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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

REVENUE DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. 927
B.P. No.

Press
Mis.

Dated 3-5-1875 196 .

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Local Funds—Roads.

Read the following papers:—

No. 194. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 28th September 1874,
No. 2788:—

Read the following letter from R. DAVIDSON, Esq., Acting President of the
Local Fund Board, Ganjam, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board
of Revenue, dated Pattupore, 29th July 1874, S. No. 497.

I have the honor to enclose copy of a Resolution passed by the Local Fund Board of the Chatterpore Circle at their last meeting held on the 20th instant, and in which, owing to the unsatisfactory way in which the roads in the Circle are repaired by the Department Public Works, they have resolved to adopt two measures which they believe will have the effect of relieving that department of a portion of the work which it is apparently unable to accomplish in an efficient manner with its present staff, and at the same time will enable them to exercise a more direct control and more stringent supervision over the working of the road department, an arrangement which they are sanguine will prove most beneficial to the interests of the Circle.

2. The measures which the Board have decided upon adopting, and which I have now the honor to submit for the approval and orders of the Board and of Government, are:—

(1.) To employ one or more skilled Overseers to be under the immediate control of the Local Fund Board, to assist in superintending the execution of sanctioned works, &c.

(2.) To invite Zemindars who may be so disposed to undertake the up-keep of the roads passing through their estates, receiving the amount of maintenance grant for the purpose.

3. Experience has taught the Local Fund Board the desirability of adopting both measures, and lest the Board should think that my own opinion ought not to count for much, owing to the comparatively short time I have been in the district on the present occasion, I may mention that since joining I have made it a point minutely to inspect the state of nearly all the roads in the Circle, extending from the Bengal frontier to within a very short distance of the Chicacole circle limits, and have repeatedly found it my duty to point out officially to Major Smalley glaring instances of the defective nature of the work under execution by his department.

4. One of the worst cases which attracted my attention was near Rumbah, where the road was disgracefully out of repair, and where enormous holes over a foot deep by measurement in the Grand Trunk Road were being filled with sandy soil alone, dug from the way-side ditches. One part of the road seemed to have been rendered nearly impracticable for bandies by this primitive method of repair, for they had taken to the sideway, and a crop of grass was actually growing in the middle of the public road. Mr. Minchin and I, as Members of the Local Fund Board, made an official inspection of the locality before bringing the matter officially to the notice of the District Engineer. This, as the Board are aware, is the road over which we hope to send a large traffic in salt to Orissa.

5. I am free to admit that, viewed under favorable circumstances, the roads may present for a short time after repair a superficial appearance of excellence, but when a practical test is applied, they fail in consequence of their being little more than a shadow, without substance of solidity in their repair.

6. I am not aware what beneficial effect, if any, these representations may have had on Major Smalley, but I may mention that a proposition was made by Mr. Leggatt, the Range Officer, to entertain an extra Writer and Peon for each uncertificated and, I may say, incompetent Overseer.

7. The Local Fund Board declined to sanction the measure which they thought it premature on Mr. Leggatt's part to recommend, as he had only been a few days in the district at the time, and as the measure, if complied with, would have permanently added a sum of upwards of Rupees 500 per annum to the already heavy burden which the Local Fund Board have to bear for Department Public Works Establishment, without securing what the Board considered a corresponding advantage; and in replying to this communication from the Local Fund Board, Major Smalley wrote to me, remarking among other things, as follows:—"I might say that you yourself have only recently joined the district, and that you certainly have not lost time in advancing your opinions," (regarding the unsatisfactory manner in which the Road Department did its work.)

8. The Members of the Local Fund Board in general take a very lively interest in the condition of the Circle communications, and having a fair insight into the way in which matters are conducted by the Road Department, they were not greatly surprised at what would otherwise have been a startling announcement which Mr. Leggatt, the Range Officer, considered it his duty to make at the last meeting of the Board, to the effect that the Department Public Works instead of paying for the material actually deposited at the place of utilization, paid for it as delivered at the pit-site, and by so doing, lost by fraud or otherwise about one-half of the material for which they paid. This, he stated, was the result of his personal inquiry and experience.

9. I believe the Board of Revenue will recognize the fact that, under existing arrangements, the Local Fund Board can in reality exercise no effectual check over the expenditure of their funds by the Department Public Works; but they hope to remedy this defect to some extent by the employment of skilled Overseers, who will be under the immediate control of the Local Fund Board, and whose services will be employed in furthering generally the best interests of the Circle.

10. The necessity for the measures resolved upon is, moreover, sufficiently evinced by the unanimity with which the resolution was voted by all the members present, including the professional member; Mr. Goodrich alone dissenting on the minor question relating to the up-keep of Zemindari roads.

11. I have been requested by the Local Fund Board to obtain the views of Government as to the conditions on which the experiment of handing over the up-keep of the Zemindari roads to approved Zemindars might be tried, and I may therefore state that the primary object which the Local Fund Board have in view in recommending this measure is to afford a certain amount of relief to the Department of Public Works, but they are also of opinion that by the adoption of the measure, the roads will be better preserved than they are at present.

12. The Local Fund Board at their last meeting sanctioned an estimate of over Rupees 50,000 for constructing a very important road through the Mandasa Zemindari.

13. The Zemindar has most liberally furnished land for the purpose free of charge. He is an enlightened, publicspirited Member of our Board, and he has expressed his readiness to undertake the up-keep of the road in question when finished, provided he is furnished with a copy of the estimate and of the accounts of actual expenditure, in order that he may satisfy himself that the road has been done complete justice to in the matter of construction, and that it is handed over to him in a thoroughly finished and satisfactory state.

14. The Local Fund Board think the precaution a very practical and reasonable one, and that the hint given is worthy of general adoption.

15. I may here mention that one of my objects in making my present tour is to inspect what is known as the Digupudy road, extending from near Aska, through the Seeghur, Pedda and Chinna Kimedy, and Chikati Zemindaries, to meet the road leading direct to the Itchapore Salt Pans, and which was lately reported to the Local Fund Board by the Department of Public Works as completed, with the exception of bridges.

16. It would be idle to disguise the fact that I am disappointed at the state in which I have found it, exhibiting as it does, in my humble opinion, a want of skilled supervision in its construction. I have reported the state of the road to Major Smalley.

17. The Local Fund Board are of opinion that the up-keep of the Mandasa road when completed may, with perfect safety, and very great advantage, be entrusted to the Mandasa Zemindar, whose vouchers may, they think, be accepted by the Controller of Public Works Accounts, as a sufficient guarantee for the expenditure incurred in repair. As a matter of course, the road which will be 14½ miles in length will be under the general supervision of Department of Public Works, but the repairs executed will be considered as having been made under "Other Agency" of the Local Fund Board.

18. I know of no measure better calculated than that now proposed to induce Zemindars to take a lively interest in the welfare of their estates, and it may also have the effect of stimulating the Department of Public Works who may not care to have their work unfavorably compared with that of the Zemindars.

19. I take this opportunity of informing the Board that the Members of this Board have learned with concern that it is in contemplation to transfer Mr. Leggatt's services to Purlah Kimedy.

20. They regret this, as since Mr. Leggatt's arrival in the district he has evinced a very great interest in his department, and has introduced several measures which have the Board's entire approval, and which are calculated to improve upon the hitherto unsatisfactory state of affairs. I trust, therefore, I may be permitted to express the hope that the Board of Revenue will see fit to recommend that his services be continued to the Chetterpore Circle.

Submitted for the orders of Government.

2. The Chettierpore Local Fund Board (the District Engineer voting with the majority) have resolved that the supervising staff at the disposal of the Public Works Department in the Circle is too weak to be able to watch closely the expenditure on works spread over so large an area, and that one or more Overseers at Rupees 100 a-month should be entertained, and be employed under the immediate control of the Local Fund Board to assist in superintending the execution of sanctioned works.

3. Under the circumstances, the Revenue Board think that the entertainment of one or more Overseers, as may be found necessary, should be sanctioned; but that they should be paid out of the 25 per cent. on expenditure by the Public Works Department which is paid by the Local Fund Board to Government, and entitles them to as much supervision as they really want.

4. The Local Fund Board also wish to invite Zemindars to undertake the maintenance of roads passing through their estates, the maintenance allowance being paid to them.

5. The Board think there can be no objection to trying this experiment, the work done by the Zemindars being of course under the same rules as work done by Officers of the Revenue Department styled "Other Agency." These rules require that if the maintenance allowance is more than Rupees 50 a mile, the bills sent for audit to the Controller shall be accompanied by completion certificates signed by Public Works Officers. From paragraph 17 it appears that in the case of a road now being made through the Mandasa Zemindari, which the Zemindar offers hereafter to keep in repair, the maintenance allowance being paid to him, the Local Fund Board think that completion certificates signed by Public Works Officers may be dispensed with.

6. The Revenue Board have no doubt that in the particular case of repairs actually supervised by the Zemindar himself, the certificates might be *safely* dispensed with, but they do not think an exception should be allowed to the system which provides a most important safeguard.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) J. GROSE,
Secretary.

No. 194-A.

MEMORANDUM.

The resolution arrived at by the Local Board that, "the supervising staff at the disposal of the Public Works Department *being insufficient* to watch closely the outlay on works spread over so large an area" it should be increased, is perfectly intelligible and reasonable; not so is the further resolution, that such additional competent staff shall work under their own immediate orders. It would apparently only be fair that the District Engineer should be allowed to show what he can do with a proper staff. Whatever may be present short-comings, they are fully accounted for by the Board.

2. I am unfortunately unacquainted with the Vizagapatam and Ganjam Districts. But it has struck me forcibly, since I have held my present appoint-

ment, that the strength of the Range and Subordinate Staff is disproportioned to that of non-Zemindari Districts. There is only one Overseer of the Imperial List to each taluq of a district; and in Ganjam there are but three taluqs, in Vizagapatam only two taluqs. Hence the necessity for greater proportional strength of Local Fund Overseers than in the Ryotwari Districts.

3. It would be a happy deliverance for the Officers of the Public Works Department in certain districts if the entire management of Local Fund Works were taken out of their hands. But I am not of opinion that it would be for the benefit of the country. Where the present system fails, it is partly (as admitted in this case) owing to inadequacy of the executive staff. But partly also to defective power of organization, and want of tact and method and common sense, on the part of District Engineers and Range Officers; as well as to peculiarities of Local Boards. Those who know the personnel of the Chingleput and Salem Districts, and of the Dindigul Sub-division, must clearly see that failures are attributable to individuals, not inherent in the system. The change of a District Engineer has already made a difference in South Arcot; and on the whole things work much better than they did two years ago.

FORT ST. GEORGE, (Signed) G. W. WALKER, Colonel, R.E.,
7th Nov. 1874. Secretary to Govt., P.W.D.

No. 195. ORDER THEREON, 20th April 1875, No. 881.

The Government consider that the necessity of increasing the Public Works Establishment of the Circle has been clearly shown by the Local Board, and they resolve accordingly to sanction the entertainment of an additional Local Fund Overseer on the highest sanctioned rate of pay, *viz.*, Rupees 60 per mensem with horse allowance of Rupees 15.

2. Under G.O., dated 21st January 1875, No. 98, no additional charge will be made to the Local Fund on account of this increased establishment, and until a decision has been come to on the general question of the organization of a separate Local Fund Public Works Establishment, the new Overseer will be under the orders of Public Works Officers of the District in the same way as other Local Fund Overseers.

3. The Government willingly sanction the proposed experiment of inviting Zemindars to undertake the maintenance of roads passing through their Estates, the maintenance allowance being paid to them, but they agree with the Board of Revenue that no exception should be made to the ordinary audit rules.

(True Extract.)

[Signature]
Chief Secretary.

To the Board of Revenue, with an enclosure returned.

Public Works Department.
Revenue Department.
Accountant-General.

Exd. T. O'Connor.

201038
Revenue Department
Distt. of 118753 Myadras.

FINANCIAL.

To THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

Rs.

Ac.

Undt April 20th.

Issued May 1st

Recd. 2-30

Rs.

G.O., 20th April 1875, No. 881.

APRIL.
Nos. 194-195.

Local Funds, Roads.—Sanction accorded to the
expenditure of an additional Local Fund Over
seer for the Chetipore Circle, Ganjam District
and to the proposed experiment of inviting Zemindars
to undertake the maintenance of roads passing
through their estates, the maintenance allowance
being paid to them.

30927
Dated
30 May 1875