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Attendance dismal cancel forum Wed.

Ten thousand people in Acton and Esquesing showed lack of concern about government in Halton Hills by not attending the public meeting arranged by the Chamber of Commerce. It was scheduled for last Wednesday evening at the golf course, but dismal attendance forced C of C president Mike Worthington

to regretfully cancel the whole thing. Halton Hills council had postponed a special capital budget meeting to come to Acton to talk to residents of the town and district. Attendance roster: Region chairman Allan

Masson, Halton Hills mayor Tom Hill, Halton Hills councillors G. W. McKenzie, Joe Hurst, Les Doby, Russell Miller, Len Cox and Ric Morrow. Three reporters. Chamber of Commerce executive members Mike Worthington, Mike De Jong and Bill Anderson. Two of their wives.

Noticably annoyed, Mayor Tom Hill pointed out his councillors had changed the date of a budget meeting to come to Acton to talk to the people about their concerns. We could have had a free night, he complained. Mr. Worthington replied in actual fact only 60 per cent of the councillors expected had come.

Power off four hours

Parts of Acton were without electricity for four hours on Monday as the result of a primary cable being accidentally cut.

B.C. Cable were installing underground cable on Alice St. in front of the Hydro Commission office when the juice stopped flowing.

Power was off all along Alice and Bower Ave., from 10.10 a.m. to around two o'clock, and off on parts of John and Mill Streets for a short time.

Settlement seen soon

Beardmore union contract is still in conciliation, after expiring Jan. 17. According to union president Bill Spielvogel a strike vote was taken but he says he anticipates a settlement in the near future.

Another meeting is scheduled for March 10.

EMPTY SEATS by the dozen faced councillors and a handful of ratepayers at the public meeting called by the Chamber of Commerce last Wednesday. Embarrassed organizers called the meeting off. Seen chatting at the back of the golf course hall are Mayor Tom Hill, Mrs. Bill Anderson, Mrs. D. Frizzell, Mrs. Mike Worthington, Dave Williamson, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Denny, Dave Dills, councillor Len Cox, councillor Pat McKenzie, councillor Joe Hurst, Mercury reporter Bob Rutter, councillor Les Doby, Dorothy Stone, region chairman Allan Masson.



PUBLIC FORUM was cancelled but those attending the special meeting Wednesday at the golf course broke up into small groups to discuss concerns. Shown in this circle are Ross Ballentine, councillor Joe Hurst, councillor Len Cox, region chairman Allan Masson, Hamilton Spectator reporter Gren Allan, mayor Tom Hill.

Mail service affected by nation-wide strikes

Incoming mail to the Acton post office has been cut by almost 85 per cent due to the Public Service Alliance strike across Canada.

All mail coming from Toronto has been halted as the Letter Carriers Union of Canada take part in the nation-wide, blue collar strike for higher wages. More than 11,000 employees across the country walked off their jobs on Monday, slowing movement of mail, halting grain loading in Winnipeg and stopping airport runway snow removers.

centres as Guelph and Georgetown and will continue to do so, according to postmaster Gord McKeown, but nothing will be arriving from Toronto, where the majority comes from.

Acton letter carriers belong to a different union, Mr. McKeown said, and therefore, will not be striking along with their Toronto counterparts.

The Acton postmaster has not had any word from Toronto as to the laying off of employees or closing down the office. There have been no embargos placed on the mail

yet, even though one is expected.

"So far," Mr. McKeown told this paper, "we have heard nothing. All we know about the flow of mail is what we hear on the radio or read in the paper, the same as everyone else."

He went on to say, "We got 900 letters by the trucks today (Tuesday), and we usually get five to 6,000. Everything is very quiet. We are affected, but not involved."

Meanwhile, talks continue in Ottawa, and most mailboxes in Acton are empty.

O.P.P. to leave end of August

The contract with the Ontario Provincial Police for the policing of Acton will expire August 31. Halton Region Police will assume duties here September 1.

The decision was made by the Halton police commission and just awaits signing by Halton region.

The last contract provides for a corporal and six constables from January 1 to April 30, and from then on a corporal and eight constables.

The increase in men is for the summer months.

The cost to the region for these eight months is \$80,332.

Esquesing too

The regional police force will also take over policing of Esquesing at the same time. This means the Halton regional force covers all of

the county except for a small rural area of Milton. O.P.P. will continue to patrol Highway 401 from their headquarters at Milton.

Chief Skerrett of Halton region police says he expects there will be a sergeant and six constables in the Acton office, with a clerk. With similar divisions in Milton and Georgetown, Esquesing will be covered as the need arises. The force covers all of Halton Hills.

Plans are still being made and the men are yet to be hired and posted. Chief Skerrett expects the takeover to be smooth. "I don't see any problems."

Acton has been policed by the O.P.P. on contract for many years.

A regional police force is an integral part of regional

government and had been anticipated.

Highest in Ontario

Halton region police became the highest paid officers in Ontario last week.

The officers were awarded an increase of 16.25 per cent across the board. A first class constable now makes \$15,801 as opposed to \$14,139 for the same rank in metro Toronto.

After last year's contract went to arbitration Halton's first class constables were making \$13,592.

It is expected the 1975 contract will be signed sometime this week.

Council rejects 12.5% staff raise

Halton Hills council threw out a recommendation for a 12.5 per cent across the board raise for employees, to compensate for a 12.4 per cent cost of living increase.

The recommendation came from finance committee, but it was voted down and sent back to committee of the whole to study the overall affect it would have on the '75 budget.

Councillor Ric Morrow said most salaries were in line with other municipalities. He

pointed out big changes in salaries were made after the establishment of regional government.

"Don't forget every member of the staff who has an annual review is getting a five per cent increase. They shouldn't have the God-given right to get more just because the cost of living goes up. He said with a 12.5 increase the bigger the raise.

Morrow said they calculate what is relevant for each

member of the staff. He claimed many industries have decided this is the best method of achieving some record. He said an across the board increase would destroy the salary schedule. He stressed the lower paid would get a smaller increase, and still have to pay the same for rent."

"I agree with every word," remarked Councillor Russell Miller. He said it was fine to do well for the staff but emphasized they have to do

well by the taxpayer. He said some calculations had shown him someone on a starting level would get an increase of \$574 but some others might get as much as \$3,000.

Councillor Len Cox said there was no way he could favor an across-the-board raise. "This kind of raise makes the rich richer and the poor poorer."

Councillor Les Doby agreed, saying, "It should take no time at all to throw this out."

Trapping continues birds get jittery

The birds at the pond are becoming noticeably nervous as the trapping operation there continues, according to neighbor Esther Taylor.

The trap was set up over a week ago and 50 or 60 mallard ducks were caught in it and transported to a district barn. In the past week, 20 or 30 more have been trapped. They remain there till Dale Gartley of the Department of Natural Resources comes to determine their fate. Apparently some will go to another wildfowl location (Kortwright at Guelph has been suggested.) The hybrids may face a more chancy decision.

Family

The four favorite geese in one family have been taken by neighbor Doug Mason to the farm home of Mrs. Ella Harding, R.R. 2 in Erin township. The "geese who think they're people" are doing fine, according to Mrs.

Harding. She says she makes pets of her fowl.

The one big white duck will go to the home of Gord Hitchcock, and this duck's smaller daughter to Fred Kentner.

Water quality

The deportation order became imperative when Beardmore reported deteriorating water quality in their system. The birds, 200 or so, were wintering in open water over the Beardmore intake. Department officials had also previously informed Harold Townsley that a wildfowl sanctuary should include wildfowl only, no domestic animals or hybrids.

And so the trap was built and installed beside their open water on the lake. Esther Taylor, who feeds the birds regularly, gets the feeling the birds' faith in the sanctuary is shaken. These are even nervous of her now, she says. Their alarm calls are frequent.

She hasn't seen any of the big beautiful Canada geese since Sunday. They circled the dam several times before flying away.

Early every morning a large flock of ducks now leaves Acton. But at evening feeding time they return, flying very high. They wait for a signal from the birds below before they come down to their feeding place. They never acted like this before, Esther Taylor says.

Less grain

One aspect might be the decreased amount of feed being given, as instructed by Mr. Gartley of the Department. Town grain is fed to the birds by neighbor Doug Mason. Others, including Miss Taylor, supplement this with their own contributions.

All the ducks are jittery. Esther Taylor notes with sadness. "After all, they're not stupid."



FLOSSY DOESN'T like men, but she does like snow. Flossy is a three-year-old American Spaniel owned by the Gallant family of Churchill Rd. She enjoys winter with Carrie and Lee Gallant.

Legion pays \$20,000 in lieu of parkland

The payment in lieu of five percent parkland in the Acton Legion's subdivision bounded by Mill Street, Cameron Avenue and Fairy Lake will be set at \$20,000 in the final draft of the bylaw. Planning Board recommended Tuesday night.

The amount was debated loud and long at past meetings, but passed with little comment at this one.

Laterals

Councillor Les Doby asked if the lateral sewer pipes were included in the agreement.

Councillor Joe Hurst said they would be installed at the developer's expense and were being looked after by the Region.

Doby said he was concerned that no existing dwellings be inconvenienced. Hurst said the Regional Engineer would inspect the plans.

The land has been appraised. There was considerable discussion on the amount at previous meetings. The original recommendation was for \$20,000 but some councillors said they felt the sum should be higher.

Drugs seized

A drug seizure was made by Acton O.P.P. at midnight Saturday and an Acton man will appear in court April 23 as a result. A small amount of marijuana was found.

The same day an out-of-town man was charged with possession of hashish. The recovery was made on Main St. He was due in court April 9.

There were also two charges of impaired driving laid by Acton police during the past week.

Citizen of the Year outstanding service

Nominations for Acton Citizen of the Year are now being taken by the Chamber of Commerce.

The form for suggestions will be found in this paper next week, with a closing deadline of March 21.

As in previous years, anyone can nominate a

person they feel has contributed outstanding service in the community.

The Citizen of the Year will be honored at a dinner on April 25. The dinner will be the closing note of the Chamber of Commerce week which runs from April 20, to April 25.

Cancel hearings Speyside quarry

The O.M.B. hearing into Speyside quarries, scheduled to begin March 10, has been cancelled.

The O.M.B. informed Halton Hills this week that the hearing will be cancelled until the provincial cabinet gets a chance to look at the town's petition.

The town petitioned the cabinet recently for an adjournment of the hearing on the grounds any decision the O.M.B. might make is premature until the Niagara Escarpment Commission completes its master plan.

Halton Hills had previously asked the O.M.B. for an adjournment of the hearing but were refused forcing them to petition the cabinet.

It is believed the cabinet has not looked at the town's petition yet but did ask the O.M.B. to cancel the March 10 hearing starting date until they have had time to deal with the petition.

Halton Hills is concerned it could cost the town as much as \$30,000 for expert help at the hearings and don't want to proceed until the Escarpment comes up with a plan.

Education budget '75 may be \$60 million

Preliminary forecasts indicate Halton's 1975 education tab will jump by about 15 per cent or close to \$8,000,000. Superintendent of Business and Finance for the Halton Board of Education, Bruce Lindley said the early draft of the 1975 budget calls for spending of \$60,000,000 compared to \$52,451,309 in 1974.

The board reviewed a section of the budget during the meeting Thursday.

Transportation, tuition fees, capital expenditure, non-operating expenses, debt-service charges, schools for the trainable retarded and administration costs are budgeted at \$8,850,710. This section of the budget represents an increase of 8.72 per cent of \$717,682.

The capital expenditure referred to involves only those projects of a relatively minor nature. It does not

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