

LAKWOOD PARK INFORMATION COUNCIL

The LAKWOOD PARK INFORMATION COUNCIL recently held a meeting in the Riely School for the purpose of investigating the current annexation drive to make this area a part of the City of Long Beach. Some 250 residents attended, and because of the interest shown the facilities of the school proved to be too small.

The meeting brought to light many interesting facts surrounding the annexation picture. Because of what was learned that evening and through subsequent thorough investigations the following information is now presented.

(1) THE ANNEXATION DRIVE

The Annexation Drive despite protests to the contrary, is being directed by political interests in the City of Long Beach, according to a carefully arranged plan. (The City Manager and his assistants have publically debated the issue on numerous occasions although by law the move must come from RESIDENTS in the areas.) The so called "Grass Roots" movements now underway are following almost to the letter the plan for annexation as laid down in the Wentz Report, prepared by a former city official under the direction of the Long Beach City Manager.

(2) TAXES:

Annexation will offer no savings in taxes. Although Long Beach claims a low tax rate, the city assesses property at least 10% higher than the county, and many of our present tax districts will continue in spite of annexation.

(3) SCHOOLS:

The Long Beach Unified School District of which Lakewood is a part along with the City of Signal Hill and Avalon—hasn't anything to do with the City of Long Beach other than the fact that the Administrative offices are located there and Long Beach is also a part of the Unified District. The Schools of California are a state institution operated by the county. Every taxpayer in Lakewood Pays the Exact Same Amount of Taxes for schools as the Long Beach taxpayer and not a cent less. Annexation to Long Beach will not change the School Tax for anyone in the district, one cent.

Distortions of this have repeatedly appeared in the L.B. papers. Trying to show that Lakewood is getting a FREE ride. It just isn't so. Any bond issue for new schools in Lakewood will also contain provision for schools for Long Beach. If the bond issues are not voted by the district the greatest hardships will be felt in the overcrowded schools in Long Beach. Education is not a sectional privilege.

(4) WATER:

Cheaper by 25% approximately in Lakewood.
Lakewood—1600 cu. ft. @ \$2.95 per month
\$35.40 per year

Long Beach—1600 cu. ft. @ \$5.96 per month
\$71.52 per year

A savings of \$12.12 per year by staying Lakewood

By annexation to Long Beach it will mean that Long Beach will have to spread their share of Metropolitan Water over a greater area. They will not receive any more water than they are now entitled to. This is because of the membership fees paid. On our tax bills would appear a special assessment for the Metropolitan Water District of \$.28 per \$100 or \$5.60 per year average and we would pay an average of \$12.00 more per year for water.

If we do not annex and as members of the Central Basin Water District, when it becomes a member of the Metropolitan Water District we would be entitled to our share of the Metropolitan Water District supply based on the membership fees we pay. All told this membership, back taxes for membership, operating cost to us, paying off 1952 dollars with 1953 dollars, at \$.25 per \$100 assessed valuation or \$5.00 for operating cost plus \$.22 per \$100 assessed valuation (tax decreases each year) for back taxes or \$4.40 per year equals \$9.40 more we will pay than what we pay now. However, we are paying \$12.12 less for our water, so we will still save \$2.72 per year with our present setup. These assessments will appear on the County tax bill whether we are annexed or stay Lakewood.

(5) INSURANCE:

The rates in Lakewood are slightly higher because of the past rating. This is being equalized as fast as possible. We have had 3 reductions of insurance rates in the past 6 years.

Present rates are:

Lakewood: \$5.00 per \$1,000 for 3 years on a shingle roof, less for composition roof or \$45.00 for \$9,000 insurance for 3 years.

Long Beach: \$3.75 per \$1,000 for 3 years on a shingle roof, less for composition roof or \$33.75 for \$9,000 insurance for 3 years.

A total savings of \$3.41 per year. This would not be changed by annexation. The Board of Fire Underwriters are studying adjustment of our rates now. In addition there are many reliable companies which will write policies for the same cost in Lakewood as is paid in Long Beach.

(6) GAS RATES:

Based on consumption of 6,000 cubic feet of gas per month as an average.

Lakewood: 6,000 cu. ft. @ \$4.61 equals \$55.32

Long Beach: 6,000 cu. ft. @ \$4.29 equals \$52.48

A difference of \$2.84 per year.

However, you get free customer service through Southern California Gas Company.

Long Beach, is faced with a serious gas shortage, and they admit they will be forced to buy their gas from Texas. They recently signed a contract with Richfield to bring in gas from Huntington Beach, and Spokesmen have stated they face an increase in Long Beach Rates.

(7) ELECTRICITY:

Southern California Edison Company has informed us that the average consumption for a single family dwelling is about 85 kilowatt hours per month and that Long Beach is in their D6 Schedule, while Lakewood is in their D3 schedule. This results in the following:

Long Beach		
KWH	Unit Price	Amount
First 14		\$.85
Next 36	.035	1.26
Next 35	.02	.70
85	Total	\$2.81

Lakewood		
KWH	Unit Price	Amount
First 16		\$.90
Next 34	.045	1.46
Next 35	.029	1.02
85	Total	\$3.38

Thus the difference is about 57 cents per month or about \$7.00 per year, as compared with the \$10.00 as shown above. Is annexation to Long Beach the only method to get equal rates? The answer is no. Here again the Public Utilities Commission has control over the rates of the Edison Company. The Edison Company is now in the course of a complete rate survey

and they assure us they will give Lakewood their earnest consideration.

It is our belief that the new pattern for utility rates has been set, within the last year, by the General Telephone Company, the Southern California Gas Company, the Pacific Gas and Electric Company and others who now give the same rate for the densely populated areas adjacent to the cities as the rates in effect within the City. Ask yourself this question, "Does it cost the Edison Company more to serve us now than it would if we annexed?" The obvious answer is NO. We therefore feel confident that both the Edison Company and the Public Utilities Commission will take this into account when their rate increase application is filed later this year.

SUMMARY ON UTILITIES

Savings	Lakewood as we are	Long Beach
Water	\$12.12 per year	
Insurance	No change	
Gas		\$2.84
Electricity	Possible	6.84
	\$12.12	\$9.68

It is as stated no savings on electric rates are expected by annexation. The cost of supplying the electricity will not change. Savings as we are equals \$2.44 per year.

(8) FIRE PROTECTION:

We have here now one of the highest rated fire departments in the United States. Our protection here is backed up by the county's 89 fire companies and three ladder companies—105 pieces of equipment. On every call of fire to the Lakewood Station, three fire companies answer the call. If it is a two-alarm fire, six other companies roll on the fire. Our protection has been excellent. There has never been a major fire in Lakewood.

(9) POLICE PROTECTION:

Present: (5)—2-man Patrol cars on swing shift.

(3)—2-man Patrol cars on graveyard shift.

(4)—1-man Patrol cars day shift.

(1)—Motorcycle Patrol day shift—and extra Policeman from 3 - 5 p.m.

We now have patrol cars operating in Lakewood on a 24-hour basis, with additional patrol cars only 4 miles away. We also have the State Highway Patrol covering the area on a 24-hour basis. Most important, the County has plans approved and all necessary funds for a 50-man Sheriff station and an 11-car prowler system to be built in Lakewood. The site has been acquired and the only thing holding up construction is talk of annexation. The Sheriff's representative

confirmed this at the recent meeting. The County does not want to make a capital expenditure here if it only has to be turned over to the city. Long Beach officials have admitted that they will not build a station here, and the Long Beach Police Department is over 9 miles away.

(10) PARKS AND RECREATION:

Lakewood recently voted a SELF GOVERNING Parks and Recreation and Parkway District. This was for the purpose of landscaping the parkways strips as well as acquiring additional park sites and developing them to add to the 3 we already have. A \$175,000 Olympic type swimming pool is now under construction. The parks and recreation future for Lakewood looks very good if we don't annex. Remember, now Lakewood decides for itself what it wants to have in the way of parks. If we become part of Long Beach whatever we get out here has first to be approved by the 9 members of the city council and then voted on by the whole of Long Beach. Why would Long Beach residents want to vote funds for Lakewood Parks that they would have to travel 8 to 10 miles to enjoy, when Long Beach still has park sites within their city limits that have been sitting for years without being developed.

(11) REPRESENTATION:

Lakewood with its more than 105,000 population is now the 7th largest community in the State of California and larger than 97% of all U.S. cities. But under the provisions of the Long Beach Charter and according to the plans underway, Lakewood would be a "Voice in the Wilderness" as far as any representation is concerned. Lakewood will not be one district with one councilman to represent us. Rather Lakewood will be divided among the already existing districts in such a fashion that we would be greatly outnumbered by the large segments of Long Beach population already in those districts. If Lakewood wanted to obtain some need or service that would be desirable for us out here we could be overwhelmingly out-voiced by those in our councilmanic district who live in Long Beach and whose interests are entirely different from ours.

The recent school board election is a good example. McMillan won in Lakewood but he was voted down by the rest of Long Beach.

(12) PRISON FARM:

When over 3,000 Lakewood residents sent in written protest, and 450 Lakewood residents went down to the Long Beach City Hall in person to protest the building of the Long Beach Prison Farm in Lakewood, the Long Beach City Council received the delegation with open disgust and total disregard for the wishes and feelings of the people of Lakewood. The Long Beach City Council ignored the protests and gave the order to go ahead with the project.

It was a different story, however, when a small

group of 41 persons in our area signed a letter requesting permission to start annexation proceedings. The City Council and the City Manager's office waved the usual procedure, and moved with all speed to help these few to start annexation. They only seem to care about Lakewood when there is something in it for Long Beach.

Those who have been here long enough, remember that when Lakewood fought to get rid of the hog farms, the City of Long Beach was the only organization which tried to prevent the removal of the farms (that's where they got rid of their garbage). On another occasion Long Beach tried to locate its garbage dump here (in Heartwell Park).

Soon we will again be plagued with noise from the race cars running in the stadium to all hours of the night. The City of Long Beach has leased the stadium for such purposes. Last year when a group from Lakewood asked if something could be done to reduce the noise, a member of the Long Beach Council replied, "Frankly, we don't care what you people in Lakewood think."

When Lakewood tried to get the open area west of Paramount zoned for residential purposes, the City of Long Beach stepped in and succeeded in getting the property zoned for industry. The owners of the property are still trying to get it re-zoned for houses, but if Long Beach has its way, prevailing winds will be blowing the smoke of industry over our homes. It doesn't seem that the City officials of Long Beach have demonstrated any real concern over what is best for our community.

(13)

There is no question but that Lakewood would make a very ripe revenue plum for Long Beach. The Wentz Report states eventually Long Beach will receive 7 times as much revenue from Lakewood as will have to be spent here. We have hundreds of miles of new streets, well lighted, with all improvements in and requiring a minimum of maintenance upkeep. No one in Lakewood is on the "dole." We are a young progressive community. Unlike Long Beach with its many problems and very large population of older persons, Lakewood's destiny lies in the future. The best for Lakewood is still to come, if we are not forced to share the increasing burdens of an older city.

Long Beach beaches are among the finest in the world, and its amusement and entertainment centers will continue to be an attraction, but . . . We don't have to join Long Beach to enjoy those things.

Those who want annexation argue, "join Long Beach and have the prestige of being a part of a big, famous city," but what good will the prestige do us if we can have no say in running the affairs of our own community. Our prestige would probably be no better than that of North Long Beach (formerly Virginia City). Lakewood would be known as "East Long Beach." We would be the most remote section of the City, and like the remote sections of any city, it would probably be allowed to run down.

Currently under study by competent, unprejudiced experts are at least three other types of government for Lakewood other than annexing to Long Beach. All of these seem to offer many advantages over annexation. Certainly we should not rush to join Long Beach until we look further into these other possibilities.

(14)

In the meantime there is a way to stop annexation. The law provides that, if a majority of the property owners protest annexation, all further proceedings must stop for at least one year.

The Lakewood Information Council needs volunteers to help get these petitions signed. Annexation can only be stopped if we who live here do something about it.

The Long Beach papers would have us believe that annexation is an inevitable snow ball, and that every one wants to get on the bandwagon. The headline about the move in our own area is a good example.

If you want to do something to stop annexation, please call any of the below listed numbers. The more people who help out, the quicker and more easily the job can be done.

JOSEPH J. COVAS, Chairman
4551 Lakewood Blvd.
L.B. 39-3728

RAY CLARK
4702 Hayter
L.B. 39-2963

MR. D. HYNERSON
2864 Alred
L.B. 20-5612

KENETH VEEDER
4831 Levelsidge
L.B. 39-5283

MRS. MAXINE FILSON
2937 Deerford
L.B. 20-1378

B. C. McCABE
3606 Loomis
L.B. 39-4514

EDWARD STRICKLER
4467 Lakewood Blvd.
L.B. 39-4179

YOUR COMMUNITY WILL BE JUST AS GOOD AS YOU MAKE IT