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WHAT COUNCIL DID

Suggests Tax Fund Reserve Collections Get Tougher

"Taxes are getting harder to collect and I would suggest that the town set up a reserve of \$4,000 to take care of future uncollectibles" was advice given by H. A. Lever, town auditor, when he reviewed the 1953 statement at a council meeting.

The town had slightly over \$18,000 in unpaid taxes on the books at the year end, a few hundred dollars less than in 1952, but still a sizeable amount. Unpaid taxes have been slowly mounting since the record year of 1947 when every tax was paid.

There was noticeable improvement in water rate collections last year, said Mr. Lever. Water arrears totalled \$500.

Mr. Lever said that the budget would have to be much more closely adhered to in the future if council were not to get in an embarrassing position. He reminded members that they are personally liable if the year ends with a deficit. It is not wise, he indicated, to budget too close to the line to keep the tax rate down, especially when there is no reserve to fall back on. A surplus at the beginning of 1953 had shrunk to \$2,000 at the year end and there were some deviations from the original budget which gave council some extra revenue. Such items as an extra highway subsidy of \$7600, a \$2600 water surplus and the drawing of \$4,000 from surplus were instrumental in balancing the budget at the 43 mill rate set.

This year Mr. Lever warned when expenditures come up, council must say "Is it in the budget?"

He recommended changes in water accounting, saying the present total of \$1250 for hydrant charges is far from adequate, and that \$00 per hydrant would be more in keeping with costs. Water for town purposes, too, should be charged up as large quantities are used, particularly for ice flooding at the arena and for flushing sewers.

The town's debenture debt of some \$260,000 will not show an appreciable drop until 1957 when the next important large bond issue will be retired.

Mr. Lever complimented council on doing an excellent job in 1955, and one which was far in excess of monetary considerations. He hinted that it might be in order to review the yearly fee paid to elected public servants in the light of the present day when more and more time is required for a mayor and council to conduct town business.

He also asked that a committee meet with him to more sharply define the duties of an auditor as compared with the keeping of records and office routine by the permanent staff. At present, he said, the auditor is doing work which is outside the field of an audit, and if this is to be continued there will have to be a revision in audit fee.

• Legion Notes •

What we would like to know, is what happened to all the members who said they didn't like oysters . . . and then changed their minds? We think that Thursday night's meeting and so on was just about as successful an affair as members could ask for. The committee, under the chairmanship of Alf Sykes, certainly deserve a hearty vote of thanks from all who attended.

The meeting opened at 7:35 and to the surprise of everyone, there were 85 in attendance. The business of the evening was attended with despatch and the usual closing ceremonies took place at 8:15.

Entertainment chairman Arnold had arranged with O'Keefe's Brewery to have their district representative present, Mr. George Bates, who showed some films which were most interesting. The main feature was a 30 minute film of all the highlights of the year's football games of the Hamilton Tl-Oats (in colour) and the other was a short feature of daredevil acts all over the world. Both were very good and a hearty vote of thanks was tendered to Mr. Bates and the O'Keefe's Company. Mr. Bates in reply said he was certainly glad to be present and happy that the films were enjoyed. His company would be happy to show the branch anything they had at any time in the future.

The head boy of the evening, Alf Sykes, then made his appearance and said that the food was ready, if they wished to go in the other room for it. (When talking the evening over a few days previous, the committee and writer had decided that the most we could hope for was 100 — instead of which almost 200 were present, fortunately a merchant-member, Walker Cleave was present, to help fill the breach with cooked meats, etc.) This, of course was quite understandable, as the committee had no way of knowing how many to prepare for, nor how the boys would go for the oysters many of whom had never tried them, and said they had no intention of so doing. However, when they saw what a lovely dish deep-fried oysters can be, on a piece of toast, they certainly decided to make the most of it.

Joe Marchmont and Roy Laquerquist entertained as did Vince Mountford and party from Brampton. The entertainment was well-received and the boys seemed to enjoy it all. Some good impromptu acts among the members developed (on the stage we mean) with Bob McMenemy, Nick Brown, and others all contributing to the evening.

In all, we think it was just as good an evening as the Branch has had in many a year — and we hope there's a lot more of them.

In closing, we would like to remark on the grand job done by Sykes & Co., the members of whom we won't attempt to list here, except for the two cooks of the evening, Dave Bowman and Jack Kemmhead. The tables were set up just as nicely as you could wish for, and the committee had the trays as attractive as any we've seen.

We were happy to see quite a number over from Orangeville with Gord Martin, as well as zone sports convener B. Smith, Streetsville, at the party Thursday night.

We'd like to thank that genial Labatt traveller, Stan Haennel, who when he heard about the Rogers fund, "got cracking" and Labatt's sent through a cheque for \$50. Nice going, and thanks a million.

He also tells us he has quite an interesting film, taken at Dieppe, by Col. Labatt. Stan would like to show it some night here. What say, Herb?

We evidently hurt one of our former sports chairman's feelings quite badly in last week's Herald, for that night after the meeting, he approached us with calling in his eyes, asking us to quit calling him fat boy. Says it's not a question of being fat, but merely a case of 'life begins to SPREAD at forty.' Guess that's why he needs two chairs to sit on these days. Sorry John.

And finally, we wonder who the two chaps were who followed another member home Thursday night and then took up a lonely vigil on his porch waiting for him to come out again. Too bad he went to bed . . . We also hear via the grapevine the mud around some of the country roads is plenty bad. No wonder some of the boys at S&S wore slippers to work the next day.

Halton M.P. Hosts Oakville Hischoolers

An educational week-end in the nation's capital will be something long remembered by a group of Oakville high school students.

One hundred and twenty five, including four teachers and the school principal were met at the train by Sybil Bennett, M.P. when they arrived in Ottawa and were later guests at a luncheon tendered by Miss Bennett.

Leaders of the four parties were invited to the luncheon and the group had the privilege of meeting Hon. C. D. Howe, representing the government, Hon. George Drew and Solon Low, Conservative and Social Credit house leaders, and Mr. Knight who represented CCF leader Caldwell. Col. Franklin, V.C., sergeant at arms was also present.

The students stayed at the Chateau Laurier, had seats in the gallery for the afternoon session of parliament and had a tour of the city.

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