



**Co-axial** Dave McLaughlin and Art Cooke are getting closer to the time when they will be selling co-axial service to television owners in Haileybury. Here the last touches are being put on the big antenna. That is not Mayor Cooke at the top of the pole.

## Cobalt Town Council Sets 1959 Mill Rate

COBALT—Cobalt council trimmed its 1959 budget at a final finance meeting held on Monday, and held the increase on general taxes to a modest 1 mill increase.

But jumping school costs, out of the control of council, lifted the public school rates 15.4 mills over last year and the separate school rates by 24 mills.

Public school commercial rates for 1959 were set at 167.4, residential 153.4; separate school commercial 164; residential 150.

Council had an unusual condition to deal with at the special meeting called to give final touches to the budget. About 30 ratepayers turned out disturbed by reports that council planned, among other things, to reduce the High School to the status of a continuation school.

For the benefit of the ratepayers, Councillor Jack Mathews reviewed the brief he had presented to council at the previous meeting.

"We explored every avenue of saving," he said, "while avoiding the cutting of essential services to the town."

Listed on the brief was the cancellation of the contract with the Ontario Provincial Police and substituting a two-man, town controlled police force; a reduction of permanent fire truck drivers by one; and garbage collection by contract.

Enlarging on these matters, Councillor Mathews said that the reduction of the police force, the permanent fire department staff and the work department would save the town close to \$6000 a year, about 10 mills.

"I also drew council's attention to the great jumps being made in education costs," said the finance chairman, "and the report that the public school board had indicated that two additional rooms would be needed by next year."

"I suggested they consider reducing the High School to a continuation school, and using the extra rooms in the conveniently adjacent high school for the upper grades of the Public School."

"As these suggested changes would not effect this years bud-

get the matter was dropped," admitted Councillor Mathews.

He also pointed out to the ratepayers that such a drastic change in the school pattern could not be made before the approval of the ratepayers had been obtained, the school board had agreed and the adjoining municipalities promised to absorb Cobalt students.

Mayor Fulton Purdy again expressed his opposition to the plan.

Mayor Purdy also told the gathering that any concern over the financial position of the town was unfounded. "We are no worse off than most towns and better off than a lot," he said, "but we have been given the job of running the town as economically as possible and that is what we are trying to do."

He also referred to the matter of tax arrears and asked for Town-clerk Cyril Vezina's comment.

Mr. Vezina said that a fluctuation in arrears was usual. "Some years ratepayers pay their taxes early. This year the unusual long and cold winter has hit the ratepayers hard and some have delayed making payments, but we expect that in a few weeks the condition will return to normal."

Most of the ratepayers headed for home apparently satisfied, but a few remained to hear a discussion regarding the reduction of the fire force. Councillor George St. Hilaire tabled a motion to kill the idea of reducing the permanent staff, but couldn't get a seconder. Most of council felt that the volunteer force would understand their problem and co-operate to keep the fire department working efficiently.

A delegation of Teenagers asking for use of the Community Hall for their Friday night dances were told that this was the problem of the Community Hall Board, but council promised to bring the request to the attention of the Board, with a recommendation.

Since 1950 the average wage in manufacturing in Canada, in terms of purchasing power rather than in terms of current dollars, has increased by 25 per cent.

## Budget Trimming On General Rate

COBALT — At a regular meeting of Cobalt Council held last week members tackled the tough job of cutting a threatening 30 mill increase in taxes in half.

Chief culprit in a record hike in taxes for the Silvertown was the school budget which this year reached a record \$24,427.64, a jump of close to \$18,000 in the past eight years.

Finance chairman Jack Mathews presented a brief outlining possible economies which would keep the increase at sixteen mills, these included the retirement of a works department employee who is over 70 years of age, collection

of town garbage on contract, which would reduce the work staff by two men, the hiring of a town police force of two men to replace the OPP staff of three.

Council approved all these measures and estimated that 14 mills could be cut from the 1959 tax rate with the savings made.

Councillor Mathews also asked Council to take a long look at the increasing cost of education, and reminded members that this is not the end. "Every year there will be salary hikes," he said, "and present accommodation at the public school will be inadequate by next year."

He suggested that Council should meet with board members to discuss the possibility of making the High School into a Continuation School, and sending Grades 11, 12 and 13 to a school in another centre. Council was interested, but

did not give support to the idea. Said Mayor Fulton Purdy, "I am against that plan. Few people will want to settle in Cobalt if we have no High School." The matter was then dropped.



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