

The Acton Free Press.

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Fourteen Pages—Seven Cents.

Hike Town Tax Rate Six Mills All Time High Budget \$480,092

Acton Council Tuesday evening accepted the recommendation of the finance committee and established the 1959 tax rate at 68 mills for residential and 72 mills for commercial, as compared with last year's rate of 62 and 66.

The 1959 budget carries forward a deficit on 1958 operations of \$81,183.33. The town this year will raise \$384,359.53 on direct taxation as compared with last year's \$286,951.87.

Commercial and industrial mill rate to an even 72 mills. By applying an unconditional grant to this mill rate, it reduces the residential mill rate to 68.

Recommendations

Also included in the report from the finance committee were eight recommendations for council's further review which included: a revision of the water rate schedule; immediate review of the sewerage contract; a check by the auditor of all budget figures each year; passing of a by-law to declare the park a community centre; a complete study of all contracts on opening of all tenders; a study by council of the complete debenture debt picture before incurring any further capital expenditures; payment of taxes; and that the

finance committee remain as a standing committee for the balance of the year.

Too High

Mr Hurst also advised council that the debenture debt, which had climbed to one and a half million dollars, represented 29.4% of the total assessment value and noted that the figure was dangerously high, remarking "I believe this is what is wrong with our finances."

ance report... this is not the first time the auditor has brought the debenture debt to people's attention but it is the first time it has been brought to the attention of council. This is the end of crazy spending for the town of Acton."

Mayor Cook also congratulated Mr Hurst for his excellent report which he stated "has made council history."

Asks Variance

Sesto Perini, builder in Lakeview subdivision, was present when a letter from an engineer engaged to survey lots in the subdivision reminded council of an error which caused the builder to erect a few homes which did not comply with the zoning by-law.

Front Page Editorial

In the Dark Again

So the public and press were excluded from the detailed budget discussions of Acton Council on Thursday night.

We have editorially objected to this type of treatment on other occasions this year but there was apparently not sufficient public concern to discourage a continuation of the practice.

On Tuesday the budget was presented as an accomplished fact. The discussions had been held in camera and citizens are not allowed the information that would allow them to appraise the wisdom of individual items.

It is unfortunate that the council has so little apparent respect for those who elect them. Barring the press automatically bars the public. If citizens have the same reticence in paying their taxes as council has in keeping them informed, returns may be disappointing this year.

Some Reduce

Mr Hurst noted that \$15,000 had been deleted from the original budget submitted by the roads committee, \$1,128.50 from the Fire Department's budget, \$500 from the Planning Board and the Public School Board had submitted a revised budget showing a decrease amounting to \$2,000.

The finance chairman expressed his thanks to clerk J. McGeachie for his untiring hours spent in assisting his committee to arrive at a final budget. He also commended Mayor Cook and other members of his committee for their assistance.

Tax Breakdown

The 1959 tax breakdown was presented by the finance chairman as follows: Public School, 18.28 mills; High School, 7.55 mills; County rate, 6.01 mill; and general rate, 41.16 mills bringing the

Noon Grass Fire Spreads Rapidly

Sparks presumably from the town dump caused a spreading grass fire at noon today and had Acton Fire Fighters spraying water and beating flames with bromine in order to overcome the blaze.

Dry grass on the C.N.R. right-of-way and on property facing on the third line road was ignited, presumably from sparks from the dump where garbage was burning. Spreading toward the United Suburban Gas Co. relay station near the site, the flames were checked before any serious damage could result.

The surveyor also explained in his letter that at the time Mr. Perini had started work in the area to construct new homes, weather conditions made it difficult to locate the steel stakes and the builder had taken measurements from the wooden pegs.

In pointing out the error, the surveyor stated the unintentional mistake by Mr. Perini and asked council's consideration for a variance on the lots affected, as the foundations and a large portion of the homes were already constructed.

Builder's Responsibility

Mayor Cook advised Mr. Perini that as a builder it was his responsibility to ensure that the work was done in accordance with the zoning by-law.

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Firemen Forward Resolution Asking Better School Storage

Sunday afternoon, Acton Fire Department were host to the monthly meeting of the Halton County Mutual Aid Fire Service Association. Visitors included Chief Leon Miller of Guelph, and F. Schneider, D. Hiltz and J. Peart of Rockwood Fire Department.

Business included final preparations on the new assignment and running card for mutual aid. A report of the Fire Prevention Bureau activities, was given.

Forward Resolution

The lack of storage space for flammable materials etc. in the design and construction of the new schools was discussed with a resolution being forwarded to the Ontario Fire Chiefs' Association.

Council Closes Door to Public During Special Budget Review

Acton Council Thursday evening of last week drew the curtains on a special budget meeting for the public and press. It started with an objection by Deputy Reeve J. M. Greer to an open meeting as he entered, then left the council chambers.

Deputy Reeve Greer entered the council chambers and, with his hand still on the door knob, exclaimed, "Oh, the press are here. Then I am leaving," and departed from the town hall.

Mayor W. H. Cook, as surprised and shocked as were the reporters, enquired what the outburst was all about and then, taking his seat behind the council table, called the meeting to order. He announced he had called the special meeting to review and discuss the budget for an estimated mill rate.

Mr Cook enquired if all the committee chairmen had submitted their budgets to the finance chairman and councillor J. T. Hurst, chairman of the finance committee, informed the mayor that the building committee chairman had requested council's review of his committee's budget.

"Closed Meeting"

Councillor W. J. McLeod, arriving late, remarked "I thought this was a closed meeting to discuss the budget, not set the mill rate." The mayor explained the mill rate would not be set until the regular council meeting the next Tuesday.

At this point, Councillors McLeod and H. Lowe sponsored a motion which moved that "council close the meeting to press representatives at this time since the meeting presumably is a formal meeting for committee budget adjustment."

Would Confuse Public

Councillor B. D. Rachlin announced he would go along with the motion but first wished to state his reasons. He said, "I take it this will be a meeting when all committees will rehash their budgets reports of another tentative mill rate would only tend to confuse the public and would serve no useful end."

Reeve J. H. Goy told council he would rather not see the press barred but instead suggested that council adjourn and if they then wanted to sit around and talk, it was perfectly alright.

The mayor told his colleagues there were two ways to deal with the situation: either to pass the motion as presented or have it withdrawn in favor of a verbal motion to adjourn.

Councillors McLeod and Lowe were quick to withdraw their motion and when a vote was taken on a verbal motion to adjourn, Councillors Frank Watts and Ham Peal voiced their objection to the motion and voted in the negative. Councillor Hurst neither voted in the affirmative or the negative for the verbal motion but, according to the council's procedural by-law, refusal to vote is taken as favoring the affirmative stand.

At the outset to the meeting, one reporter approaching the council chambers for the meeting observed Councilor McLeod and Reeve Goy chatting with Deputy Reeve Greer outside.

Special Meeting Called

When Mr Greer had made his colorful entrance and exit, Reeve Goy enquired how the cards advising of the meeting had read. He was informed by the mayor he had called a special meeting of council to discuss the budget.

Both press reporters were notified of the special meeting by the town clerk and were under the impression it was to finalize the budget.

When reporters left the town hall, they observed the departed deputy reeve in his car circling the block around the town hall where the group had resumed. It is understood council remained informally until 2 a.m. Friday morning.

AMOS MASON of Acton was honored during the Acton Chamber of Commerce dinner in St. Alban's Parish Hall last night (Wednesday) and was presented with a plaque inscribed "Acton Chamber of Commerce Honor Amos Mason 1958-59, Citizen of the Year." Pictured above Mr. Mason appears on the left with Mrs. Needles, guest speaker and G. V. Barbeau, Chamber president.

Name Amos Mason Citizen of the Year Chamber Honors Young Acton Skater

Special honor was paid to the Citizen of the Year, Amos Mason, and young skating star Elizabeth Force when the Chamber of Commerce held its community dinner during Chamber of Commerce week, in St. Alban's parish hall, Wednesday. Highlight of the evening was an address by Mrs. Needles on industrial promotion.

Turkey dinner was served to 110 by the ladies of St. Alban's Guild.

The hall was filled as members, wives and friends, including several from out-of-town, enthusiastically applauded the three guests of honor during the program.

Milton, Gordon Rolston, a shipper at H. K. Porter's, started the Acton Box Manufacturing company. Frank Toth, who has a shoe repair business, has been in Acton 26 years. Omer Parker of Everton is manager of the abattoir at the Reformatory. Garnet Miles is in charge of the Carlon pipe division at Beardmore, and has been in town 26 years.

Leader 46 Years

There was lengthy applause after Amos Mason was introduced as the Citizen of the Year.

Mr. Barbeau reviewed Mr. Mason's accomplishments stating: "This year the Chamber of Commerce in choosing its citizen of the year, found little difficulty in making a suitable choice. For forty years, Mr. Amos Mason has been a civic and community leader in Acton. His record of service covers almost every organization and his leadership has been directed toward every worthwhile community enterprise."

"It was in 1920 that Mr. Mason moved here with some second hand machinery, to open the Mason Knitting Company in what was then the old municipal Power House. He had been educated in Acton, later moving to Alton. Shortly after his return to town, he began his extensive community service work, that now appears as a record of achievement and leadership.

"By 1922 he was leading the Acton Citizens' Band, then working on the Public School Board, and later on the municipal council. He served in the capacity of councillor then Reeve, Warden of Halton County, and Acton's First Mayor, during his 14 year connection with the municipal council of Acton."

Chairman of the Canadian Red Cross. In this Red Cross work he was greatly assisted by his wife who contributed many hours with the women of Acton in the preparation of articles of clothing for use in the war areas.

"Mrs. Mason has also greatly assisted him in his municipal work and as general hostess. Mr. Mason served as charter president for the Rotary Club of Acton, still continuing as a member of that group.

"The Municipal Council saw fit to name a street after the Community Leader, and thus the name will be continued on for many years. Such

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Outlook Projects

George Barbeau, as chairman, welcomed the large group to the community dinner. He asked for volunteers to assist the police in checking bicycles on Safety Day, being held by the Chamber on Saturday, May 9. He also mentioned that an industrial display was being considered for the fall fair, when samples of products made in town would be shown.

Vice-president Ted Tyler Sr. introduced the head table guests, directors and committee chairmen. Rising as their names were called were Mrs. Ted Force, Steve Jones, manager of the Kitchener Chamber of Commerce, Mayor Walter Cook, Mr. and Mrs. Bill McKay, Bert Woods, Ted Tyler Jr., Johnny Goy, Ben Rachlin, Mr. and Mrs. Jack McGeachie, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Holmes, Orville Chapman, Frank Terry, Aldo Braida, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Benson, Frank Prouse, Henry Deveau, Mr. and Mrs. Norman Braida, Jim Ledger, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Woodburn.

Work for Betterment

Pointing out it was Chamber of Commerce week across Canada, Mayor Walter Cook said "It is gratifying to council to have such an active organization of men from all walks of life who dedicate themselves to work for the betterment of the community." They realize savings for the ratepayer, he noted.

After Mr. Barbeau paid tribute to the "tremendous job" done by Jack Holmes as chairman of the membership committee, the new chairman, Orville Chapman, proposed the names of new members: William Wilson, who has been in Acton nine years, is chief electrician at the Ontario Steel plant in

Y Board Presidents

"Mr. Mason served on the first board of the Acton Y.M.C.A. and later as president of that board. He led the choir of the Acton United Church, was president of the Acton Board of Trade. He expanded his business to new and larger facilities and served as chairman of the Swimming Pool Committee.

"During the war years his service continued as he headed the Acton and Community War Service League, from 1940-1945, led the orchestra during the fund raising minstrel show, served as Halton



TRIP TO TORONTO with grade eight students of the M. Z. Bennett school was the topic of an essay written by Andrew Smith, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ron Smith. His composition was judged the best of the class and appears in the Free Press this week.

Strike 1959 Mill Rate, List Budget Figures

RECEIPTS		1958 Actual	1959 Budget
Taxation		\$286,951.87	\$384,359.53
Local Improvements		5,946.44	5,946.44
Supplementary Assessment		4,500.00	2,500.00
		3,332.45	
Debt Service Recoverable:			
Georgetown		6,750.10	7,046.46
Milton		4,542.56	4,424.69
Essex		4,131.08	4,029.42
Nasagaweya		1,479.73	1,391.54
Public Utilities:			
Hydro		5,626.00	5,614.00
Water		9,510.43	10,380.61
Sewer Rent		22,053.75	22,000.75
Grants and Subsidies:			
Relief		11,628.43	1,200.00
Fire and Police		298.42	321.75
Highways		14,148.89	8,430.00
L.C.B.O.		865.31	850.00
County of Halton		4,295.35	4,535.57
Licenses:			
Licenses		490.00	500.00
Dog Tax		2,420.50	2,000.00
Tax Penalties		857.75	1,000.00
Unconditional Grants		11,976.80	
Other Revenues:			
Town Hall Rent		117.00	350.00
Fines		2,071.59	2,000.00
Service Charges:			
Legion Taxes		488.12	
Warren Grove Sideroad		431.73	431.73
Y.M.C.A.		1,162.00	1,283.00
Recreation and Community:			
Arca		442.10	900.00
Ambulance		735.00	1,000.00
Cemetery		3,619.37	4,000.00
Miscellaneous Items:			
Sundry		1,405.88	500.00
Post Tax		235.03	200.00
Warren Grove		1,125.00	1,150.80
Post Office		1,469.70	1,803.80
P.U.C.		341.54	
H.E.P.C.		52.80	28.80
Public School Overlay			742.82
Per Capita Overlay			515.16
High School Underlevy		\$108.62	
County Underlevy		\$111.55	
Per Capita Grant			202.17
			11,976.80
			\$480,092.77

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Returns Good

W. Woodburn of the Acton Rotary Club this week reported that returns from the Easter Seal campaign were very favorable with \$739 in receipts accounted for to date. Mr. Woodburn noted further that anyone wishing to assist the Easter Seal Campaign may mail or drop any donation into the Bank of Nova Scotia.

Milton Man Hospitalized Following Car Accident

Roy Downs, Milton, was hospitalized last night (Wednesday) following a two car collision at the intersection of No. 25 Highway and No. 15 Sideroad at Speyside, with severe head lacerations, abrasions, cuts and bruises.

Mr. Downs, news editor for the Canadian Champion in Milton, was proceeding south to his home town on an assignment for his paper, when he was in collision with a car driven by Kenneth Newell, R.R. 3, Milton, as it entered the highway from the sideroad.

Vehicles Locked

When the Downs car, travelling south on 25 highway, collided with the Newell vehicle, proceeding west on 15 sideroad, the two cars apparently locked together, zig-zagged off the highway onto the gravelled portion of the Speyside store and service station, narrowly missing the gas pumps. The Newell car collided with a parked truck in the area owned by Harry Hoversberger of Speyside.

Witnesses to the accident in the store at the time called police, a doctor and ambulance and attempted to assist Mr. Downs, who was pinned beneath the undercarriage of his car.

Driver Pinned

Before he could be removed, a tow truck was rushed to the scene to lift the car off the injured man. Constable Dave Hardy of the North Halton O.P.P. detachment investigated the accident. He reported the driver of the Newell car claimed his brakes had failed. The investigating officer noted

later that a brake test on the Newell car would be made. He said estimated damage amounted to over \$1,500 to the three vehicles involved.

The mayor told his colleagues there were two ways to deal with the situation: either to pass the motion as presented or have it



HOSPITALIZED following an accident last night (Wednesday), Roy Downs, Milton, received injuries as his car, travelling south on number 25 highway, was in collision with another vehicle drive by Kenneth Newell, of R.R. 3, Milton. The Newell car was travelling west on number 15 sideroad, at Speyside. Shown in the picture is the Downs car.