

Through the Legal Department's efforts a reduction of approximately 8 per cent on residence charges has already been authorized, but it is contended that still further reduction should be made.

Fourth: The case emanating from the proposed consolidation of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company and the Great Western Power Company. The Great Western Power Company now pays approximately Twenty Thousand Dollars per year as franchise taxes to the city. The Pacific Gas and Electric Company, due to technicalities not necessary to discuss here, pays no such tax. City Attorney Higgins is taking the matter before the Railroad Commission in order to insure the city against loss of franchise taxes by the consolidation proposed.

Some other cases successfully contested by the City of Oakland were two condemnation proceedings, one adding additional acreage to Sequoia Park and the other bringing to the city the right of way for Hegenberger Road, the new highway saving twenty minutes between the heart of the city and the Municipal Airport. Another case, condemnation pending, is that of the City of Oakland against the Japanese-American Association in the matter of land lying south of the Municipal Auditorium. Other important cases include that of Jordan vs. Oakland, wherein private citizens are attacking the validity of the Grand Avenue zoning ordinance, and the Bond Premium case, the decision of which will indicate whether the premiums paid above the par value of harbor bonds go into the city general fund, for the purpose of bond redemption, or go with the bond money itself for purposes of harbor construction.

Rate Department Vital

Due to the experience in the above Public Utility cases the City Attorney is convinced that there is need for establishing within the Legal Department of the city a Rate Department, to deal solely with Public Utility cases. In this I fully concur. Public Utility rates vitally affect every man, woman and child, every home, business, and every industry in the City of Oakland. The legal care of utilities and their rates demands full time work by very competent legal specialists. I would urge that in the budget of 1930-1931 sufficient moneys be appropriated to the Legal Department for the creation of such a department. The salary would be saved many times over in the course of a single year.

Legal Counsel for All Boards

With the increased business of the Park Board, Library Board, Playground Board, Civil Service Board, their need for legal counsel becomes daily a growing necessity. Under the Park and Playground Departments there is ever present the necessity of insuring the city against personal damages. With the expansion of these two departments in the way of land acquisition and building construction—this also pertaining to the Library Department—need for legal counsel is mandatory. Similarly with the Civil Service Department, which has to do with age requirements and anticipated pension systems.

For these boards, therefore, I urge the appointment of a legal counsel. Such an official could, of course, be a deputy under the City Attorney, but delegated specifically for the task of caring for the legal affairs of the above-named departments. He should be available for all board meetings and should make himself thoroughly conversant with the activities of each board at all times.

STATE BUILDING FOR OAKLAND

Legislative Counsel Does Effective Work

For the last meeting of the State Legislature the City Council, at my request, created the position in the Legal Department of Legislative Counsel for the City of Oakland. A well-known attorney received the appointment and attended Legislature in the city's behalf. Among other duties he was given that of gaining an appropriation for the purpose of constructing a State Building in Oakland. Such a building, built and