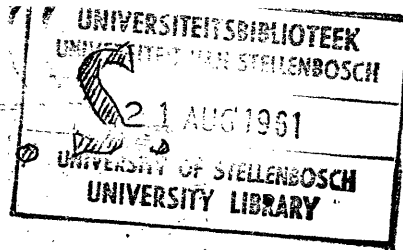




I. M. S.



No. 45. STELLENBOSCH; August, 1949.

INFORMATION IN CONNECTION WITH THE MUNICIPALITY
OF STELLENBOSCH.

1. THE FARM LAND OF THE MUNICIPALITY.

There has in the past been occasion for I.M.S. to refer to the land owned by the Council. Some of this land is under trees and is being exploited by the Council itself. Some 450 morgen are used in this way. Other land is used for public services such as sewage disposal, football fields and golf course. Some 120 morgen can be accounted for in this way. In addition to this some of the land vesting in the Council consists of small holdings which are let to employees of the Council. Not more than 16 morgen fall in this class. It is, therefore more important to dwell on the Municipal land that is let to farmers. As this matter has been discussed by the Lands, Parks and Forestry Committee of the Council, some interesting facts have become available.

By way of introduction it must be stated that the value and price of farm land has increased immensely during the last ten years. It, therefore, stands to reason that the rents must also be increased. The Councillors are the trustees of the ratepayers and must obtain the best return from the land that is possible. As trustees the Councillors must husband the land to the best of their ability. In order to decide what rents would be equitable, Messrs. A.J. Knott and F.E. Wheeler were asked to draw up a list of the lots owned by the Council and

leased to farmers. From their very careful and detailed report it appears that 33 lots are let to farmers. These lots together total up to more than 1900 morgen. Of this big aggregate 295 morgen are described as unsuitable for cultivation by the gentlemen making the report.

While there are 33 lots that are being let, there are only 26 lessees as a few farmers lease two or even three lots.

How much is being paid per morgen at the present time? The results on this point can be tabulated as follows:-

RENT PAID PER MORGEN PER ANNUM.

<u>Rent per Morgen p.a.</u>	<u>Number of Lots.</u>
2/6 to 5/-	6
5/1 to 7/6	14
7/7 to 10/-	5
10/1 to 12/6	1
12/7 to 15/-	1
15/1 to £1	2
More than £1	4
	33

Several questions suggest themselves immediately. One is: Why do the rents differ so much? Why is not a flat rate charged? It has already been stated that some of the land is not suitable for cultivation and if the percentage of suitable land in a lot is high, it stands to reason that the average price per morgen for that lot must be higher than for land where the percentage is much lower. The fact is, moreover that the land was leased at different times and that old prices have been allowed to remain pretty

much what they used to be. That means that some prices have become out of date completely. Some of our land is actually being let at 2/10d. per morgen which is certainly unjustifiable. A third factor also influences the price of the lease and that is whether the land concerned is covered with vines or not, for it need hardly be explained that a morgen covered with vines is a paying proposition at the moment.

A fourth factor affecting the price of the lease is whether there is a dwelling on the property or not. In a few cases houses are available.

A second question may be: Is there any particular reason why four properties have to pay more than £1 per morgen? One of the properties is in the town itself and is about $\frac{1}{2}$ morgen in extent. Another, about 10 morgen in extent, is on the Municipal boundary and very valuable. The other two properties are also considered to be very valuable.

Possibly a third question is: How much is obtained at present from all the land leased? To this the answer is £1,100. For the 1900 morgen that are being leased to farmers the Municipality is receiving an average rent of 11/7d. per morgen.

As prices have risen enormously and as 11/7d. per morgen is hardly a reasonable charge at present, the Lands, Parks and Forestry Committee of the Council decided to overhaul the whole matter and fixed the new leases at some £2 per morgen. As a result of this suggestion, discussions took place between the farmers concerned and the responsible Committee. It was eventually decided not to insist on the new suggested rents

but to make a temporary arrangement for one year. Under this temporary arrangement the Council will benefit considerably and time will be gained for arriving at an equitable arrangement. For the information of ratepayers a portion of the minutes of the Committee Meeting is given below. It must be added that the members of the Lands, Parks and Forestry Committee are the following:-

Mr. W.A. Krige (Chairman), His Worship the Mayor (Mr. Louis Hofmeyr), Mr. A.H. Bosman, Dr. P.J.S. de Wet and Mr. G.P. Blake.

2. FARMERS HIRING LAND MEET THE LANDS COMMITTEE.

The Minutes of the abovementioned meeting which took place on 20th May, 1949, read as follows:-

"After the Chairman had welcomed those present, farmers hiring ground from the Council addressed the meeting and the following matters were mentioned:-

- (1) The farmers considered that the land rents had been increased too much. At present prices of ground were high but a considerable amount of the ground leased had acquired its value mainly by the labour they had put into it.
- (2) All the ground was not suitable for vines.
- (3) The farmers were satisfied that the land rents be increased but they had understood that the basis would be £1 per morgen per year. They also considered that they should have been given longer notice, say a year, of the increase in rentals.
- (4) Many of the farmers had planted most of their vines on Municipal ground and the quotas had been fixed on that ground.

- (5) Some of the farmers had been hiring the ground from the Council for very many years and considered that they should be given special consideration. They were quite prepared to buy the ground but the Council had refused to sell.

The Chairman explained the Council's point of view. It considered that the ground had been leased too cheaply and it was now trying to fix a basis which would be fair to all. It had to consider its ratepayers. When fixing the new rentals the Council had taken into consideration that some of the ground was of poorer quality than the rest.

As regards the ground which the Council had decided not to lease again immediately, the position was that a decision would have to be arrived at within short what ground the distilleries required for the disposal of effluent.

His Worship the Mayor (Cr. Louis Hofmeyr) explained the financial position to the farmers. The valuation of the ground had increased but the Council had not up to the present increased the rentals. The Council only wished to fix an equitable basis of charges that would be fair to its ratepayers and also to the farmers. At present the rentals received constituted less than 2% of the value of the land. The Council's expenditure had increased but its income had not increased accordingly. It had also to be borne in mind that a large percentage of the properties in the town were not ratable. The inhabitants of the town also paid rates to the Divisional Council. The farmers had admitted that the rentals had been low and that they would be prepared to pay £1 per morgen per year. For many years they had had the benefit of the low rentals.

Mention had also been made that the value of the ground had been increased by the work of the farmers.

This was a condition of the leases entered into with the Council. The Council wished for the co-operation of the farmers and for this reason had agreed to discuss the matter with them in a friendly spirit.

As regards the question of selling the ground, the Council had considered it many times but the majority of the Councillors were against selling.

After some further discussion it was resolved to recommend that all the ground in question be leased to the present lessees for a further year at a rental of £1 per morgen per year and that a Committee representing the farmers in the meantime discuss matters further with the Council's Lands Committee in order to settle on the future rentals to be charged.

The farmers nominated Messrs. T.J. Roos, D.D. Joubert, J.W. Roux and T.J. Neethling as their representatives."

3. ELECTION OF COUNCILLORS.

As the following Councillors, viz. Mrs. S. Pienaar, Mr. W.A. Krige, Dr. P.J.S. de Wet and Professor J.C. de Wet, must retire by rotation in September, the annual election will take place on the first Monday of the month, i.e. 5th September. Nominations for Councillors must reach the Town Clerk on or before 18th August, 1949 at 4 o'clock. On 19th August, 1949, the Returning Officer will announce the names of those that have been duly nominated. If more than four names are submitted, the election will be held on 5th September, as has been stated, and voting will take place in the Town Hall between the hours of 8 a.m. and 7 p.m.

4. POULTRY REGULATIONS.

It will be realised that drawing up of poultry regulations is no easy task, but that, on the other hand, keeping of poultry can become dangerous to the health of the community, if unhygienic conditions are allowed to obtain. Keeping of poultry can, moreover, become a nuisance and some norm or standard for supervision must therefore be devised. The Municipality must obtain power to enforce hygienic conditions on behalf of its citizens.

During recent years frequent attempts were made to draw up regulations but the difficulties experienced prevented their acceptance by the Council.

As a result of renewed interest in the matter and very hard work by the Health Committee, the following regulations have been accepted and will be published in the Government Gazette. It must be explained that residents wishing to keep poultry will have to apply for permission but that attempts will be made not to upset present arrangements. Where nuisances are found to exist, the regulations will, however, have to be enforced and, of course, where new fowlhouses are constructed, the regulations will be insisted on. It may seem that in a few instances the regulations could have been more lenient, but it must be remembered that unless enabling regulations are operative, a municipality is unable to combat a danger to public health or a nuisance against the public interests.

The regulations read as follows:-

"REGULATIONS RELATING TO THE KEEPING OF POULTRY.
(Framed under Section 194(2) of Ordinance No. 10
of 1912.)

(1) In these Regulations the following words and expressions shall have the meanings herein respectively assigned to them, unless such meaning be repugnant to or inconsistent with the contents or subject matter in which such words or expressions occur; that is to say:-

"Council" means the Municipal Council of Stellenbosch.

"Poultry" means any chicken, fowls, ducks, geese, turkeys, guinea fowls, pigeons, and any feathered bird used for food for the consumption of man.

"Fowl-house, or Run" means any structure whatsoever intended for the keeping of live poultry therein.

"Distance of from" means the shortest distance between the outside of the walls of any dwelling or public building and the outside of the walls of any fowl-house, chicken coop or structure used for the purpose of keeping live poultry therein.

"Dwelling" means and includes any house, building or premises, room, "huurkamer" (hired room) or other place, the whole or any part of which is used as a sleeping place or habitually occupied by one or more persons.

(2)(a) No person shall keep any live poultry on any premises within the Municipality of Stellenbosch without the written sanction of the Council first had and obtained. All applications for such sanction shall

specify the premises in respect of which such sanction is to be given and shall specify the nature, position, extent of accommodation for poultry which are to be kept. The Council may, as it shall deem fit, refuse such sanction or may from time to time at its pleasure vary, amend or annul any such sanction.

(b) No person shall keep any live poultry in any dwelling or part thereof, or in any place other than in a properly constructed fowl-house or run.

(3) The Council shall refuse to sanction the keeping of any live poultry in any part of the Municipal area where, owing to the nature of the surroundings and the density of the population, the keeping of such poultry would be liable, in the opinion of the Council, to cause a nuisance or be a danger or injury to health, or to interfere with the comfort of the inhabitants or be an annoyance to the neighbourhood, and in no case shall live poultry be kept within a distance of 30 feet from any dwelling, street, public recreation ground or park or within 10 feet from any boundary of the property on which such fowl-house or run is situated.

(4) Every fowl-house, chicken coop, or other structure whatsoever intended for the keeping therein of live poultry shall conform to the following requirements:-

(a) Walls to be of unlined wood and iron, brickwork smoothly plastered both inside and outside, or other impermeable material. In no case will any person be allowed to erect any fowl-house or run of old pieces of rusted iron, wholly of wood or broken pieces of nettingwire, or to construct any fowl-house or run in such a manner as to be dilapidated or unsightly.

- (b) Floor to be of brick, concrete, asphalt or other impermeable material.
 - (c) The floor of every fowl-run, used in connection with such fowl-house, shall be paved, covering the total area of such fowl-run, with bricks or blocks of similar material, in such a manner as to form a continuous hard surface which can be readily cleaned. This paving may be covered with a layer of clean sand, which shall however be renewed at regular intervals so as to keep such run in a clean and sanitary condition at all times.
 - (d) Walls, floor and roof to be free from hollow spaces or holes, capable of harbouring rodents.
 - (e) Provided with suitable, covered and impervious receptacles for collecting poultry droppings. All such offensive matter shall be removed therefrom as often as required by the Health Officials, but in any case not less frequently than twice in each week.
 - (f) Maintained at all times by the owner or occupier of the premises whereon is situated such a fowl-house, chicken coop or other structure, in good order and repair, and free from vermin.
 - (g) Provided with a suitable, clean and sufficient supply of water.
 - (h) Kept at all times in a clean, sanitary condition throughout to the satisfaction of the Health Officials.
- 5) The number of live poultry to be kept on any premises will be decided by the Council.

(6) Whenever, in the opinion of the Council, any live poultry are kept on any premises (whether or not being previously sanctioned by the Council) so as to be a nuisance or annoyance to the neighbourhood, or a danger to health or a cause of the pollution of any water which the inhabitants have a right to use as a potable supply or otherwise, it shall be lawful for the Council, by written notice under the hand of the Health Official to require the owner or occupier of such premises to abate or remove the cause of such nuisance and to carry out such work or to do such things as may be deemed necessary for such purpose. Upon the failure of any such owner or occupier to comply with all or any of the requirements, as set out in the notice aforesaid, such owner or occupier shall be guilty of a contravention of these Regulations and shall, upon conviction, be liable to the penalty provided for a contravention of these regulations.

(7) Provided and notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the foregoing regulations contained, it shall be competent for the Council to permit the use of poultry-keeping structures in use or constructed at the date of the promulgation of these Regulations, subject, however, to such alterations, if any, as may be deemed necessary.

(8) Penalty: Any person convicted of a breach of these Regulations shall be liable to a fine of not exceeding £10 (ten pounds) and in the case of a continuing offence, to a fine not exceeding £2 (two pounds) for every 24 hours during which the offence is continued after receipt of written notice of not less than seven days, under the hand of the Health Official, has been served on the person or persons concerned."

5. TREATMENT OF HYDRANGEAS.

With reference to the treatment of hydrangea cuttings supplied to the public by the Municipality, the following information is supplied:-

The soil should be well dug over and plenty of manure added. The cuttings should now be planted so that the top buds are just above the ground, care being taken that they are not exposed to the hot afternoon sun. A shady place is preferable. Throughout the summer the soil should be kept moist. With regard to the colour of the flower desired, the following mixture should be applied to the soil as soon as the first flowers begin to form:

If pink or red is desired, add lime to the soil by sprinkling and digging in lightly every couple of weeks until blooms are fully developed. If blue, add alum or sulphate of iron in the proportion of one heaped tablespoon dissolved in two to three gallons of water every week until the blooms are fully developed.

6. PERSONAL.

The news of Mr. C.M. Neethling's death came as a great shock to his many friends in Stellenbosch and in other parts of South Africa. Mr. Neethling had a record of service in the Municipality second to none. For 38 years he was a Councillor and for 14 of these years he was Mayor. It is proposed to devote the next number of I.M.S. to his memory and to express the gratitude of Stellenbosch residents towards this great public spirited citizen.