

History of El Paso Chamber of Commerce, 1899 to 1920, As Set Forth in Summarized Annual Reports of All the Past Presidents

to the new board and reviews of the activities of the year 1906 the following interesting points are noted:

(a) First in Mr. Moye's recommendations is that the new board take up the question of providing a permanent home for the Chamber of Commerce. This, he stated, was necessary in view of the fact that the lease on the present quarters expired in June 1903, and that it was advisable that a building be erected to meet special needs of the Chamber.

(b) There was but a slight increase of members during 1906, the withdrawals having kept pace with the new members. Mr. Moye contributed this to lack of interest on the part of new business men who should be drawn into this activity.

(c) During 1906 realty values steadily advanced without fictitious or boom methods, and like in 1920 building operations are hardly keeping pace with demands for stores and residences.

(d) During 1906 the General Shop buildings of the E. P. & S. W. were completed, while the building for the General Offices was begun. El Paso was made the headquarters for this great railway system.

(e) Entertainment of the Chicago Commercial Club Excursion enroute to Mexico.

(f) Recommendation that the extension of the Reclamation Service should include Texas, and the passage of Congressman Smith's bill advocating this measure.

(g) Resolution against the practice of bringing damage suits against corporations unwarranted by facts or evidence, also protesting against the pernicious effect of sensational newspaper articles reporting unrest in Mexico.

(h) The securing of the Texas Federated Women's Clubs, and the Travelers' Protective Association conventions.

(i) Reduction in class rate the E. P. & S. W. Ry. to points north, also in rates on manufacturers, etc., by the A. T. & S. F., and negotiations with the Mexican Central to secure more liberal adjustment of rates to Mexican points. In this same connection the harmful practice of distributing carload freight to less than carload buyers by the railroads was also taken up by the Board with the railroads, and with the Interstate Commerce Commission.

(j) Trade trip into Central Arizona and New Mexico towns during October.

(k) Expenditure of \$200.00 for booklet, "The Story of Sunshine," and the issuance of 10,000 booklets on El Paso at a cost of \$1,000.00.

(l) With the financial aid of the Miners Association, the Board decided to add a Mining Department to the work of the original Chamber. It is well to note that for many years the Chamber of Commerce carried on this special activity, later to be conducted by the Mining Circle of El Paso.

(m) Recommendation, but not put into effect, that the Chamber of Commerce create a Freight Bureau to take care of traffic problems.

(n) Numerous negotiations for new industries and manufacturing plants.

(o) Plans for an interurban line connecting El Paso with valley towns, also keen interest in a project to connect El Paso with Kansas City by railroad via the Pecos Valley.

(p) Beginning of the paving of the business district and its near completion by the time the new board supplanted the old.

(q) Many new churches and school buildings are planned during the next few years.

(r) \$100,000.00 subscribed to the erection of the new Y. M. C. A., to be completed during 1907.

(s) Federal Building has been found entirely too small to meet the present needs, and Congressman Smith at the request of business men of El Paso introduced a bill asking for an appropriation of \$250,000.00 for additional land on which to erect an additional building.

(t) Announcement that the Leasburg Dam will be an accomplished fact by Spring.

(u) Recommendation that a delegation go to Washington in the interest of the Elephant Butte Dam project.

(v) During 1906 Ambassador Creel was entertained in El Paso.

—1907—

The affairs of the Chamber of Commerce for 1907 were wound up by the out-going Board of Directors on the evening of Tuesday, January 14th. Due to the death of Secretary Tilton on February 10th, 1908, and the fact that he had been ill for several months prior to his death resulted in no special report being made for the year 1907.

A resolution was passed urging the citizens of El Paso and the residents of the Valley to come to the aid of the Rio Grande Valley project by subscriptions to a fund to send a Committee to Congress to secure an appropriation for carrying forward the work on the Elephant Butte project.

At a meeting of the Board, held on January 24th, E. Moye was re-elected as President. W. E. Anderson gave notice that at the next meeting he intended to introduce a resolution increasing the number of directors from nine to thirteen. He said he did this in order to get more men interested in the Chamber of Commerce.

One of the chief subjects of discussion of the meeting of the new board was the necessity for securing a bigger membership. A subject also brought up subsequent to this meeting was the advisability of having Cloudcroft made into a national park, with a suggestion that a petition be sent to the President to set aside Indian Reservation and Cloudcroft as a park. This movement grew out of the fear of El Pasoans that the timber which makes Cloudcroft so beautiful a place, might be cut.

—1908—

The reports for the year 1908 were read at the annual meeting held at 8 o'clock on the night of January 28th, 1909, at the St. Regis Grill. During the year 1908 Mr. C. A. Kinne was selected as Secretary to replace Mr. Tilton, deceased, and President Moye was succeeded by President J. A. Happer. In the annual report of the condition of the Chamber

of Commerce, Secretary Kinne states that the membership has more than doubled during the year exclusive of those who have dropped out. The work of increasing the membership is still to be carried on, and it is the hope that the membership will reach the 500 mark before the first of March, 1909.

Secretary Kinne gave a report to the Board of his trip to the West and Southwest for the purpose of studying business conditions of Chambers of Commerce and other ideas that would be helpful in the development of the El Paso institutions.

—1909—

During the year 1909 J. A. Happer became President of the Chamber of Commerce and Charles A. Kinne was re-elected as Secretary, Miss Nita Ransberger, Assistant Secretary, and A. W. Reeves was re-elected Manager of the Freight Bureau.

The retiring Board of Directors for the year 1909 met on the evening of January 28th, 1910 in the final business session. The following recommendations were made to the new board:

(a) The establishment of a publicity bureau, with recommendation that \$600.00 be appropriated for this purpose.

(b) Monthly meeting of the members of the Chamber of Commerce.

(c) Campaign for a greater jobbing district, and for preference in all of the "Made in El Paso Goods."

(d) Wider field for the Freight Bureau. It was recommended that this Bureau be made self supporting as far as possible by a subscription from the shippers directly interested, in order that the fund now being devoted to this department be devoted to the publicity department.

(e) Fostering of a new hotel for El Paso.

(f) The advertising committee reported thru Mr. Happer that there were an average of 12 publicity schemes offered per month to the business men, none of which mean anything to the city, all of which take money from the city, and that all of these have been discouraged. The recommendation was made that local advertising should go to the local newspapers and the larger publicity should be handled by an expert.

It is worthy of note in this connection that the Adclub of El Paso has since taken over this special activity of vigilance work in advertising and that it is carrying out a program so ably suggested by Mr. Happer back in 1910.

(g) The total of 103 new members were added to the Chamber during 1909.

(h) A total of 15,000 letters and 20,000 pieces of literature were sent out during the year. A new booklet of which there were to be 15,000 issues was reported as progressing and some ready for distribution.

(i) One of the big events of this year under the direction of the Chamber of Commerce, was the Taft-Diaz meeting.

(j) It was shown in the report the amount saved in Pullman fares by reason of the reduction obtained thru the efforts of the Traffic department, amounted to \$30.00 per day