

Cramahe sports club tax break

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by Ray Yurkowski
THE INDEPENDENT

CRAMAHE COUNCIL, at its Dec. 19 meeting, heard a request from the Castleton Sports Club to waive taxes on property owned by the club.

The sports club provides adult baseball and the largest youth soccer program in the area. It was noted the majority of its fund-raising effort is used to pay maintenance costs. Future plans include turning a four-acre lot, as yet undeveloped, into more soccer facilities as well as horseshoe pits.

In previous years, the municipality has given the club an annual grant to offset operating costs. Last year, the grant was in the amount of \$2,000.

The 2006 property taxes for the sports club are \$991, of which \$522 is the municipal portion.

A report from treasurer Mora Chatterton noted the Ontario Municipal Act does not provide authority for the municipality to waive taxes on the property.

Council approved in-

creasing the club's grant to a total of \$3,000 as part of the 2007 budget to offset the property tax.

Treasurer's report

A report from Ms. Chatterton revealed tax arrears in the township increased by more than \$47,000 as of Dec. 1, 2006. In 2005, \$763,872 was owed to the municipality and in 2006, the figure stands at \$811,220. The total is down from 2004 when arrears were more than \$919,000.

As well, she predicted the fire department will end the year "very close to what they have budgeted" and suggests any surplus be transferred to the fire equipment reserve fund. That fund was depleted in 2006 to help offset the cost of a new pumper truck.

Ms. Chatterton says the community service department will likely end the year with a deficit of between \$30,000 and \$50,000.

"We are hoping that in 2007 we can overcome this problem with our new poli-

cies and (accounting) procedures we have put in place for the operation of the bar, banquet centre and canteen (at the Keeler Centre)."

Shortfalls in the budget report include realizing only \$62,484 of an expected \$120,000 revenue for Keeler ice rentals this year. None of the projected \$76,000 in revenue for ice rental subsidies, sign rentals and building cost recovery had been collected as of Dec. 12.

Part-time salaries cost more than \$18,000 at the Keeler Centre and almost \$61,000 for the bar, banquet hall and special events, an item that was forecast at zero at budget time. However, 'distributed salary' will make up the difference in both areas, accounting for \$92,000 or 39 per cent lower than the projected \$152,000.

Keeler Centre Operations

Mayor Marc Coombs read highlights from a report from chartered accountants hired to make recommendations regard-

ing Keeler Centre operations. However, it was a case of being there before.

"These are the same recommendations we received in 2004 and we didn't act on them," he said. "We want to know what is going on down there."

Terry Scott, director of community services, explained improvements have been made to the accountability system at the centre in response to the new recommendations from accountants Collins Barrow.

A number of new forms have been developed to show breakdowns of deposits, control cash floats and ensure totals match those expected. New inventory systems, now done on a regular basis, will verify totals and give a better financial evaluation of events at the centre.

Councillor Tim Gilligan requested that separate and more frequent statements be made available to make the performance of the centre, a revenue producer, "easier to track."

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FOND FAREWELL FOR WARKWORTH MINISTER



Rev. Lloyd Paul, the popular minister at St. Paul's United Church, Warkworth, bids a fond farewell to resident Norma McCleary. Mr. Paul, 50, is leaving the church after six years to join a ministry in Toronto's West End. "There are so many interesting people here and I got to meet them all," he said. The village is throwing a farewell party for Mr. Paul and his wife Pat in the church hall this Saturday, Feb. 3 at 5.30 p.m.

PAUL DALBY PHOTO

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