

NO BILLIARDS FOR ACTON.

Petitions Signed by Over 300 Citizens Presented to the Council Protesting Against the License.

BACKED UP BY A STRONG DEPUTATION AND PHRANIC DETERRENTS.

The members of the present Council may better their lives by them that were honored with the largest delegation on Monday evening that has visited the Council Chamber for years, and they occupy a further unique position in the fact that the largest petition ever presented to Acton's municipal parliament will prove to be the most momentous in its uncertain future against the licensing of a billiard room in Acton as proposed in the resolution of Councillor Henderson and Swackhamer passed at the meeting two weeks previous. The petition bore the names of upwards of three hundred taxpayers and citizens. The Council gave the delegation a good hearing. The speeches were frank and mostly to the point, and assurances were given by members of the Council that no billiard room would be opened in Acton while they held the reins of office.

The petition also asked that steps be taken toward opening a public reading room for the benefit of the young people. This matter was received favorably and, to their credit be it recorded, Councillor Henderson and Swackhamer introduced a resolution complying with the prayer of the petition in this behalf.

The session opened at 8 o'clock.

Members present: Steve Williams,

Councillor Henderson, Hynds, Agnew, and Councillor Swackhamer.

The Committee on Finance presented their twenty-first report and recommended payment of the following account:

R. W. Stephenson & Co., coal \$80 10

On coal 51 27

Johnstone & Co., nails and supplies 8 29

Donald McGregor, training Green Coat, 100 yards on streets 4 10

Arthur Holden, work at power house 3 05

183 05

Moved by John A. Henderson, seconded by George Hynds that the report of the Committee on Finance, just read, be adopted.—Carried.

Mr. Swackhamer introduced the matter of the request of the Baseball Club for refund of the \$10 paid for park for baseball games during the season.

The motion was left over for further consideration.

A communication from Mr. George Campbell requested that an electric light be placed on Brock Street near his residence. Mr. Campbell claimed that it was badly needed and invited the Reeve and Council to take a trip up some dark night, claiming he would then realize the need of the lamp noted.

At this point a delegation comprising Mrs. A. E. Smith, President of the W. C. T. U.; Mrs. Jas. Moore, Mrs. Jenkins Smith, Mrs. Allan Mann, Mrs. Win. Brown, Miss Goodloe; Revs. H. A. Macpherson, J. K. Gordon, M. A. A. E. Smith, Dr. W. Ward, Mr. Campbell, ex-Councillor Caney, ex-Councillor Brown, Jas. S. Coleman, Jno. Stephenson, James Brown, Ex-Sergeant Nicklin and others entered the Chamber. Mr. John Cameron asked the Council if it would wait their convenience to hear the delegation now. Reeve Williams replied that it would, but requested that the speeches be short as the Council had a large amount of business to consider. Mr. Cameron then read the following petition:

TO THE REEVE AND COUNCILLORS OF ACTON.

GENTLEMEN: We, the undersigned taxpayers and citizens of Acton, being much regretful at the present state of our body favoring the licensing of a billiard room for the use presumably of the young men of our town; and we would respectfully beg a reconsideration of the same, bearing in mind that the tendency of such an institution is toward gambling and demoralization generally.

The Reeve: As far as I am concerned I never played billiards, but I have seen them played, and never saw any harm in them. That is why I endorsed the motion. I venture to say there is more gambling on the back hill grounds in six months than would be seen in a billiard room in a life time.

Ex-Councillor French: Who told you that? It is not true.

Rev. H. A. Macpherson: We are all pleased to receive so courteous treatment from the Council. This question seems to resolve itself into how much or how little experience we have had with billiards. I am not out of touch with the young people in the town, and I can assure you at the same time when it comes down to a matter of personal knowledge I may say that I know of one young man who has put up and lost more money on this game than he has ever earned. Our people do not want billiards introduced here. They have signed the petition largely. It may be said there are a great many ladies names among the petitioners. Rightly so. We have seen that even candidates for seats at the Council Board do not despise the ladies' votes at election time. Mr. Bennett is a good man, but if he took out license and introduced billiards how long could we be sure he would be in charge. One young man now goes to Georgetown and loses their money at billiards.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

The petition was signed by over the hundred citizens taxpayers and citizens. The names included upwards of one hundred and forty names of the houses in town; and though it was stated in the speech of Councillor Henderson that seventy-five per cent. of the young men in town favored the opening of a billiard room, and could see no harm in the game, the names of forty young men appear on the petitions.

After asking the Council to give the petition their consideration, Reeve Williams requested Councillor Henderson, as being the mover of the resolution granting billiard license, to reply.

Mr. Henderson said: As mover of the resolution which has created this furor, I except the Reeve's request to speak on the matter. In the first place I will read a letter received from Mr. Bennett, the applicant, the day after the Council meeting:

Sept. 21st, 1902.

N. Alan, Teacher.

HIGH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT.

Mr. E. G. Davis, Headmaster.

Mr. H. E. McPherson, Teacher.

Mr. H. E. McPherson