

Fairhope Financial Report Released By City Council

FINANCIAL REPORT

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ness" and should with continued improvement in business procedures and administration be able to add increasing benefits to all our residents. Should be able to continue to hold the cost line and and perhaps reduce the electric power rate. Our well water system is one of the best in the state, we now have a million gallon elevated tank and are now adding another well so the supply will be adequate. That healthy situation was financed by the revenue of the gas system. A gas system that has had 7 price increases made to it by the pipe line company and none of those increases were passed on to the residential customers.

It is in the field of assistance to other departments that our power system operation has helped the city and its people. The utility funds have helped the day-to-day general operations of the city in the amount of \$45,207.00 during 1963. In addition they have built the City Garage, helped the hospital, built public restrooms, pur-

chased property, helped the schools, etc. All very important and needed items.

Our operation is so the reason that Fairhope can function with a low business license charge; no city sales tax; no city gasoline tax; no parking meters; and a low garbage collection fee. Thus it seems that we are indeed fortunate that our city officials have had the foresight to obtain, and to hold on to, the utility systems.

New Chamber Manager Assumes Duties



WESLEY E. STRAULEY
Major USMC, Retired

Major Strauley voluntarily retired from the U. S. Marine Corps in November, 1963 after 25 years of active service. Spent three years 1951-1954 in the Mobile area as Officer in Charge of the Marine Corps Reserve Training Center, at that time located on Pinto Island.

Mr. Strauley's military career has included several years of staff work involving planning and organizing in complex organizations. Strauley has stated his intention of working vigorously to carry out the policies and to accomplish the administrative work of the Chamber of Commerce board of directors. "I have always endeavored to improve conditions and relations in my area of authority and coordination in order to reach the expected high standard of living. I will make every effort to insure the Eastern Shore community receives full consideration from external sources on matters of betterment," Strauley stated.

Strauley is married, has two children, 5 and 2. His wife, Marie, from Mobile, was an employee for several years with the State Department of Agriculture covering the local counties.

By Pete Byrne,
City Administrator

A copy of a condensed version of the City Annual Audit for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1963 will be found on page 2 of this edition of the Courier. It is being published in accordance with the wishes and authorization of the City Council and this is in line with the policy of the council making available to the people of Fairhope all council proceedings.

The audit was made by the firm of Smith, Dukes and Buckalew of Mobile and its original form entailed five separate printed pamphlets . . . certainly much too long and involved to print in its entirety. However, there are extra copies of the audit in the City Hall that may be borrowed by any resident of the city if they wish to study it more thoroughly. The summarizing report as printed in the paper has been abstracted from the complete audit and does outline the financial condition of the city and its various basic funds.

This is a "bonus year" for city operations as it is the first time that the total gross revenue exceeded one million dollars. That fact puts the business operation of Fairhope in the same category of many cities 3 to 4 times our size. This revenue is a result of the city operating the utility systems. The gross revenue of the gas and electric systems totaled nearly \$700,000.00.

City operation of all the systems is somewhat out of the ordinary, particularly in small cities. It is more common in some sections of the Midwest and in the Northwest. But often in those sections natural gas is hard to come by so there are not too many towns that are able to operate both main power utility systems. I do know that most of the officials that I have met at municipal and public power conventions wish that they were municipal functions.

The benefits of utility ownership to the residents of Fairhope have been positive and they certainly should increase as the growth of the city and the systems increase. The struggle of cities for operational revenues is well known to all, certainly well talked about, and most have borrowed up to their legal state debt limit and many have asked for remedial legislation to EXCEED that limit. Fairhope, on the contrary, with a borrowing limit for General Obligation Bonds of over \$400,000.00, has at the present time REDUCED the general obligation indebtedness to \$30,000.00.

We have reached a stage that is on the threshold of "big business" (Continued on Last Page)