

Allendale Buys Crestwood Lake

ALLENDALE — The Borough Council spent \$1,035,000 Thursday night and for the money got 70 acres and a lake.

The decision to make the purchase was made unanimously as the council approved a bond ordinance authorizing the expenditure of the funds.

What the funds will buy is Crestwood Lake and its surrounding acreage, whose owners were the Van Houten family of this borough.

In the words of the ordinance, the property will be used for recreation and as the "site for various municipal buildings."

These buildings will almost certainly include a library, an ambulance corps building and possibly a new Municipal Building.

The latter facility is definitely needed now, leaders here feel, but in an effort to hold back on spending more funds, a move to build will probably not occur for three or four years.

A municipal facility will in-

clude police offices, which are presently in a rented house, and all of the borough departments, some of which are now scattered through town in the homes of department heads.

The overwhelming need for a new library building will probably mean that this facility will be built on the Crestwood Lake site first.

In discussing the purchase Thursday night, Mayor Albert Merz reported on the interest of Ambulance Corps members in building on the land. He noted that since the corps has managed to raise 60 per cent of the cost of a structure already themselves, such a building is not far away.

The purchase of the lake by the council is unique in the sense that no referendum was called by the governing body asking the public to approve the purchase.

However, as Merz pointed out, the public was appraised over a period of months of what the

council had in mind, and showed overwhelmingly that it favored the move.

When the council held its public hearing on the proposal, for instance, only a bare handful out of a large crowd indicated opposition, and at no council meetings during the months preceding Thursday night's action, was any antagonism voiced.

Prior to voting on the ordinance, the council noted that approval had been received from the State Local Finance Board at a hearing in Trenton on July 27, as well as from the local Planning Board.

The Planning Board described the move as "highly desirable."

Several persons arose during the public hearing on the ordinance, but generally to ask for information rather than to criticize the proposed expenditure.

The lake itself will be ready for use for municipal recreational purposes next summer. It has long been a commercial venture.