

# Grill candidates at Erin township meeting

One of the few nomination meetings in the district was held in the Hillsburgh Community Centre, November 13. Thirty-six residents turned out to meet and question candidates for Erin township council and Wellington County Board of Education.

Seeking re-election to the Board is Gordon Gregson with 12 years of experience with the Erin School Board before being elected to the Board of Education in 1970.

Mr. Gregson supported community use of schools, and pointed out that schools now available for public use, are used 35 to 40 hours per week, outside of school hours.

He also supports equal education in the various schools and told the audience that over the past two years, the music program has been updated, and swimming and outdoor education programs implemented.

Communications are poor between the county and ratepayers, Mr. Gregson admitted, and concluded by saying he thinks he can offer the community a lot.

**Contests Seat**  
Contesting this seat is W. David Wright, R.R. 1, Erin, who moved to this area three years ago. He agreed that there was poor communication, that this was a definite need, and that he wants to communicate.

When asked what he would do differently at the county school board, Mr. Wright observed that the meetings might last longer, because he intends to ask questions, if elected. Also, he felt that if there was money left over in the allotted budget, it should be spent, one way or another.

Gord Gregson replied to this "I really don't think our kids are being deprived of anything. We could spend the money and we could get grants, but where do grants come from?—from the ratepayers."

**Acclaim Reeve, Deputy**  
Reeve Lloyd Lang and Deputy-Reeve Donald Matheson will both retain their seats by ac-

clamation. Present councillors Harold Griffin, William McLean, and Bert Wheeler will all run again and the three seats will also be contested by Allan Rimmer, Fred Cox, and Frank Kennedy, all of Hillsburgh, and John K. Reid of Erin.

Reeve Lang stated things of concern to council and ratepayers, mentioning the Official Plan, severance policies, and taxes, pointing out that taxes have risen very little compared to some of the larger municipalities.

Both the reeve and deputy, Donald Matheson, sit on county council. Mr. Matheson outlined some of the accomplishments over the past two years, and spoke briefly on the new county home for 169 older people, Wellington Terrace. He added that a county museum might be investigated in the old wing, to provide a point of interest for the old people who might like to help in the upkeep.

**One Absent**  
Chairman Jack McPherson introduced candidates for the three council seats alphabetically, starting with Fred Cox who was absent from the meeting.

Veteran councillor Harold Griffin commented that it was encouraging to see so many people turn out, that he was pleased to see so many newcomers to the township, adding "I'm not here to tell you what a good job I did. That's for you to say."

"I made mistakes, sometimes. If you don't make mistakes, you can't be doing too much."

Frank Kennedy told the audience that he'd never run for public office before, but would like to give it a try. He'd like to see more road improvement and more community recreation for both kids and older people although recreation might have to be taken to the latter.

He concluded by pointing out that the town of Hillsburgh has a population of 745, and should have representation on council.

Bill McLean, councillor for the past six years, spoke on the roads situation. "The subsidy dollar has been cut down by Queen's Park. We have an increasing population and an increase in traffic, which makes an increase in wear." He added that the township needs a road study to prove the need for an increase in subsidy.

Mr. McLean concluded with, "Money is scarce, and what there



LLOYD LANG  
Reeve by acclamation



DON MATHESON  
Deputy-Reeve by acclamation

is used for maintenance." Shortest speech of the evening was by John Reid, who said he isn't yet sure if he will stand, but if elected will do the best of his ability.

**Gang Leader**  
A note of humour was introduced by Allan Rimmer who mentioned that he must have leadership qualities, as in his younger days he was the leader of a gang which controlled four blocks.

On a more serious note, Mr. Rimmer maintained that a regional garbage system is needed. He is also concerned about township planning and development.

Bert Wheeler, summed up Council's accomplishments over the past two years, mentioning the zoning bylaw which is now at the OMB for approval; the Official Plan which is almost ready for approval; the purchase of another snowplow and grader; the new fire hall built; \$5,000 in grants received to assist in improvements to the two community centres.

Plans for the future include radio equipping of plows and graders; recreation board; and new township shed.

Mr. Wheeler concluded, "Sometimes the needs of the people may differ greatly from the wants of the people, and I'll do my best to fulfill the needs."

**Question period**  
For the next two hours, residents asked questions of the candidates about future plans, opinions, and past happenings.

"Why was the old home abandoned (for old people)?" Donald Matheson replied that the disposal facilities were not

adequate the buildings were in need of repair, and a study showed a new home would be better. Also, the kitchen facilities were outdated.

Reeve Lang on Road Subsidy Cuts: "Wellington County is the only one in this area that got an increase because that was what a needs study showed. A road study, including a traffic count is in our proposed plan."

Mr. Kennedy, where would you get the money for improvement of roads?"

"Go to the government for it," Reeve Lang on conservation of scenic roads. "We will not disturb the roads if the residents want them left alone but that means that sanding and graveling won't get done either. We've got no hard policy on that subject."

"Why is there an increase in cost of Education and why the delay on high school plans going to tender?"

Gord Gregson: "There is an increase in education cost because of the increase in salaries, cost of buses, administration, buildings (architects and materials) and the increase in vandalism."

"There's no delay in the tender. It's just slow in the works. I've heard that it seldom gets through in less than two years."

Mr. Gregson on the lack of Ospringe Kindergarten: "There just isn't sufficient enrolment. There will be no kindergarten until the enrolment increases."

Mr. Gregson on large number of pupils per teacher: "I don't agree with either large classes or split classes but sometimes it's necessary."

At this point, a resident suggested that, with the excess from budget, an unemployed teacher be hired to split a large class.

About teaching French in public schools:

Gord Gregson: "I think that money might have better uses."

David Wright: "I think it's a wonderful asset to know two languages. I'd like to know the cost of putting a good course in, maybe have an appreciation course here and a deeper course in Georgetown where there are French-speaking people."

Clerk Elmer McKinnon summed up the Education Cost situation: "The best education at the least cost is the most you can try to do."

Harold Griffin on severances: "I'd like to see Erin remain rural. We have some of the best agricultural land in Ontario here, but homes could be built on land that's no good for farming. I feel that newcomers have been an asset in the past few years. Each severance should be looked at on its own merit."

The meeting concluded with an informal coffee and donut session.

## Teacher seeks seat on board

Acton high school teacher Brian Downes, who lives in Guelph, is seeking election as one of 11 township trustees on Wellington County separate school board. In his ninth year of teaching, he is now head of the mathematics department of Acton high school. Two of his three children attend St. Patrick's school in Guelph.

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**PROGRESS IN THE PAST**  
VOTE DECEMBER 4th  
**Bert Wheeler - - X**  
Erin Township Council  
**PROGRESS IN THE FUTURE**



HAROLD GRIFFIN  
Council



ALLAN RIMMER  
Council



WILLIAM MCLEAN  
Council



BERT WHEELER  
Council




FRANK KENNEDY  
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