

Esquering sees problems in analysis of Plunkett

The 126-page Plunkett report under study by municipalities throughout Halton and Peel Counties has been met with varied opinions. Monday night of last week Esquering Township council agreed with only one item contained in the report — the combination of the three high school areas in North Halton.

Clerk K. C. Lindsay read a preliminary report during the meeting pinpointing Esquering council's reactions to date to the Plunkett report. Following is the preliminary report read by the clerk.

"In evaluating the proposals in the Plunkett Review of the Counties of Halton and Peel, some of the proposals might have value if modified, for instance a combination of the present three high school areas in North Halton might conceivably cut down the cost of vocational training in the areas, providing some of the classes at each of the three schools and moving the pupils instead of trying to provide a full vocational setup in each of the three schools. Similarly there might be merit in combining fire protection services although the present arrangement seems to work very well and at a minimum cost.

"On the other hand, road costs would be greatly increased; not only would there be a large increase in the number of supervisory personnel, but with the proposed road mileage in the proposed northern county of 1,028 miles, and taking the medium rate of \$2,000.00 per mile, the County spends \$3,000.00 and the township \$1,000.00. Approximately, it would mean a road budget of \$2,056,000.00, less provincial grants of \$1,028,000.00 and \$1,028,000.00 to be levied by taxation on the estimated assessment of the north of \$67,022,965 would mean a rate for roads of approximately 15 mills, as against a combined rate township and county for the year 1966 of 7.954 mills.

"The review takes two counties with a reasonably well-balanced assessment, Halton — \$265,765,540 and Peel — \$258,987,195, adds them together and splits them across to come up with two counties with a completely unbalanced assessment, the southern area with \$457,729,760 as against the northern area with an assessment of \$67,022,965 or approximately 12.77 per cent of the total against 87.23 per cent for the southern area.

"The review makes no provision or suggestion as to the division or adjustment of the de-

biture indebtedness of the various municipalities. To deal only with that of the township of Esquering the township has a debt of \$682,428 of which the town of Acton is responsible for a small portion.

"Then, the county of Halton has \$850,000 debentures of which Esquering is liable for \$184,195 and Acton, Georgetown, Milton and Nassagaweya are liable for the balance. Then Acton has \$205,968 debentures of which Esquering is liable for \$48,237 and Nassagaweya is also liable for a portion and also Acton has \$88,100 of debentures of which Esquering is liable for \$19,091 and Georgetown, Milton, and Nassagaweya are all liable for a portion.

"Georgetown has \$27,700 debentures of which Esquering is liable for \$5,634 and also \$186,503 of which Esquering is liable for portions. Then Milton has debentures of \$678,000 of which Esquering is liable for \$149,905 and Nassagaweya is liable for their portion of the county debentures of \$5,297,250.

"The suggested representation in the northern county is entirely unsuitable particularly for those of the present municipalities who are allowed only one member on council and he elected for a three year term. If at the end of his term he retires or is defeated, a new man would have to be elected who would have no experience in municipal affairs, probably no knowledge of the particular problems concerning his area and no one to guide him. Similarly, if the man elected was incompetent or even just not interested, and such cases are bound to happen in the future just as they have in the past, the area would be without competent representation for three years.

"Again, the Review, after explaining that it is generally desirable that local divisions should generally conform as far as is practical to the watersheds, proceeds to draw a line directly across every watershed in the area leaving the headwaters of 12 Mile Creek, 16 Mile Creek, the Credit River, Etobicoke Creek, and the Humber River, all in the Northern County and the Mouths of all but the Humber in the Southern County.

"The estimate of future growth in the Review is somewhat out of line particularly with regard to the township of Esquering since it estimates the population of the township of Esquering as 7,600 in 1980 and as the assessed population was 7,599 on October 1, 1966, it is

executive committee of three was questioned, along with the committee's powers. Again the idea of having Halton as one region was expressed and it was further stated all administrative bodies should be directly responsible to the overall council of elected officials.

FUTURE GROWTH: According to council, the estimate of future growth is underestimated in Plunkett's report. One municipality — Esquering — has already reached the total that Mr. Plunkett had suggested would not be reached until 1980. In the report it was suggested growth would start from the lake and work up. Council countered with the idea that, "if growth goes from the south to the north then it could be more effectively planned if the current county is kept intact."

LOCAL REPRESENTATION: Council unanimously opposed the idea of having only one representative for Esquering and Nassagaweya. Because of the larger population in Esquering, it is possible Nassagaweya would be left without a representative. Representation should be considered on the basis of area, assessment and population—not just population, it said.

PLANNING: The planning referred to in Plunkett's report is not in keeping with the present use of land. Reeve William Coulter suggested, "if we're to be a dormitory township then we should be joined with Oakville and Burlington." It was decided to recommend, "because of the influence of the southern part area it is more feasible to have future water requirements coming in from the south."

ASSESSMENT AND TAXATION: The appointment of an assessment commissioner in the Halton County area was recommended and consideration should be given to total rural and urban area.

FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS: "Should the Plunkett report be enforced, we suggest strongly that the area south of Milton which is serviced by the town should be included in the proposed Halton-Peel area."

fairly safe to assume that it has already exceeded the figure in the Review for 1980. If the estimates for other municipalities in the combined counties of Halton and Peel are as accurate as those for Esquering the estimates in the Review are of very little value.

The proposed boundaries, as set out in the Review, seem entirely unreasonable. If an east and west division were necessary (and no good reason for such a division has been advanced) then it should have been drawn at either the Dundas Street or the Upper Middle Road, but as said before, the present boundaries make two fairly well balanced divisions with assessments that are nearly comparable, and no compelling reasons have been advanced for changing them. The argument that larger units of administration are either more efficient or more economical is fallacious. It is well known fact that the larger the unit of administration the more expensive it is to operate.

"In regard to assessment and tax collection, any larger unit would undoubtedly make for more mistakes, not that assessment shouldn't be supervised possibly from the provincial level to assure as far as possible the same standards in all areas, but the mechanics require that where there are so many changes and divisions that someone with an intimate knowledge of the territory should be in a position to make the changes, both as regards to the assessment roll and voters' list.

"According to the Review there were 4,878 public school pupils in the five municipalities in Peel County to be included in the northern county, and no secondary facilities whatever. If the recommendation of the Report were implemented the nearest high school to any of these pupils would be Georgetown high school, which would not have the capacity to take care of them, and which is 30 to 35 miles from pupils in the neighborhood of Ballvay.

"So that one of the first things the suggested new board of education would have to do would be to build another expensive high school and the northern area would have to pay for it despite the fact that the ratepayers in Albion, Caledon, Caledon East, Chinguacousy and Toronto Gore are already paying for the Central Peel Secondary School and the ratepayers in Esquering are paying on three secondary schools, and those in Nassagaweya on two, and those in Acton, Georgetown and Milton are paying on one in each town.

"Another matter of which the Review has taken no notice, probably because it was beneath their notice and concerned only one of the forgotten municipalities in the northern area, is the matter of the Railway Bonus Fund. It only amounts to some \$27,000.00 which would pay half of Mr. Plunkett's fee, but it was created a perpetual trust by law of the County of Halton in 1893 and can't just be brushed aside."

Although the preceding statement was made public during the meeting it was pointed out council is still studying the Plunkett report and intends to have a completed submission ready to the Minister, J. W. Spouner.

Other business transacted at the meeting included:

- Learning the Department of Transport had approved installation of flasher signals at the CNR crossings on the third and fourth lines.
- Approved payment of \$100 to Glen Williams Ladies softball team for winning the Ontario Championship.
- Agreed to view a proposed dump site suggested by the town of Acton, which is located on lot 27, concession 2 in the township in the vicinity of Fairview cemetery. If approved, an agreement will be drawn up specifying no burning.
- Accounts totalling \$386.80 were approved for payment.



County Council Briefs

At the November meeting of Halton County Council last week:

- Members sought clarification of whether per diem rates should be charged to the County by members travelling to a convention on a Sunday. It appeared some members charged and others did not. It was referred to the personnel and finance committee for an answer.

- Warden H. H. Hinton asked the same two committees to provide a report on purchase of alcoholic beverages by the council or any committee. He suggested the committees should purchase their own if it was needed. His comment followed a story in a Toronto newspaper which purported to "expose" the fact the council had overspent its \$2,500 limit on entertainment and refreshments in 1965.

- The Warden also levelled a blast at an Oakville daily paper for its reports on so-called "fun funds" of the County. He said the paper reported the Warden "admitted" visiting relatives on a recent study tour to England, with the implication it was an admission of guilt. Warden Hinton said he spent three hours of his own time to visit relatives in England. "We are not accustomed to this type of reporting in the north of the county," he said, suggesting the newspaper should base its reports on facts.

- It was learned the Halton County Planning Association was studying the Plunkett Report and will issue its decision later.

- The Industrial Committee reported seeing a film prepared for the Windsor Industrial Commission and decided to employ a man to make a study on an industrial promotion to promote the interest of school children in technical fields and assist both the children and local industry.

- Members of the roads committee reported they have asked county engineer to prepare a report on signs for Halton County Museum along county roads and provincial highways

in Halton, following a request.

- The road committee reported approving an additional 10 cents per hour pay for men working night shifts during the winter, and the Board of Health's request for a five per cent increase in the hourly rate of part-time Health Unit staff was approved.

- Assistant engineer Robert Blair was authorized to attend an asphalt course in March of next year with expenses paid.

- The firm of Warnock-Hersey Co. Ltd. was engaged to conduct a review and evaluation of services provided by Halton County Health Unit staff, at a cost not to exceed \$2,400. Their review is to be a pilot study and it is possible the firm will later be engaged to evaluate the entire county government organization.

- It was suggested a full time personnel director was needed. George Noble, Metro Toronto's personnel officer was to be invited to a meeting of the personnel committee to discuss a solution to staff problems.

- Purchase of a \$780 cheque writing machine for the Halton Centennial Manor was approved.

- Engaging of an assistant family counsellor to assist Halton's family counsellor R. Vivian was approved.

- County assessor Robert Beach was delegated to attend a meeting of County and District Assessors in Toronto in December.

- The council approved a \$66,000 payment to Milton District Hospital as the first quarter of its building grant.

- Members endorsed a resolution from Niagara Falls city council seeking an increase from 50 to 70 per cent in the maximum subsidy on capital expenditures on homes for the aged.

- Reeve Herb Merry and Deputy-Reeve W. A. Hoey reported on their attendance at an E.M.O. Course at Arrnprior. Reeve Merry noted the hosts had provided an eight foot bed for him. He is six feet seven inches tall and has trouble sleeping in an ordinary sized bed.

New policy

Police list week's charges, investigations, patrol miles

A new policy laid down for O.P.P. Detachments throughout the province was initiated this week. All police detachments will issue a detailed weekly report on police activities to local newspapers.

The report details miles travelled, hours of duty, accidents investigated, charges laid and court sessions attended.

This week the first report from Corp. Rev. Mason of Acton O.P.P. Detachment gives a complete breakdown of activities from Tuesday, November 13 to Monday, November 19.

"In the past week, the Acton Municipal Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police patrolled 789 miles in and for the Town of Acton, with the personnel having a total of 178 work hours.

There was one minor accident in which there were no injuries. A total of five charges were laid under the Highway Traffic Act and eight warnings were issued to motorists.

"One minor disturbance of a criminal nature was investigated along with six miscellaneous calls at the detachment office. One prisoner was escorted to Halton County Jail at Milton, charged under the L.C.A.

"On November 14, members of the detachment attended court at Milton for a period of three, and one-half hours on a number

of traffic cases in which seven convictions were registered. "It has been noted there is considerable speeding in the area of the schools and in other parts of the town. Radar is being put in full operation at these points." Cpl. R. Mason No. 568.

Stop light tender . . .

(Continued from Page One) cording to instructions from council and had received a price from the building contractor, Kerr Construction, for approximately \$1,200 for a bridge across the school creek to the library entrance.

The mayor stated cribbing for footings would be assembled this weekend and work would proceed as fast as materials arrived. Progress payment for construction amounting to \$21,570.45 was approved.

Councillor C. F. Leatherland reported on a meeting held in Kitchener with Centra Mortgage and Housing Corporation at which time it was learned loans for further housing in Acton this year were not available as this year's funds for the area under the jurisdiction of the Kitchener office had almost been used up. It was also learned that in the event of a dire emergency loans might be available this year for one or two homes. Applications for loans can be made next year, however.

A special meeting of council has been called for Wednesday, November 30 at 7 p.m. at which time members will have an opportunity to peruse the town's submission concerning the Plunkett report. Following this, the submission will be under review by the North Halton Urban Board at a meeting in Milton the same evening.

Council agreed to have town workmen install the community Christmas tree at the former post office following a request from Trinity United Church Women who are sponsoring a Santa Fair there Saturday, December 3.

It was also agreed to proclaim Saturday, November 26, as Boy Scout Apple Day in Acton.

Accounts totalling \$10,996.28 were approved for payment.

Councillor Earl Masales informed council Acton Board of

Parks Management appeared reluctant to hold further meetings in view of possible amalgamation of both Parks Board and Recreation Committee. The problem was turned over to the administration committee of council for investigation.

Present for the meeting were Mayor Duby, Councillors Mrs. Doris Fryer, C. F. Leatherland, F. G. Oakes, Earl Masales, Robert Drinkwater, William Williams with Reeve H. H. Hinton arriving at 9:30 p.m. after attending a dinner sponsored by the Halton County Fire Prevention Bureau. Deputy-Reeve R. R. Parker was unable to attend for business reasons.

The new abattoir at the Guelph Reformatory has been opened. The first shipment of cattle arrived last week. It provides another market for local cattle.

60 men attend church meeting

Responsibilities of men in the church were discussed at a meeting of men in Knox church Tuesday evening. Presentations were made by the Rev. Walter Welch of St. Andrew's church, Humber Heights, and George Ferris, Toronto, assistant to the director of Presbyterian Men.

About 60 men attended from the Presbyterian, Baptist, United and Pentecostal churches here and three Baptist churches from out-of-town.

Mr. Welch spoke on church men and their lay visitation inviting persons to attend church, resulting in growth in all churches.

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Nassagaweya files answer to Plunkett

"The proposed boundaries for the new county of Halton-Peel are too large and there is no substantial amount of industrial and commercial assessment to offset an increasing mill rate."

This will be one of the leading statements, when Nassagaweya Township Council's opinions and recommendations on Thomas Plunkett's study are forwarded to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and to the special Halton County Committee which will be studying the reports.

At a Monday night meeting council made a final draft of recommendations and opinions. They will be sent to the Minister and to the County Committee in the very near future.

Council dealt with the report in eight different categories — education, a.e.a. government structure, future growth, local representation, planning, assessment and taxation and "further recommendations," as requested by the special Halton committee.

AREA: A one-tier system of government applied to the county as it now exists was recommended. It was pointed out the suggested boundaries in Plunkett's report are too large and there is no substantial industrial or commercial assessment to offset an increasing mill rate in the northern rural county.

EDUCATION: Council accepted the ideas of the Township School Board, which stated the eight boards in the northern part of the county should be merged into one board of education covering high schools and elementary schools. A similar amalgamation could take place in North Peel, South Peel and South Halton (Oakville and Burlington). After that was effectively accomplished there would be three possibilities according to the Township Board — (1) maintain four boards of education — (2) amalgamate into two boards as recommended by Plunkett or join into two county boards, namely Halton and Peel.

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE: The idea of having an

executive committee of three was questioned, along with the committee's powers. Again the idea of having Halton as one region was expressed and it was further stated all administrative bodies should be directly responsible to the overall council of elected officials.

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Mutual Aid sees new hall

Members of Halton Mutual Aid fire services, from the five fire departments in the county toured the new Burlington fire station on the Guelph Line north of the Queen Elizabeth Way at their November meeting Tuesday evening of last week. A brief business meeting followed.

Officers were nominated for the annual January elections.

Ralph Elderfield of Burlington Volunteer Fire Department was the sole nominee for president, and is expected to step up after a year as vice-president. Two nominees for vice-

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