

# Region budget cuts

Across-the-board budget cuts ordered by Regional Council Wednesday will result in a reduction of service and could lead to layoffs, according to regional treasurer Don Farmer.

After rejecting a number of resolutions that would have made cuts in specific areas of the \$9,750,475 budget, council ordered treasurer Farmer to cut 10 per cent of regional department budgets at a meeting Wednesday. The gross budget runs close to \$15,000,000 but about \$5,000,000 comes in grants and revenue-producing programs.

The motion left the treasurer in a quandary. Several large sections making up the regional budgets, are outside of the control of the council and cannot be cut by council.

In making the resolution Councilor McLean Anderson noted the cut would not apply to public works, children's aid, police, or health. He was vague as to other areas that may or may not be affected by cutting the budget. His written resolution however, noted the cut would be across the board.

Asked for clarification, Farmer listed several areas that could not be cut and pointed out that debt charges could not be reduced.

Talking to reporters after the meeting, Farmer explained the cuts would probably amount to about \$500,000 or three-quarters of one mill.

He said he still needed further clarification on the

on the former areas of Esqueping and Nasagaweya, which would face increases of five mills and felt the budget had to be cut. She supported the general cut.

In terms of tax relief to the taxpayers, the cuts will be minimal. The budgets had been thoroughly discussed and trimmed by staff and committees prior to council's session Wednesday.

According to Mayor MacArthur the urban core of Milton can expect a reduction for what are now regional services of about five mills, while rural areas in the town will increase by about five mills. The town expects to set a budget by Aug. 15.

Prior to cutting the regional budget by \$550,000, Milton's levy would have been \$687,394, Burlington's \$4,259,177, Oakville's \$3,782,953 and Halton Hills would pay \$1,020,951.

Estimates indicated mill rates for regional services in Milton will vary from 15.77 in the former area of Burlington, to 23.31 for the former township of Nasagaweya while the old town of Milton will pay 19.40, Oakville area 15.37 mills and Esqueping area 18.46 mills.

Both Esqueping and Nasagaweya will face heavier taxes this year because it is the first year they've paid directly for police protection.

They are policed by OPP and that cost is shared over the whole region. According to Milton treasurer Don Lougheed, Milton's urban residents will pay less for police protection and garbage costs this year than in other years.

The urban ratepayers will receive a credit for water and sewer charges that will also offset costs for dwellers in the old town of Milton. Next year however, that rebate is expected to disappear and Milton is apt to face heavy costs in those areas, according to Lougheed.

A breakdown of the regional budget shows \$971,022 for general government; \$4,739,008 for police; \$489,913 for levies from three different conservation authorities; \$3,575,129 for public works; Health and Hospital grants \$1,746,427; Social and Family Services \$2,089,903; Community planning and Development \$104,069, and financial costs will amount to \$741,700.



IT WAS SLOW and easy when a 36-foot lathe was moved into Gibson Construction and Sheet Metal building in the industrial park. The huge new piece of equipment arrived last Friday from Galt.

## Committee refuses to cut budget 10%

Faced with the prospect of cutting 10 per cent off its 1974 budget (totaling \$2,111,763), the Halton Community Services Committee debated it at length, viewed and rejected several ideas, then flatly refused to make any cuts.

The only leeway might be a close to \$30,000 reduction in the Halton Centennial Manor's net cost of \$297,247 but even that's not definite yet—Manor administrator Stan Allen hadn't had a chance to review his budget, looking for savings by the time Monday's committee meeting was held. He told the committee it might be possible to lop 10 per cent off his budget, but left the indication it might mean "watering the soup, or something."

Community Services Committee is just one of several Halton committees and departments ordered to cut 10 per cent to keep the region's first budget down. Most committee members felt the resolution from last Wednesday's meeting of council was "frivolous."

They agreed, first, that the Children's Aid Society and Halton Health Unit are really

"outside" groups—although they report to this committee they are fairly autonomous and the council appointees to CAS and IHU aren't in a majority position. They also agreed that most grants to organizations had already been paid, with the exception of two approved July 17, and it would be unfair to cut the final two grants by 10 per cent when the other groups enjoyed full grants.

The only area left for the committee to cut was the social and family services department whose budget totals \$1,485,616. A 10 per cent cut would mean close to \$150,000 would have to be removed to fit the council's guidelines.

Administrator Ronnie Vivian presented three proposals, none of which committee members found acceptable. Welfare payments could be reduced but the administrator warned the committee they would likely run out of money in November, and have to go back to the council for more. Staff salaries might be cut 10 or 12 per cent, he said, but committee members soon realized that would have meant a 24 per cent reduction

in salaries for the balance of 1974 as the year is more than half over—and predicted a mass resignation by the staffers. There were some other miscellaneous items in the budget that might be trimmed, but none were trimmable enough to scrape up \$150,000, Vivian indicated.

"Salary cuts are out of the question," said Councilor Pat McLaughlin, Burlington. The Ontario government pays an 80 per cent subsidy and "for every dollar we trim, we lose \$4 from the province," pointed out vice-chairman Councilor Terry Mannell of Oakville. "This is the kind of impact that wasn't realized when that resolution was passed."

"It's just an exercise in absolute frustration," summed up regional chairman Allan Mason.

Councilor Len Cox of Halton Hills said budget cuts mean cutbacks in the services provided, and it was impossible. "No way," he summed up.

Cox charged the request for an across-the-board 10 per cent cut was "just not good budgeting."

Mannell wondered if the resolution chopping back the budget was "responsible government, or political?"

Regional Treasurer Don Farmer told the committee he wasn't sure if the council could demand the Halton Regional Police Commission and the Halton Region Conservation Authority cut their budgets by the mandatory 10 per cent. Both are "outside" groups with boards comprising some councillors, but mainly citizen appointees.

## International win for Toronto band

The George Harvey high school band, which has a following of friends in Acton, placed first in their band class at the Vienna International Youth Festival.

The Ontario band which attained the honors is directed by Art Hillard, who also sometimes directs the Acton Citizens Band. His high school group has played at the fair the last couple of years and joined Acton bandsmen for supper and social evening afterwards.

They played three pieces for the high school band competition, competing against six other bands from the U.S.A., Australia, Europe and Canada.

Learned fast

They aren't a marching band, but learned how to march just for the competitions. First place went to a California band, with a 20 minute marching display. This gave them total high points.

The trip cost the George Harvey band about \$30,000 altogether. They received a \$100 donation from the Acton Band and raised money many ways. (They are not paid for playing at Acton fair.)

The players were in Europe a week and a half and also played concerts in Munich, Baden and at the Zoological Gardens in Berlin.

One of the players, Chris Howells, also won a \$500 scholarship at a university of his choice, as the best trumpet player in all the

compelling bands.

Mr. Hillard reports the adjudicating alone took three hours. He was very pleased with his band's achievements.

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## Shortage delays courts

When the tennis courts will be ready for play is anybody's guess, but the contracts have been let and fencing ordered.

The nets and posts are all set. However, the fencing contractor says due to steel shortages the order could take at least three or four weeks.

The tennis club will be left with a sum of money which could provide lights if much of the installation is done by volunteers. Members of the club will be discussing the lighting with recreation director Doug Collison. No money was specifically budgeted for lights.

The site is behind the community centre. Fencing has been set up to keep cars off the new paving.

## More Olympic wins

Another Olympic lottery winner! Mrs. Sally Smith of H.R. 1, Campbellville, won \$100 in last week's draw.

Although there were rumors of a \$1,000 winner in town, the Free Press hasn't been able to locate him. Other \$100 winners reported last week were Leslie and Mammie Keila, and Charles Habbell Jr.

## Engagements for the band

Acton Citizens Band has been making an average of about one public appearance a month lately.

Upcoming engagements are Hillsburgh potato festival, opening of the Legion, International plowing match and Acton fair.

The players are hoping to enter two classes of competition at the C.N.E. but are presently short some needed players.

## No meeting called yet

Although last Thursday was the scheduled meeting night for the new Acton advisory committee on recreation, no meeting was held. The June meeting also fell through.

Recreation director Doug Collison says the delay in budget means there isn't much specific the Acton group could advise on.

## Will replat Lakeview arms

Acton Hydro Commission learned Halton Hills council has approved the replating of 28 arms on poles in Lakview subdivision, at a cost of \$40 each.

At their last meeting, the final payment was made on the new air conditioning in the hydro office.

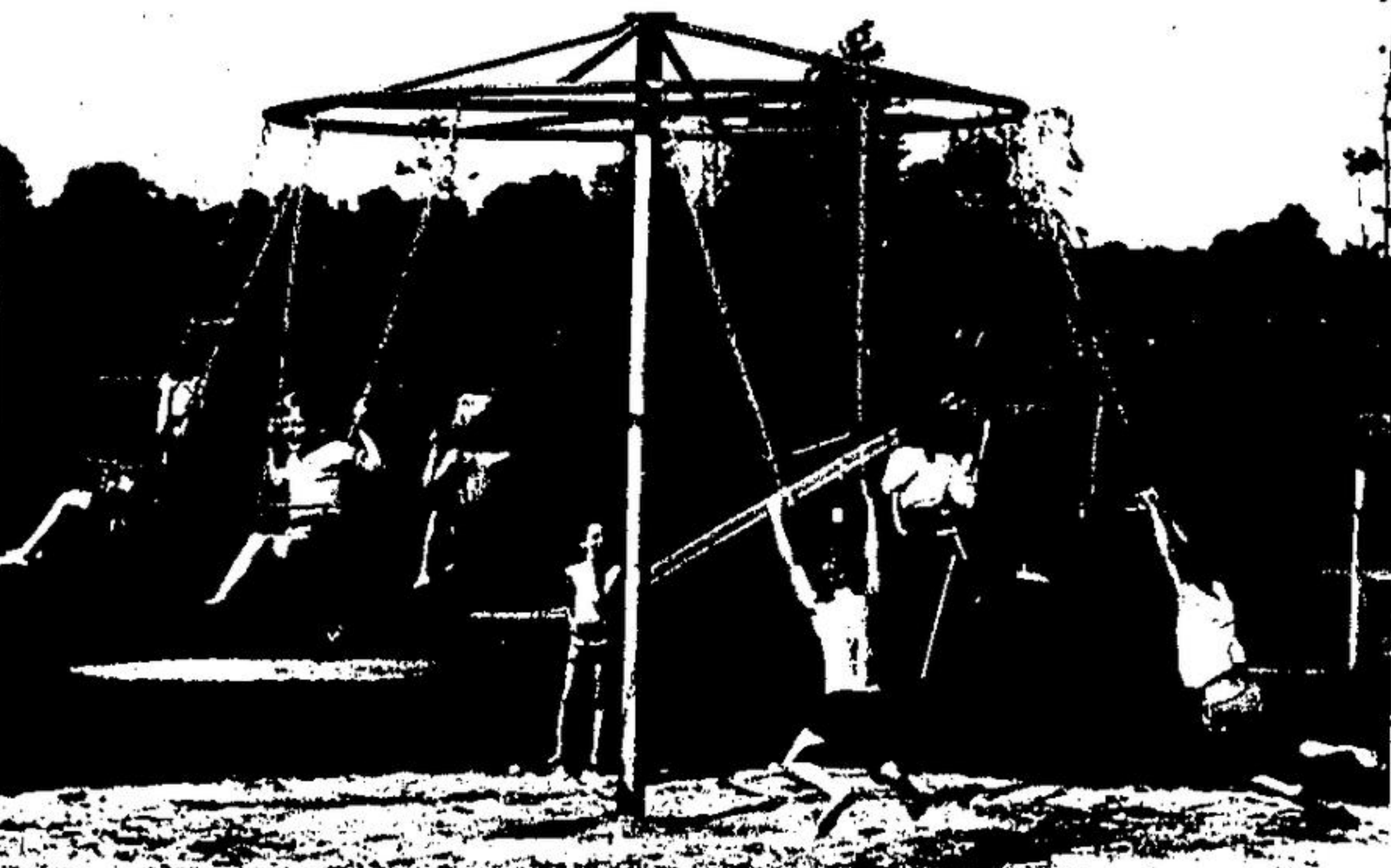
Payment was received from MacNamara Corporation of \$21,150 for phase three, as per agreement for services.

All commission members attended the last meeting

except Halton Hills mayor Tom Hill.

**New rides at park**

The new rides in the park are being enjoyed by the children. They were purchased last year by the now defunct Acton recreation committee and had been in storage until this summer.



SUNNY NEW PLAY area has been created at the far end of the park. The slide and swing were purchased by the now-defunct Acton parks and recreation commission and stored until installed this summer by Halton Hills works staff. There is another new ride in the play area near the main gate as well. The park is enjoyed by hundreds each week, particularly on weekends.



THIS SIGN erected on the front lawn of Knox Presbyterian Church is to commemorate another centennial. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has been in operation for 100 years and as depicted by the sign, it seems that they're looking forward to the next 100.

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