

The Acton Free Press.

Eighty-Fourth Year.—No. 42.

ACTON, ONTARIO, THURSDAY, APRIL 16th, 1959

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 \$51,103.33. The town this year will raise \$384,369.53 on direct taxation as compared with last year's \$288,051.07.

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

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; a study of a by-law to reduce the park a community centre; a complete study of all contracts on operating all tenders; a study by council of the complete debenture debt picture before incurring any further capital expenditures; preparation of a tax schedule; and that the finance committee remain as a standing committee for the balance of the year.

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."

"Payment of interest is what is killing the town of Acton," stated the finance chairman. He also advised council to have the financial picture of the town at their fingertips at all times by having the finance committee advise them throughout the year.

Councillors Resign

Much to the dismay of council, they learned that two colleagues, J. T. Hurst, chairman of the finance committee and F. Watts, chairman of the fire and police committee, tendered their resignations to take effect immediately.

Further information on these resignations appears elsewhere on this page.

Before presenting the finance committee's final budget, chairman Hurst renewed reviews and discussions which took place with the committee and a special meeting of council, at which members of other elected boards in town had been asked to carefully review their estimated budgets and pure them if possible.

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 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 reference in paying their taxes as council has in keeping them informed, returns may be disappointing this year.

Comments Chairman

Councillor B. D. Rachlin congratulated the finance chairman for his excellent report and told his colleagues, "I have never been privileged to hear such a fine financial report."

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

Asks Variance

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

It was explained in the letter that at the time the first survey was taken in the subdivision, to draft rough sketch plans, wooden stakes had been driven into the ground and at a later date when a more complete survey was finished, steel stakes had been placed to mark the proper location for the proposed homes.

The surveyor also explained in his letter that at the time Mr. Prime 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. Prime 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. Prime that as a builder it was his responsibility to mark the location for the proposed homes.

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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 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.

Leader 40 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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Outlines 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.

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, presented 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 President

Mr. Mason served on the first board of the Acton YMCA 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	\$384,369.53
Local Improvements	5,946.44	5,946.44
Supplementary Assessment	4,500.00	2,500.00
	3,332.45	
Debtenture Debt Recoverable:		
Georgetown	6,750.10	7,048.46
Milton	4,542.56	4,424.69
Esquimaux	4,131.08	4,729.42
Nassauville	1,479.73	1,391.54
Public Utilities:		
Hydro	5,628.00	5,654.00
Water	9,510.43	12,480.81
Sewer Rent	22,053.75	22,000.75
Grants and Subsidies:		
Relief	11,329.83	1,200.00
Fire and Police	298.42	321.75
Highways	14,148.69	8,430.00
L.C.B.O.	665.31	650.00
County of Halton	4,293.35	4,335.57
Licenses:		
Licenses	490.00	500.00
Dog Tax	2,420.50	2,000.00
Tax Penalties	957.75	1,000.00
Unconditional Grants	11,976.80	
Other Revenues:		
Town Hall Rent	117.00	350.00
Fines	2,071.00	2,000.00
Service Charges:		
Legion Taxes	48.12	
Warren Grove Sidewalk	431.73	431.73
YMCA	1,162.00	1,283.00
Recreation and Community:		
Arts	442.10	900.00
Amateur	75.00	1,000.00
Community	2,629.27	4,000.00
Miscellaneous Items:		
Sold	1,405.90	500.00
Post Tax	255.00	200.00
Warren Grove	1,125.00	1,150.00
Post Office	1,469.70	1,800.00
P.U.C.	341.54	
H.E.P.C.	32.80	26.80
Public School, O.V. Levy		742.02
Per Capita O.V. Levy		515.16
H.E.S. School O.V. Levy	\$5,482.00	
County Underway	\$117.75	
Per Capita Grant		202.17
		11,976.80
		\$480,092.77

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Firemen Forward Resolution Asking Better School Storage

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

Returns Good

W. Woodburn of the Acton Rotary Club this week reported that returns from the Easter Seal campaign were very favorable with \$730 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, e.g. jacked 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 Hertzberger of Speyside.

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

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 heeling 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.

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, inquired 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 members had submitted their budgets to the finance chairman and councillor J. T. Hurst, chairman of the finance committee, informed the mayor

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 like it this will be a meeting when all committees will rebash their budgets. The reports of another tentative mill rate would only tend to confuse the public and would serve no useful end."

Reeve J. H. Greer 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

Special Meeting Called

When Mr. Greer had made his colorful entrance and exit, Reeve Greer 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.

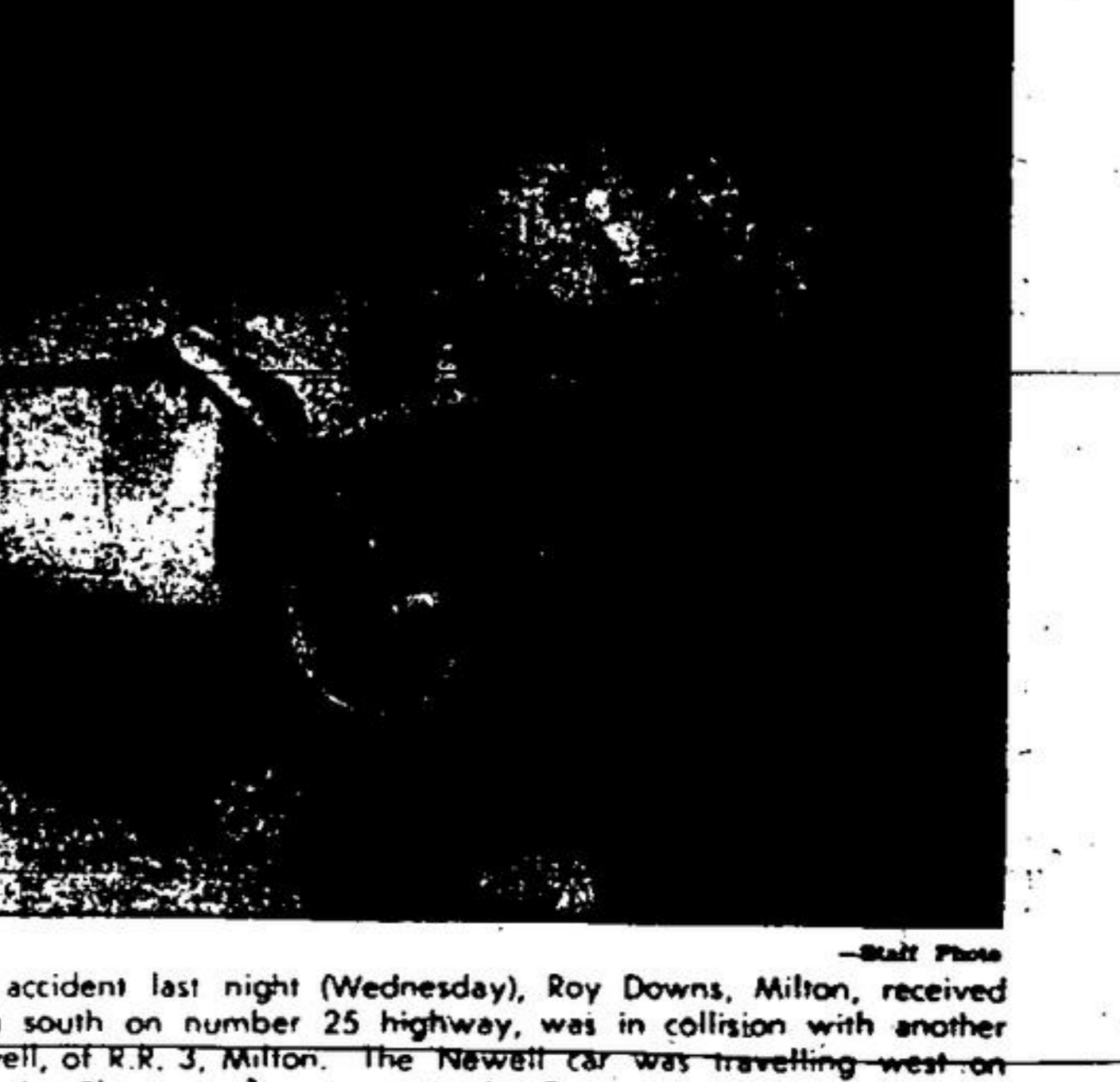
When reporters left the town hall they observed the departed deputy reeve in his car circling the block around the town hall where the group had resumed. It is understood council remained informally until 2 a.m. Friday morning.

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Hospitalized

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