

ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HELD LAST NIGHT DID MANY GOOD THINGS.

The New Board Declared Elected, and a Strong Stand Taken on the Question of Giving Railroads Right of Way Through the Heart of the City.—Moving For the Great Southwest Industrial Exposition.

The annual meeting of the chamber of commerce was held last night at the chamber of commerce building. An hour was spent by the directors in canvassing the vote for directors. The following were declared elected: U. S. Stewart, C. R. Morehead, S. J. Freudenthal, H. B. Stevens, Felix Martinez, W. G. Walz, A. Courchesne, B. F. Hammett, E. Kohlberg.

There were 86 votes cast out of a membership of less than 200. President Freudenthal then submitted his report, which is printed in full below. The new directors will meet tomorrow afternoon at four o'clock to elect officers for the ensuing year.

Treasurer's Report. The treasurer, H. B. Stevens, submitted a report showing the receipts and expenditures for each month; the total receipts being \$4,867.50, and the expenditures \$4,792.50, leaving a balance of \$75 on January 1.

Vote of Thanks. On motion of A. P. Coles, a unanimous vote of thanks was extended to the retiring directors, Messrs. Emerson, Browne, and Berkey.

Railroads, Right of Way, and Terminals. A. P. Coles presented a long set of resolutions with a preamble setting forth the danger and unsightliness of the railroad tracks through the central portion of the city, and the injury that is now and will always be worked to the property adjacent to the tracks.

Mr. Coles, speaking to his resolutions, emphasized the danger to life and limb, and the constant injury to property, that result from the present conditions. He told how he had warned the Franklin street syndicate when the extensive blocks of property were bought some months ago, that if the purchase was made on account of a railroad the purchasers would have a fight on their hands before they could get their right of way secured.

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people in switching west of the depot, by which means they make every thoroughfare from north to south dangerous at every hour of the day and night.

Mr. Courchesne proposed as a substitute for Mr. Coles's resolution a simple motion calling for the appointment of a committee to take the matter up with the railroads. He agreed with Mr. Martinez that while the resolutions were true in their statements they might have a wrong effect by leading the railroads to believe that they were antagonistic in spirit.

Mr. Coles objected to the appointment of a committee, saying that a committee could do nothing, and what was needed was a public notice to the people and the railroads, of the sentiment and determination of the property interests of the city. He thought delay would be an injustice to the railroads themselves.

E. Kohlberg also favored the resolutions so far as their statements of fact and opinion went, but he did not consider it advisable to pass them at this time in the shape presented.

A. W. Gifford thought that the time was ripe for pushing a union depot project. He suggested that the citizens devise a plan whereby they might secure twenty-five or thirty blocks of ground for a union depot and ample terminal facilities, and organize a terminal association, then to offer such inducements to the railroads, backed up by regulations in council, as to complete the project and have every railroad in the city enjoying the privileges of the joint arrangement.

H. D. Slater suggested that while the facts stated in Mr. Coles's preamble and resolutions were well known to all, the railroads as well as the citizens, they were put in such a way as might perhaps lead the railroads to think that they were in the nature of a threat or an unfriendly warning. He believed that the ends of the resolutions would best be subserved by leaving out all the preamble, which recited the dangers and injury to property attaching to present conditions, and confining the resolutions to a simple statement of the sense of the chamber of commerce, and a declaration of intentions.

Accordingly he offered two brief resolutions which seemed to him to cover the requirements, and these were accepted by Mr. Coles and Mr. Walz, who had seconded Mr. Coles's resolution. At Mr. Coles's suggestion a third resolution assuring the railroads of the friendship and appreciation of the people and the chamber was added, and the resolutions were finally passed as follows:

Resolved, That we, the citizens of El Paso, represented by the chamber of commerce, extend to all railroads now at El Paso or that may come in the future the assurances of our profound friendship and recognition of the inestimable value of each to the welfare and prosperity of our city, and that we are mindful that our interests are identical, and

Resolved, That it is the sense of the chamber of commerce that no more railroads should be given right of way or terminal privileges in the heart of the city, and

Resolved, That this chamber of commerce will endeavor in every way to induce the present and prospective railroads to establish joint terminal facilities."

Committee Appointed. H. D. Slater moved that the chair appoint a committee of five to formulate a plan to bring about the desired ends as indicated in the resolution just passed. The motion was carried, and on motion of Mr. Slater the chair (President Freudenthal) appointed C. R. Morehead, U. S. Stewart, H. B. Stevens, B. F. Hammett, and A. P. Coles to serve on such a committee.

On motion of Mr. Slater the committee above named was directed to go before the city council at its regular meeting tonight and formally present the above resolutions to the council. It was agreed by all that there was need of immediate action, and the committee will get to work at once.

To Aid the Carnival. On motion of Mr. Coles, it was requested that every member of the chamber render all the assistance in his power to the Carnival committee, especially in the matter of securing accommodations for visitors.

Monthly Meetings. The president called the attention of the members to the fact that the by-laws provided for a monthly meeting of the chamber on the first Wednesday after the second Tuesday of each month and earnestly requested that all attend.

The Great Southwest Exposition. At the close of the general meeting the new board of directors met informally and, with W. G. Walz acting as temporary chairman, discussed at some length plans for the proposed Great Southwest International Industrial Exposition, to be held in the winter of 1902. The chair appointed a committee of five, Messrs. Martinez, Hammett, Gifford, Hart, and Earle, to present

the scheme to the coming mining convention in the name of the chamber of commerce, and make an effort to obtain a guarantee of five or ten thousand dollars from the mining men, conditional upon the success of El Paso's efforts to raise a large sum for the exposition.

It was the sense of all the directors that the aid of Mexico and the United States government, as well as that of the territories and Texas, can be secured toward the establishment here of a permanent industrial exposition.

President's Report. Mr. Freudenthal's report was as follows: Members of the El Paso Chamber of Commerce:

The chamber of commerce has completed its initial year and fully demonstrated its usefulness as an organization founded for the express purpose of advancing the interests of the city and tributary country, and I desire to briefly call your attention to its more important work.

The chamber has been duly incorporated and organized under the laws of Texas and suitable quarters centrally located have been secured for a term of three years. This was possible through the liberality of sixteen members who each loaned \$100 to pay for the building. This incurred a debt that the chamber will gradually pay.

The directors, having recognized the fact that mining is the greatest industry of this section and that too much cannot be done to encourage the development of its mineral resources, have at considerable trouble and expense gathered together a mineral display that is most creditable and useful in advertising the mineral resources of this section, and at the same time has placed El Paso on record as a city that is trying to develop all its surrounding country. It has demonstrated that the usefulness of the chamber of commerce is not confined to the city limits. The mining committee has proved highly useful in preparing this exhibit, and great credit is due to the members of the committee and its efficient assistant, Major S. M. Davis.

The directors have also given much attention to the international dam and always worked with the committee on irrigation, a committee that has at all times been ready to act. It has been the aim of the directors in working for the international dam that nothing should be done that might be objectionable to our neighbors in New Mexico. With this end in view our representatives in Washington have been advised that it is the desire of the chamber of commerce that the litigation now pending over the Elephant Butte dam be decided at the earliest possible time, that this important work might go on, and further, that the objectionable clauses of the Stevens bill be eliminated.

The Culberson bill, now pending before congress, will, in all probability, be so modified as to contain nothing that might be objectionable to New Mexico. While there still remains much to be done to obtain favorable legislation in this matter, much has already been accomplished. It is to be hoped that during the present session of congress the dam will be assured.

The matter of freight rates has had a great deal of attention from the committee on transportation, one of the most important committees of the chamber. This committee has given the matter most patient study, and decided that it would be necessary to organize a freight bureau in this city and employ an experienced person to take charge of same. With this end in view the committee has obtained the signatures of practically all the important shippers in the city to an agreement wherein all shippers agree to act together in matters of mutual interest. This secures unity of action among the shippers, and the first step has been accomplished. It now remains for the committee to secure a revenue to pay the expenses of the freight bureau. The committee has taken some action in this matter and prepared a list assessing members of the chamber and others a certain amount to pay the expense of such a bureau. As soon as it is definitely known what amount can be secured a competent person will be employed, and the important matter of freight rates will have proper attention.

That there are now many discriminations against El Paso on local shipments out of the city is not disputed. The rates charged in many instances are prohibitory but we will never be in a position to obtain redress until we can go before the roads that enter the city and present our claims intelligently. We have no disposition to antagonize any of the roads, but shall expect and demand fair treatment, and the commercial interests of El Paso can not advance until this is accorded us.

The question of manufactures has at many times had the attention of the chamber through its committee on manufactures. In some instances bonuses for establishing manufactures here have been asked for. In all such instances it has been decided, that while manufactures should be accorded all possible aid and encouragement, it would be unwise to give a bonus in money to establish such, although certain aid might in some instances be given, such as a gift of land for building to encourage industries not already established here.

The directors have also interested themselves in many other matters of importance to the city. Persistent, but so far unsuccessful, efforts have been made to have the ineffective quarantine against San Francisco abolished. A number of distinguished visitors to the city have been entertained, particularly Mr. Aspiroz, the Mexican ambassador to the United States. Encouragement has been given to the establishment of a mining association at El Paso, and this will be successfully accomplished during the approaching carnival, and will do much towards making El Paso a center of the great mining country surrounding us to which we must look for our future growth.

The directors have recognized the great importance of the Bisbee road now building, and are taking active measures to have this road built to El Paso, having practically offered the projectors \$50,000 bonus to build to this city. That this road will be of immense advantage if built to this city is undoubted. It will directly connect El Paso with the great productive copper camps of this section, and we must not let this splendid opportunity pass by. The people of El Paso should be a unit and work together, and leave nothing undone to bring this road to our city.

A large amount of literature, setting forth the advantages of El Paso, has been distributed, and an extensive correspondence carefully attended to by our efficient secretary, Mr. Russell, to whom a large share of the credit for the success of the chamber is due.

A matter of importance for which the El Paso chamber of commerce takes full credit has been the movement to form a state commercial organization, with a view to having all the commercial bodies of the state act together in matters of mutual interest. The El Paso chamber of commerce, after an extensive correspondence with the other commercial bodies of the state, has issued a call for a meeting at Austin on January 25. All the commercial bodies of the state have been interested and we have every reason to believe that much good will result therefrom to El Paso and the entire state.

The present membership of the chamber is a little over 200 and the monthly income about \$250, while the regular fixed monthly expenses are about \$200. There is practically no cash in the treasury, and inasmuch as the income and the fixed monthly expenses of the chamber are nearly equal it will be seen that the usefulness of the chamber will be seriously impaired unless more income is obtained. The membership of the chamber should be largely increased. There are many desirable persons in the city who would become members if its advantages were properly set before them. The chamber needs a few volunteers to solicit membership, and I feel satisfied that with proper effort the membership can be largely increased.

The White Oaks and Sierra Madre roads and the El Paso Smelting Works have contributed liberally and are entitled to our lasting gratitude. All the other railroads have cooperated with the chamber by furnishing transportation for our representatives and for material for our mineral exhibit.

In conclusion, I urge the people of El Paso to liberally support the institution which works for the interest of each and every one, and which has already accomplished much good and will accomplish much more in the future. No man who has the interest of the city at heart can afford to refuse support to such an organization as this and if given proper support by our people, and if the members themselves will take proper interest and be willing to give a few hours of their time for the public good, great results highly beneficial to our city will follow, and it will become a power for good in the community. (Signed) S. J. Freudenthal, President.

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