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ONUS IS ON C.N. CLOSE STATION

Halton M.P. Rud Whiting has advised Acton council that the Canadian Transport Commission has proposed a public hearing to deal with the whole matter of the C.N.'s Guelph master agency plan.

The onus is now on the railroad to show the Commission that closing stations including Acton and Rockwood will result in no inconvenience or hardship to the area. Date and place of the meeting have not yet been set but Mr. Whiting has been advised the Commission will try to give a month's notice.

"Why was the town not advised?" (by the transport commission), asked Councillor McKenzie at Tuesday's regular council meeting.

"He's been in close touch with the situation," answered clerk-administrator Joe Hurst, "and carrying on further than we did."

"We can't do much right now," thought Reeve F. Oakes. It might be wise to get started now, thought the clerk, because there may be only a week's notice prior to the hearing.

Councillor Earl Masales was doubtful there was anything that could be done. "The people who could assist didn't show up at the last meeting," he complained.

"We can at least acknowledge the letter from Mr. Whiting. Are we with him or against him?" asked Councillor McKenzie.

Council agreed to answer the M.P.'s letter and refer to the case presented at the last meeting in Acton. Mayor Doby felt council was doing the maximum.

"The letter said the onus is on the railway and they are certainly in no shape to say the Acton station was losing money," Councillor Bill Coats asserted.

The mayor agreed but felt the planning-out process here had had the wanted slowdown of business for the railroad.

Council is also trying to set up a public meeting between Ontario Housing Corporation officials, Headway Construction, senior citizens and residents in the area on Cobblehill Road where the proposed O.H.C. geared-to-income housing project is planned.

O.H.C. officials will show slides of their housing projects in various municipalities. Meeting date will likely be Wednesday, Feb. 26, and will be held at the Robert Little school. Mayor

Doby has requested that Paul Nielsen, chairman of the Development Committee, act as chairman of the meeting.

The mayor referred to the fact that Georgetown has a senior citizen housing project approved and ratified in a few months while Acton has been working on the scheme for the past two years.

Council passed a motion that all rezoning of land in Acton be deferred until amendments to the official plan and zoning laws are approved by the Ontario Municipal Board.

Councillor McKenzie was concerned. He asked if this could affect the senior citizens' housing project. Mayor Doby replied that circumstances had caused a delay but quite possibly the whole thing can be finalized in time for spring building.

Council again discussed regional government after the reeve had given a report on the meeting of all the county Reeves in Milton Friday. The meeting fired a telegram to the Minister of Municipal Affairs demanding seven representatives on the negotiation committee from Halton instead of three.

Councillor Greer felt the

county would not get a representative on the lower tier for each of Acton, Esquesing and Nassagaweya but suggested one member for each 10,000 people. He felt Acton was doing the right thing asking for a slowdown on the regional plan and keeping it in Halton.

Complaints against the lack of direction from the minister were many but Councillor McKenzie said members could equate the setting up of regional government with the County Board of Education. The I.S.O.C. committee had made recommendations and the Board considered them when it stepped into power this year.

Council also considered the year projection of expenditures which was due at the O.M.B.

Monday and approved it. Recommendations included capital expenditures of \$250,000 per year from 1969 to 1973.

The shortage of nurses in the Halton County Health Unit was accepted but Reeve Oakes and Councillor Coats were at odds over the cause during a discussion on possible V.O.N. service in North Halton at Tuesday's council.

"There's a shortage of public health nurses because of the policies of the Health Unit," Councillor Coats declared.

Reeve Frank Oakes' eyebrows lifted.

"I can't agree with that," he replied. "You mean the policies of the union?"

"Not the policies of the Health Unit," answered Mr. Coats.

The reeve pondered and said there were probably many things Councillor Coats didn't know about the situation.

"I'll talk to you afterwards," he grinned.

Council also:

• Discussed installing signs to enforce the parking by-law on the parking lot adjacent to Trinity United Church.

• Discussed crosswalks and the new illuminated crosswalk signs and agreed they indicated caution although warning signs have not been installed at town entrances yet.

• Discussed the delay in purchasing a snow blower, indicating no decision would be made until snow was more plentiful for demonstrations.

• Discussed a projected meeting over regional government with Georgetown and Esquesing. Councillor Greer asserted council shouldn't miss an opportunity to "talk with our neighbors" on the subject.

News travels... on two wings

Blissfully unaware of last week's groundhog prediction a robin perched on a window sill at Frank Heller's plant Tuesday morning.

News travels fast — especially good news like that.

And the Heller employee only had to open a door to tell the news to the Free Press printing staff in the same building.

They forwarded the word up to the office staff, and from there it went up to the third floor news room.

But by then the robin had lifted his cold claws from the window sill and flown away.

Back south?

Carnival

Acton's first annual winter carnival "Phuture Phreeze" promises a full slate of activities from Wednesday to Saturday.

Although it has been organized by high school students several events should involve the entire community. Look inside today's Free Press for details.

McKeough's proposal for regional government because it means slicing up Nassagaweya and "unless citizen opinions are expressed in sufficient volume there will be no hope of preserving the Township."

Mrs. MacArthur urges all to write Ontario opposition leaders Robert Nixon and Donald MacDonald, as well as Mr. McKeough, Premier John Robarts, and Halton West M.P.P. George Kerr.

McKeough's proposal to proceed within a month has made us do our homework, admitted Mayor Les Doby. He distributed copies of The Free Press around the council table so council could read the views of the townships and the town of Georgetown on the regional government proposal.

Most vociferous opponent of the entire scheme was Deputy-Reeve Ted Tyler who thought council should oppose regional government in all its forms. He said he didn't like the attitude of acceptance some took towards it. If it was necessary it should be a strictly Halton deal, he declared.

Mr. Tyler said he wasn't the only one opposed to the proposal. Most of the merchants were, too. Services in Acton were good, taxes reasonable and some towns, especially in Peel, don't have these favorable assets.

"We'll all be lumped into one pot," he lamented, "a real plum for all the guys who have problems." He cited Acton's industrial ratio and the fact the town has one of the lowest hydro rates in Ontario as useless assets when absorbed by other municipalities.

"We're doing well on our own," the deputy-reeve said. "I'm not against progress but take a good look at services, assets and costs and how can you help opposing regional government."

"We have a gun at our head. O.K. But we don't want Peel in with us." He failed to see why the provincial government didn't simply pass a new statute if they wanted a buffer between Toronto and Hamilton.

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EDDIE ALLEN and LORI DE BRUYN exchange Kindergarten - Valentines.

Council upholds Halton as regional government unit

Darcy McKeough, the Chatham cartographer who's carving up the map of Ontario into larger units for regional government, was fairly praised, doubly damned and vigorously upheld at a special meeting of Acton council, Wednesday night.

Purpose of the meeting was to give Reeve Dr. Frank Oakes some direction for a Friday meeting of the County Reeves in Milton. They in turn selected three representatives to meet with Municipal Affairs Minister McKeough and proceed with negotiations to implement regional government in Halton and Peel counties.

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Councillor Garnet McKenzie was the first to disagree with Mr. Tyler's contentions. "I can't see

us continuing as a little town," he argued. He said the county was trying to push county assessment, a good indication of agreement with the principles of regional government. He pointed to police, fire protection and health units as proof that municipalities can work as a larger unit. "We won't get to first base," he charged, "if we argue, let's stay the way we are."

Mr. Tyler said the mutual aid fire protection is still controlled locally not on a spread-out deal.

"If it's changed watch costs skyrocket," he predicted. "If we object (to regional government) how can he push it down our throats?" asked Councillor Bill Coats. He quoted the minister as saying it would fail if the people are not convinced of the program's merits.

Clerk-administrator J. Hurst urged councillors to look at the attitude of other communities and the fact they were making provisions for it.

"Changing times mean some things must be put on a larger scale but not nearly as far as the minister has recommended," Councillor Coats continued. He urged a stronger county government with some local representation on it.

Reeve F. Oakes reminded council that even with a two tier system in the county it was sometimes difficult for small problems to be solved.

The deputy-reeve charged, "We've been sold a bill of goods by a bunch of super salesmen who think they're always right."

Councillor Jack Greer said he could see no difference between regional government and the county system. "Why couldn't we work it out as we go along without jeopardizing what we are doing. Take one step at a time and eventually go into more fields on a five year plan," he suggested.

Reeve Oakes nodded. "Retain Halton as a county or region," he maintained, urging gradual absorption of a regional program by the county.

Councillor Peter Marks warned council not to put all its eggs into one basket. He said it was difficult for a layman to analyze

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SINGING THE PRAISES OF THE GOLDEN CARNATION are Wednesday night's leads in the Robert Little operetta 'Behind Castle Walls'. (left) Sandra Denny, Jim McNabb, Peter Bunz, Bonnie

Bristow and Ian Strange. A different cast performs on Thursday night. Look for more extensive coverage in next week's Free Press.—(Staff Photo)



THERE WAS A PRINCESS in a song and dance annual operetta at Robert Little school.—(Staff Photo)