

Region puts end to 'illegal' payments

A controversy simmering behind the scenes for months, finally came to a head Monday afternoon during a meeting of Halton Regional Council. During that meeting council ruled that members of the land division committee can no longer accept payment for site inspections.

In ruling on that, council overturned a decision made earlier by the administration committee. In spite of the fact regional solicitor Mike Martin said payment isn't legal and that there is no authorization for it in the Planning Act, the committee failed to act on it.

Stop illegal payments

Councillor MacLean Anderson of Oakville, a member of the administration committee, appealed to council Monday to discontinue

what he called "illegal payments."

Members of the Land Division Committee received \$40 per meeting, plus mileage for driving to inspections and meetings, and until now \$25 for each site that was inspected.

Oakville Councillor Carl Eriksen cast doubts on what actually happened at a meeting over one year ago when Land Division Committee Chairman Les Preston requested permission to charge the fee.

Eriksen said it was his recollection that the committee actually refused the fee as well as another request to have the payments declared income tax free.

Eriksen told council he asked the clerk's department to seek out the resolution

authorizing the payment. No such resolution could be found but an amount was buried in the budget to cover the expense. The amount was covered under a general heading in the budget document.

The specific request for additional payment never went before regional council.

An amendment that would have simply upped the per diems to cover any losses in the cut of \$2,500 was defeated.

Chief Administrative Officer Ernie Reid told council the solicitor was of one opinion but the only way anything could be proved would be to test the case in court.

"I can't see going to court over this amount of money. Practice and legal opinion don't always coincide," he told the council.



LAURA WILES CELEBRATED her 83rd birthday on Sunday at her home on Knox Ave. Neighbourhood children baked her a cake to bring back fond childhood memories. Laura ran the bus depot and a candy store with her brother Harold for many years and has lived in Acton for most of her life. Photo by Celia Saxon

Councillors boo trip to Vegas

A decision to send three regional councillors and two staff members to a convention in Las Vegas was greeted with catcalls and loud hooting noises from a number of dissenting councillors.

Halton Regional Council voted 12 to 10 on a recorded vote Wednesday to send the delegation to the International Public Works Annual Congress and Equipment Show in Las Vegas. Last year the council sent one elected official to the same convention when it was held in New Orleans.

Oakville Councillor Carl Eriksen said the expense of close to \$1,200 to send councillors could not be justified. He

had earlier attempted to have council put a one year ban on all conventions.

Public Works Vice-Chairman Gord Brown supported the convention. Several councillors broke into laughter when he argued there was a lot of very valuable information to be gained.

Brown's speech was interrupted with laughter again when he suggested that so far there was only one councillor on the committee who had expressed a willingness to go.

Deputy Mayor Burlington Mayor George Harrington added to the debate. "Mr. Chairman, I want to advise the members of the public works committee that

the dealer has to stand on 17 hands."

At that point Milton Mayor Anne MacArthur, also a member of the works committee, suggested councillors had the wrong attitude towards conventions. "Some think that conventions are

just a place to go and drink. I know different and it's too bad that there is such a negative attitude."

Opposed Milton Councillor Marjorie Powys and Georgetown representative Ric Morrow opposed sending people to the convention.

Halton Hills councillors Dick Howitt, Pat McKenzie, and Ernie Sykes all supported the trip as did councillors Jim Watson and Anne MacArthur.

The budget for council conventions is set at \$1,500. The Las Vegas trip will take all but \$300 of the councillors' 1976 convention fund.

McKenzie nominated for Health Council

Councillors Pat McKenzie of Acton, David Coons of Burlington and Harry Barrett of Oakville have been recommended as Halton Region's representatives on the Halton District Health Council.

Those recommendations have gone to the Ministry of Health but the decisions have not yet been made.

A steering committee has been working for several months, laying the groundwork for the Health Council. The council is expected to serve as one body with an

overview of all health services within the region. Hospitals and all of the various agencies which rely on provincial funding will have to have an okay from the Health Council before grant requests go to the ministry.

Avoid duplication Chairman of the steering committee, Jack Porter said the role of the council would be to avoid duplication of service and gaps of services in other areas.

He explained the council would report to the Ministry

of Health on such things as hospital expansions and the region's priorities for health care.

"If there was some service in the south that wasn't in the north and the council felt it should be, it would seek a subsidy for the program," he said.

There will be 15 people appointed to the council. With the exception of the three regional councillors names of other recommended appointees have not been released.

Hydro Corridor

Reed for study meeting May 12

Julian Reed M.P.P. is for an independent study into the Bradley-Georgetown Corridor.

In a statement to this newspaper Monday, he said he is attempting to have the final report of the Select Committee on hydro contain a recommendation for such a study, as requested by the Interested Citizens Group.

Reed stated, "If an independent study is not conducted immediately legal delays involving hydro's acquiring of land and obtaining easements could cost the taxpayers of Ontario much more."

"The Select Committee report is submitted to the legislature, and adopted by the House, and therefore the recommendation contained indicates to the Minister of Energy the wishes of the majority of the legislature," stated Reed.

He described the move as

the "most meaningful step in the decision regarding the Bradley-Georgetown hydro corridor due to the fact it will have profound effects on our lives, and the lives of our children."

Reed said he hoped the Ministry of Environment will at least hear the request for an independent study.

A public meeting on the study will be held May 12 at Erin High School at 8:30 p.m. Mr. Reed is urging all interested persons to attend.

For water and sewers

Councillors concerned

Pat McKenzie and Ernie Sykes, two of Halton Hills' representatives on Halton Region Council are asking for help in voting on a water and sewers issue, which will be decided at the region this fall.

Regional treasurer Don Farmer has suggested that the present system of charge-backs to municipalities for water and sewers be changed to a regional levy, with the entire region paying equally.

Councillor McKenzie said at Monday night's finance and personnel committee he'd like some staff and council input, before he has to vote on the issue.

"To listen to Mr. Farmer,"

said McKenzie, "I'm a damn fool, if I don't vote for one rate for all of Halton."

McKenzie said he thought the change might be an advantage to the town now, but he expressed concern about what would happen if Burlington, for instance, doubled its population and Acton grew no larger than 10,000.

"It's being promoted by Burlington and opposed by Oakville, Milton and Halton Hills," explained McKenzie. "Surely they're (Burlington) not playing Santa Claus to help the rest of us out."

Councillor Sykes said he understands that eventual change to regional rates and services for water and sewers was one of the sections of Bill 151, which introduced regional government. "As far as I'm concerned, it's a matter of timing," said Sykes.

When rates and services were regionalized in Peel,

Peel Region Council managed to squeeze \$2 million out of the provincial government to help equalize the transition, according to treasurer Ray King.

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MPs go to court

Not only Halton Hills residents are unhappy about the proposed electoral boundaries change, which in this area would split the town and lump Georgetown with Brampton; but two Liberal MPs are upset enough to apply to the Federal Court to set aside the final report of the Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission, for Ontario.

Keith Penner, (Thunder Bay) and Norman Cafik (Ontario) have engaged lawyers who will seek to prohibit the commission from officially presenting the report.

The two MPs are setting up a trust fund to fight the proposed changes and are hoping anyone who is similarly affected will send in a few dollars.

Dr. Frank Philbrook Halton MP is spreading the word in Halton, and is asking voters to forget party lines in this issue and throw their weight behind a united front.

A number of MPs have already dipped into their pockets, and Dr. Philbrook told this newspaper any contributions, no matter how small, should be sent to the Electoral Boundaries for Ontario Trust Fund, c/o Dr. Philbrook, Room 118, Confederation Building, House of Commons, Ottawa.

This action by the two MPs is the first of its kind. Under the changes, Mr. Penner's riding would disappear and be divided among four other ridings.

Both MPs charge the report does not adequately explain the alterations as required by law. Without such explanation, they say, the report may be invalid leaving the possibility that the seats of future members could be in jeopardy. They claim they cannot debate the report fully without knowing the reasons.

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