outfit.

Next week will witness the beginning of work on a new business block for El Centro, that of the El Centro Plumbing and Machinery Company. The contract for this has been awarded to J. L. Travers.

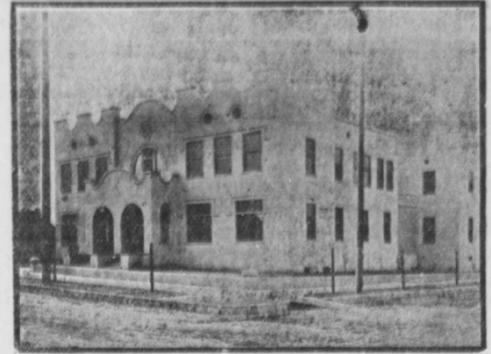
The building, which will be of brick, is to be located on the south side of Broadway, on lots 10 and 11, between Fifth and Sixth streets. The building will have a fifty-foot frontage on Broadway, and will have a depth of 100 feet. The walls, fourteen feet high, will be twelve inches in thickness, and will be built with the intention of adding a second story next fall. Plans also provide for a forty-foot extension to the rear of the building next winter.

The frontage will be filled with two large swinging doors, for the admission of automobiles. The company proposes to establish a first-class auto garage in connection with its machinery and plumbing business. It will put in a large supply of plumbing material for the purpose of supplying the general demands of the Imperial Valley, and has secured a corps of first-class plumbers, which it expects to keep busy during the entire year. The concern will hereafter be under the management of Charles D. Stephens.

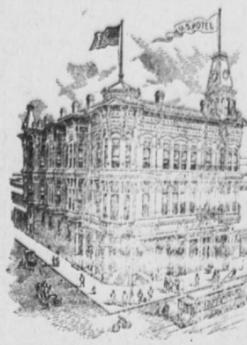
Contractor Travers expects to do a rush job on the construction of the new building, and will have it ready for occupancy by August 15. It will represent an outlay of \$5000.

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	Time Limit 30 Days	Time Limit 6 Months
Between El Centro and Brice	\$ 3.35	\$ 5.00
Between El Centro and Gleason	6.70	10.00
Between El Centro and Holtville	10.00	15.00
Between Holtville and Gleason	3.35	5.00
Between Holtville and Brice	6.70	10.00

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