

DAY TO DAY BUSINESS OF CITY DEPARTMENTS

April 5th is general election day for Lawrence City Commission and #497 School Board. Besides the candidates names, the ballot contains a question of whether or not to change the form of city government.

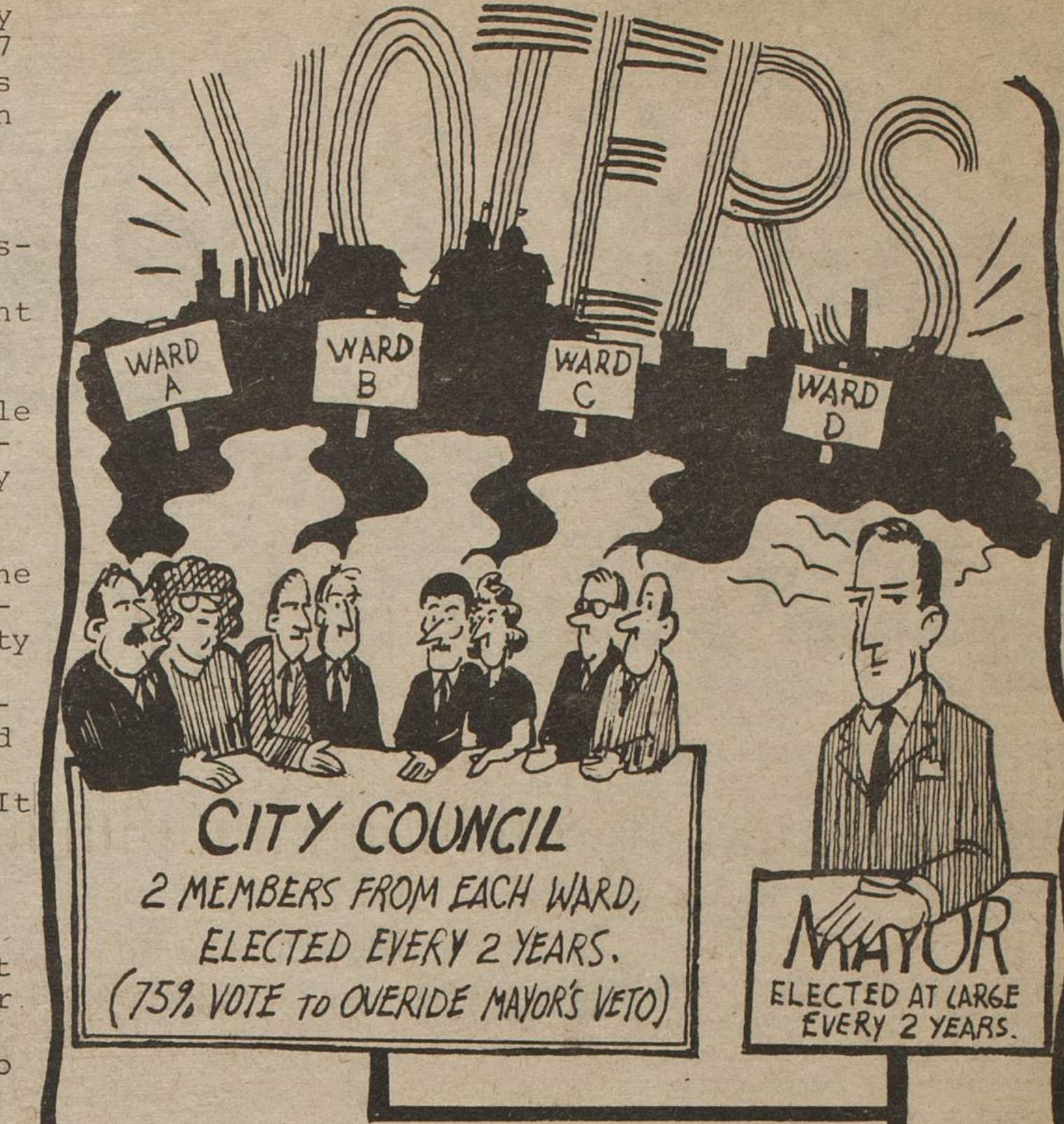
It's probably the most important question to come before the voters in a quarter century, particularly in light of the low voter turn-out in recent years. Last election, only 54 more people voted than in 1963. The people have been locked out of the decisionmaking process for so long, that many have simply given up.

A yes vote on April 5 would change the form of government from Manager-Commission to Mayor and Council. The City Manager, now appointed, would be replaced by an elected Mayor. Councilpeople would come from districts, and would be directly responsible to the people who live in those districts. It is a more balanced, equitable, more democratic structure, commonly known as "self-government."

Can we be permitted to directly elect the officials who govern our City, or must we continue to lean on outside professionals and consultant firms to do the job for us?

Compare the alternatives carefully. Observe the manner in which the City conducts its' business. Decide whether or not you're willing to accept the responsibility of self-government.

Then, go to the polls on April 5th.



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MIRINUL KANSIS

REGIMES AT CITY HALL, LAW-

RENCE VOTERS, AS IN THE

PAST, AREN'T LINING UP AT

CHOICES, BEGINNING ON PG.

THE POLLS... OBSERVE THEIR

EIGHT OF THE PUBLIC NOTICE

The food co-op, now noted as a potent political force in the community, has published the first local analysis of the changing weather patterns, and the accompanying higher food prices. See page four.

This month, the Peoples Energy Project newsletter includes information on rising natural gas rates, the death penalty, and the nuts and bolts of solar power. See page fourteen.

The Peoples Journal features a follow-up on the Lawrence Citizens' Voice convention, For the past 30 years, Lawrence and tips on dealing with negligent slum-lords. See page two.

HELVEL VIEW

March 8 is round one in the race to decide who's to run the City of Lawrence. The March 8th primary election for City Commission and School Board will narrow the field of candidates. Of the 12 Commission candidates, six will remain for the showdown in the April 5th general election to determine who the three new Commissioners will be.

Although Lawrence has grown from a town of 30,000 to 55,000 in the past 14 years, the number of people participating in the local voting game has not increased, but has remained about the same -- in 1975, only 7,100 people voted, less than 25 per cent of the elegible electorate.

residents have watched a succession of doctors, lawyers, businessmen and the wives of professional

people elected to the Commission. Candidates who can't afford the responsibility of the Commission job at a salary of a mere \$100 per year also aren't financially able to get their ideas out to the public during their campaigns. Thus, vague rhetoric and big bucks have put the leisure class, for the most part, into office.

This time around, a number of key issues have emerged. Most important is the issue of growth and issues related to it--the new water plant, mass transit, the airport, a new City Hall building and governmental accountability.

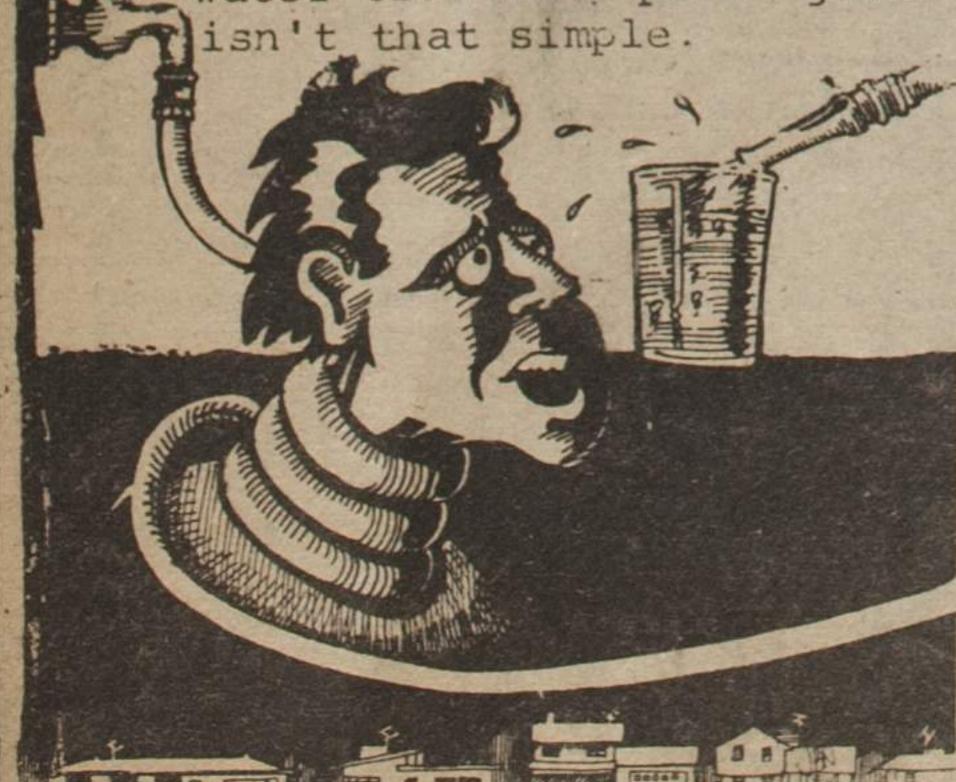
The excerpted interviews of 11 of the Commission candidates beginning on page eight should arm voters with information with which to ask more questions of the candidates.

The power of the City government can be awesome. The quality of life in Lawrence is directly tied to the five Commissioners and the City Manager. The Commission can create new jobs by issuing bonds, can create a City bus system, expand daycare facilities and provide good, lowcost City services. Under their direction, Lawrence can expand with land acquisition and construction of multi-million dollar improvement projects like the new water plant and a jetport.

PUBLIC NOTICE encourages the people of Lawrence to seek information and vote. Although we support a structural reform, changing to a Mayor-Council system, good government also requires the election of good people responsive to their voters, and continual interest and participation by the electorate.

BY SUSIE HANNA

" Jurn the water on!" "Would you like to save \$5 million?" This is the City's approach to educating Lawrence residents on how to vote March 8 on the water plant financing question. Educational? It's pure propaganda. The question of building the new Clinton water treatment plant just



Shouldn't they hear both sides?

A "yes" vote means financing the plant with general obligation bonds. The City is pushing a "yes" vote as a way to save \$5 million in interest since the g.o. bonds would be paid off 10 years earlier than if financed with revenue bonds. But a "yes" vote will boost water rates over 100 per cent in four years, according to City estimates. Any savings for water users wouldn't happen for 20 years, if at all. The City supports g.o. financing so construction can begin this summer and so the City will be free of debt to build more plants after 20 years.

A "no" vote means the plant would be financed with revenue bonds which would be paid for in 30 years. Water rate increases with a "no" vote would be less -about an 88 per cent increase, according to City estimates. If the proposition is turned down,

construction is delayed one year.



PUBLIC ROTICE says "VOTE NO!" The real question isn't being asked of voters: "Do we need the water plant?"

City Commissioners voted to build the water plant and are favoring the g.o. bond financing in ignorance. They accepted City Manager Buford Watson's recommendation that the plant must be built. They haven't considered the costs to water users, the impact the plant will have in spurring more growth in Lawrence, or alternatives to construction of a new \$8.4 million plant.

Commissioners are supporting the plant before completion of the rate study. The consultants' estimates on water rate increases to cover construction and in-

reased treatment costs probably won't be presented to the Commission until after the March 8 election. Such blind decisionmaking is irresponsible.

Could water conservation make the new plant! unnecessary? Can the old plant be expanded? Could alternative rate structures make a difference? Can more water be recycled?

The people of Lawrence need to answer these questions themselves, and put Kansas City consulting firms on the back burner for a change. A NO vote on the bond issue can give us the tire to promote a discussion of the real needs of the community, and a chance to find the best way to meet those needs.