

Morrow urges staff freeze across board



YOUNGSTERS GATHER around as Acton volunteer firefighters made sure all the flames were out in a bed at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Jones, 14 Kingham Rd., on Sunday morning. No one was injured.

Senior municipal staffers in Halton could find themselves up against a brick wall when they advance pleas for additional staff people this year. Halton Hills Councillor Ric Morrow made it known during a meeting of the Regional Planning Committee last week that he would support across the board freezes on staff hiring at both the regional and local level. Planning director Ed Cumming had asked that six people be added to his department. His request was cut to two by Chief Administrative Officer Ernie Reid but neither of those two positions were recommended by the committee. Request for a participation planner and a planning assistant were slashed from the budget estimates.

Mr. Morrow said the shortage of staff could very well delay the official plan pre-

paratlon a little but he suggested there was no great urgency for the plan to be prepared. "We are making responsible planning decisions and the region is not going to fall apart if we don't have a plan. I'm not trying to delay it but I see no burning need to hire staff when we face the costs that we have this year."

Chairman Allan Masson's reminder that the region was a year late with the plan wasn't enough to thwart the committee's desires to keep costs in line.

If the proposed budgets for

the region were approved as they stand it would mean an increase of six mills or 37 1/2 per cent would be realized.

No support Public Works Chairman Jack Ruffis made it clear weeks ago that the only way he'd support increases in the public works forces was by way of transfer from the area staff.

There has been an ongoing feud between the areas and the region since the inception of regional government.

Area councils argued they had no people to spare and the region insisted it needed more people because of greater responsibilities.

Mr. Ruffis like others has consistently said that between the two levels there is no more work being done and the staffs should not have to be increased.

Two cars in collision

A two car collision in Erasmosa township caused a total of \$1,700 damage on February 24, according to Guelph Provincial Police.

Cars driven by Jessie Dennis and Donna Gorjup, both of Acton, were in collision on Highway Seven at the junction of County Rd. 28. Neither party received injuries, police say.

Many rush for stickers

Several hundred people were caught in the last-minute rush to purchase 1976 license stickers for their cars on Friday and Saturday.

The deadline was midnight, Saturday.

Friday saw 569 people visit Watson's Music Store where the stickers could be purchased. Saturday saw close to the same amount.

Every six minutes another Canadian dies of heart disease.

In Halton Hills

Winter ignores costs snow bills up \$35,000

Someone forgot to inform old man winter this is supposed to be a year of belt tightening for Halton Hills. It dumped so much snow on the town in December and January that winter maintenance costs went up over \$35,000.

Engineer Robert Austin said the works department is budgeting in the neighborhood of \$100,000 for snow removal, plowing, salting and sanding and the small budget increase is due to inflation. Total winter maintenance budget, which takes care of many other items also, is around \$150,000.

While this winter has been expensive and hard on both works staff and equipment Austin is still optimistic the February winter improvement will continue so costs can be kept down. He said if the rest of the winter isn't too severe and the start of next winter isn't bad then the town's costs could end up in line with the budget despite the fact December and January were costly.

In December, 1974, and January, 1975, the town spent \$40,041 on keeping streets cleared and safe to drive, while in December, 1975, and January, 1976, the bill for the same operations was \$75,198. The town finance department doesn't have February fig-

ures yet but they will be down considerably from the two previous months.

A total of \$25,377 was spent by the town in December, on snow removal, plowing, sanding and salting operations. Plowing cost \$5,937 while snow removal cost \$798. The sanding and salting bill was \$18,642.

The next month the town spent only \$14,664 and the biggest decrease was in the area of sanding and salting where only \$8,925 was spent. Snow removal cost \$372 in January, 1975, and plowing cost \$5,367 that month.

The first month of this year snow cost the town \$39,413 including \$22,640 for plowing and \$8,535 for removal. Sanding and salting bills totalled \$8,243.



Councillor Pat McKenzie reports

Duties The duties of a Regional Councillor are varied and since most of the meetings are held in other parts of the Region and therefore not visible to the residents of Acton it is natural for people to ask, "What are your duties as a councillor?"

For the year 1976 I am involved in Area and Regional Council meetings, I serve on the Finance and Personnel committee and I am chairman of the local Planning Committee. I represent Halton Hills on the Regional Planning Committee and the Halton Conservation Authority. It has four regular committees and I serve on two of them. I serve on the Halton Safety Council, a special Building Committee for Halton Hills and represent Mayor Hill on the Library Board.

In January, I attended 31 regular and special meetings. When you consider the time spent at meetings, in transportation, in preparation for meetings (you receive two large envelopes each Friday afternoon) and local concerns, I average over 50 hours on a busy week. An early retirement from the Board of Education permits me to spend more time on council

duties than one who a full-time vocation. In Halton Hills for the past two years the Council has worked through the summer holidays on a regular basis and each councillor arranges his holidays to suit his responsibilities.

Although the responsibilities are demanding at times every day brings a new challenge which I thoroughly enjoy. I hope I will never be too busy to try and help anyone with a problem that requires the help of Regional or Area Council.

Elections

If the bylaw to establish polling subdivisions is passed, can elections be far behind?

This is the year of elections, and it was brought home to councillors when the bylaw was passed.

Clerk Administrator Doug Pritchard said the number of polling subdivisions had to be doubled in both Acton and Esquimaux areas, and two added in Georgetown area.

He said a start on the preliminary voters' list has been made.



ACTON VOLUNTEER firefighters doused flames in a bed at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Jones, 14 Kingham Rd., Sunday morning. Fire chief Mick Holmes said there was \$300 in damage to the bed, rug and blackened wall of the bedroom.

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