

Politics Ruining Health Unit, Says Former M.O.H.

County councillors playing politics have ruined the Halton County Health Unit, former Medical Officer of Health Dr. Hugh Hay charged.

Dr. Hay, who has been relieved of his position as MOH, said he got no support in running the health unit from either the board of health or the county personnel committee.

"How can the MOH do a job if he gets no support from the board of health or the personnel committee," he asked.

Health Board. He suggested the board of health should be made up of citizens at large rather than by county councillors.

County warden William Hunter, of Georgetown, said that Dr. Hay was asked to resign because of continual absence from the job. Hunter also said Dr. Hay had been warned by a three-man committee of the health board that absenteeism would not be permitted.

Oakville Deputy Reeve Bill Gillies first made public the fact that Dr. Hay had been relieved — and that the former assistant MOH Dr. L. M. Stuart had been appointed MOH.

Stopped Order. Gillies contacted Queen's Park and stopped the order naming Dr. Stuart MOH from being approved by the L.Gov. — because county council had not yet had a chance to approve the board of health recommendation.

Dr. Stuart had said he would like to be named MOH — instead of acting MOH — until a new one is named, when he would step down again.

The position pays \$17,000 a year, and Dr. Hay held it for less than a year. He started last September, after the health unit had been without an MOH most of the year, following the resignation early in 1967 of Dr. Archie Bull.

The health unit has been operating in a state of deepening crisis for the past two years.

In 1966, the nurses on the staff walked off the job and returned only after "greivelling" the health unit, preventing it from hiring any more nurses until a new contract was settled.

Talks Dragged. The contract talks dragged on until September of 1967, and in that time, many of the nurses on staff had quit or moved away, so the health unit was short-handed.

The health unit now has about half the nurses on staff that are required to run a full program. As a result many of the normal clinics and school programs that the unit has had in the past, have been eliminated from the schedule, and are now set up only on request.

Dr. Hay said early this year that he expected to be able to hire enough nurses when university graduates became available this spring.

But only a handful applied for the jobs available, and not all the applicants accepted jobs.

The health unit now has about 15 nurses, and to be properly staffed, Dr. Hay said, it should have about 30.

"We've picked up five people recently, but four have left us so we're only up one," he said.

Dr. Hay also said that he expected in the near future health units would bid for the services of public health nurses, much like boards of education now bid for teachers, because nurses are so scarce.

Warden Hunter said the board of health had tried its best to get additional staff, but there just were no people available, although Halton pays good money.

"We have never interfered with Dr. Hay when he was running the board of health. You just can't go out and pick these nurses up dime a dozen, you know," Reeve Hunter said.

For most of this year, Halton and Peel Health units had discussed the possibility of merging the two units to form a regional service, which would be eligible for an increased provincial grant.

Halton officials are still trying to promote the merger, even though Peel county has issued a plan for forming a regional government on its own — without any Halton municipalities included.

By-Law Tightens Control Over Building Excavations. Three readings were given to a new by-law covering excavations and fencing at Monday night's council meeting.

The by-law, sparked by the concern of the Halton Hills ratepayers after the death of a child by drowning in an excavation, makes fencing and draining a must for every builder and contractor before leaving the site unattended.

The fencing and drainage must be approved by the engineer, building inspector or safety officer. If the work is not done to the satisfaction of the town, the town may do the work and bill the contractor.

The building inspector and the safety officer were made jointly responsible for the enforcement of this by-law, and responsible for the notification to the builders and contractors of the provisions of the by-law. The enforcement of this by-law shall take precedence over any other duties of the inspector and safety officer.

A fine of not more than three hundred dollars for each offence will be levied. Cr. Young stated this by-law may be amended to coincide with by-laws from other areas, that have been tested in court.

Don Brander, Barb Britton Chosen for Leadership Camp. Don Brander, 22, of R.R. 1, Norval, and Barbara Britton 21 of R.R. 1, Acton have been chosen to attend the Junior Farmer Leadership Camp to be held at Geneva Park on Lake Couchiching.

Don Brander is secretary of the Norval Junior Farmers, and is a leader of the Halton 4-H Tractor Club. He has completed 8 4-H Clubs, being a noted junior livestock judge both at the Royal Winter Fair and in county competitions. Don is presently a partner in the family dairy farm enterprise.

Miss Britton is secretary-treasurer of the Acton Junior Institute and has completed 13 4-H Homemaking Club Projects, receiving County and Provincial honours. Barbara has been active in the Acton Junior Institute for three years. She is employed as a hairdresser in Georgetown.

SMILE. Among the questions to be answered by the applicant for citizenship was the following: "What is the length of your residence in this country?" After some thought he wrote: "Twenty-seven feet, counting the verandah."

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Retain County Reps on Sheridan College Board

A move to have no representatives from Halton County Council on the Board of Directors of Sheridan College was turned back by County Council last week, when they referred it to the personnel committee.

Reeve G. Gallagher of Burlington contended everything related to education should be left to the in-coming County Board of Education. Disagreeing, Reeve H. Hinton of Acton, a member of the Sheridan College board claimed this would indicate no interest in Sheridan on the part of County Council. He pointed out Peel would still have two representatives on the twelve man board.

The Acton Reeve who is paid at present, moved there because only people who are interested in the college would be on the board, rather than those interested in the money.

Deputy Reeve W. Gillies stated he admired his decision, but reminded him many councillors have to pay someone to take their place when they attend meetings. "This suggestion would take us back to the old system where only the rich can serve on boards," he added.

"The province appointees and Peel appointees don't get paid," retorted Reeve Hinton.

"I wonder if anyone around this table is less interested because they are paid," queried deputy reeve Evelyn Burke of Burlington. "Could they find a better reeve in Acton, if they weren't paid?" she asked the Acton Reeve.

"I doubt it," retorted Reeve Hinton.

"County Council appointments are a waste of time, it should be from some other group, perhaps the Children's Aid," opined Deputy Reeve Gillies.

Reeve W. Coulter suggested the province had suggested County appointees because they are closer to the people, and felt the practice should be continued.

Finally the motion to keep the representatives on the Board and continue to pay them their present per diem rate won out.

Acton Likely to Get 69 Esqueping Township Acres

Sixty-nine acres of Esqueping township will likely be transferred to Acton when the Ontario Municipal Board issues a decision on the annexation proposal. At a recent brief hearing, Esqueping, represented by solicitor Terry Baines, registered no objection to the annexation subject to the condition the area not be used for municipal garbage dump purposes.

Mr. Baines told the sparsely attended hearing that the Esqueping council had been petitioned by the ratepayers in the vicinity of the land to be annexed to make sure the town did not turn it into a garbage dumping area. Subject to the usual procedure, Mr. Baines said the township has no other objection.

"Could this possibly happen?" asked the chairman, Mr. Shrivies.

Mr. Baines replied that because the township is not zoned there is no assurance for residents of the area that it could not happen. Although the town had advised the area would probably be zoned R1 if annexed residents have no real protection said Mr. Baines. He admitted, however, the possibility of turning it into a garbage dump was remote.

Mr. Shrivies declared the township could take comfort in the fact that if the town attempted to make the land a garbage disposal site it would mean another public hearing with objections being heard.

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