

Band's brief to council

Following is the brief presented Monday to Halton Hills council committee meeting.

The Acton Citizens' Band submits the following report as an explanation of, and justification for, the grant of \$4,860 requested for operation of the Band programme.

1. The request for funds each year by the Band is carefully and responsibly considered. The amount requested is comparable with what is given to similar bands in Halton and adjacent Peel. The grants to Bands for last year are given below for comparison.

Band	Grant	Director Salary	Members on list	Practice Hall
Burlington (Peanut Band, Teen-Tour Band)	\$103,456	\$20,000 (full time)	?	Built and maintained by municipality
Oakville	16,000*	3,150 (includes Asst.)	50	Rented from School
Chinguacousy	7,000	2,700 (includes Asst.)	50-55	Board, \$48 per week.
Brampton	10,500	2,500		Supplied and maintained by municipality.
Acton	4,860	1,500	57**	Built and maintained by Band members.

*The Oakville grant is usually \$8000 but last year an extra sum of \$8000 was given for the purchase of new uniforms. This would not recur for some time.

**This number is for the Senior Band only. In addition there are 15 just completing a two year training programme. As well 13 names have already been registered for another two year class to begin this Fall.

It can be seen that Acton's request is the lowest of these. This is possible because the Band has its own practice hall; the Band Director asks less in terms of salary; and, the Band does operate very economically. The amount requested by Acton is the minimum required to keep a band in operation; many Bands would find the amount insufficient for their operation as is apparent from the above Table.

2. Since the formation of Halton Hills the Acton Band has accepted in effect an average 10 per cent annual cut in their grant in terms of purchasing power. Since 1971 the grant request has increased by only \$360 or about 1 per cent per year. This is much less than the rate of inflation. In this period the costs of band supplies and instruments have increased by 25 per cent to 40 per cent or more.

3. It is not correct to say the Acton Band is 100 per cent supported by the grant. Last year the Band raised \$1,085 on its own and with matching Wintario support purchased two new instruments. The Band could have asked for a grant increase to cover these instruments but took the responsible course of raising the money themselves. The fund raising was not easy; considerable effort was required. It would be impossible for the Band to raise this amount every year. Most Bands, as well, have to depend on the Municipality for accommodation either through a grant which covers rental costs or the provision of a practice facility without charge. The Acton Band built and maintains its own self-supporting practice hall. Band members raised more than half the money, erected the building themselves, and now do the work of maintenance. The Band has, and does, work hard to help support itself. There are other ways the Band pays for part of its programme. The Band raises the money required for transportation by bus about Acton to play Christmas carols for the citizens; the Band pays for its own transportation to Milton to play for the residents of the Manor; and, the Band raises the money for all the costs of entering the CNE Band Competition each year including the rather expensive transportation by bus.

4. The Acton Citizens' Band has been in continuous operation since 1872 - 106 years of music. It may well be the oldest such Band in Ontario; certainly it is the oldest organization in Acton and possibly in Halton Hills. During the past thirty years it has been necessary for Acton to give an annual grant to keep the Band in existence. The people of Acton have willingly and gladly done this and they affirmed and emphasized that it be done through two plebiscites authorizing the grant. During part of this same period Georgetown had a fine Citizens' Band but it died because successive Georgetown Councils refused to consider adequate support for such a cultural organization. Acton did keep and support its Band at a time when the average income in Acton was only 1/3 of that in Georgetown. We feel that Halton Hills Council has a moral obligation to continue those traditions and practices which Acton brought into a forced union it neither asked for nor wanted.

5. It has been stated the Acton Band should receive no more than the \$1000 grant requested by the Georgetown Girls Pipe Band. This shows a lack of understanding of the completely different structure and requirements of the two bands. For instance a set of pipes for a pipe band probably cost \$150 to \$200. The cheapest

instrument the Acton Band can buy is a clarinet at \$165. A pipe band could operate effectively with only 10 or 15 members; a concert band today must have 40 to 60 members. The Georgetown Pipe Band and the Georgetown Citizens' Band received approximately the same amount of grant. The pipe band is still in existence and thriving. Obviously the grant amount was sufficient for their needs. The Georgetown Citizens' Band is no more because its grant was insufficient. There is a certain level of funding necessary to keep a particular type of Band functioning; below that level it cannot survive. The cut in grant proposed for the Acton Band condemns it to a slow death and oblivion in five years time.

6. As mentioned previously the Acton Band members built and maintain their own practice hall. This hall is self-supporting and is available at a rental fee to local groups for holding social events. Such events help keep these groups alive and together and this in turn assists them in their various programmes. Many local groups would not be able to have social events if the hall was not available. The fact that the Band Hall has in some respects the most reasonable fee structure makes it very popular with local groups which are service oriented and therefore have limited funds. There are 14 local groups which regularly use the Hall ranging from the Acton Agricultural Society and the Cancer Society to the Chamber of Commerce and the Industrial Hockey League.

7. The Band offers instruction and an opportunity to participate in a type of cultural activity which no other municipally supported group does. Adults in particular benefit from participation because usually they are asked to pay taxes which only support activities almost exclusively restricted to young people. Band instruction and

the opportunity to play are offered free of charge to all comers regardless of personal financial position; men, women, boys, girls, whole families, all can and do participate. The Band is a unique spare time activity. In this day of the generation gap and breakdown of communication between young and old, the Band is a happy mixture of adults and young people all working together to a common end. A young person can make a contribution to the organization as a performer equal to that of an adult. Both can recognize this and both are necessary to the success of the organization. An attitude of mutual respect develops between adults and young people and they get along well. A Band has an important role to play in a community as a result.

8. A Band, unlike any other group receiving a municipal grant, is expected to return certain services to the municipality directly. When music is required for civic events and celebrations the Band is called upon. Without a Band these would probably not be held. The Acton Band has always tried to fulfill this obligation as best it could at no charge. A suggestion that the Band charge for appearances because of a cut in the grant would mean charges of \$300 to \$400 per appearance. This would dissuade many local groups from organizing parades and celebrations because of the costs involved and the community would be poorer.

The Georgetown Santa Claus parade problem is a case in point. The Acton Band and Georgetown Pipe Band play at no charge whereas Bands from outside are very expensive to hire. If these two Bands charged as well for appearing there would quite likely be no such parade in Georgetown. The Acton Band also appeared last year in Georgetown for the Franco-Canadian 'Carnival', prepared a joint concert with the Georgetown Choral Society at

Christians and is working with them on a joint presentation for the Arts Festival in Georgetown on June 3. At the time of inauguration of 'GO' train service to Georgetown shortly after Halton Hills was established, the Mayor phoned the Acton Band. He had tried everywhere to get a Band to attend this celebration but with no success. Someone suggested the Acton Band so he phoned the Band up and said could you appear and how much will it cost. The Acton Band said it was rather short notice but they would appear and it would not cost anything. And that is exactly what they did.

Cookie week

Guides and Brownies will be knocking on doors selling Guide cookies, from April 29 to May 6. Council officially proclaimed that week Girl Guide Cookie Week, at their last council meeting.

OUR READERS WRITE:

Acton's good band

It was with great pleasure that I read and re-read Mr. J. Browne's letter on band expenses.

Down through the years Acton has always had a good band. Where my husband and I lived in Toronto I was horrified to receive a copy of the Free Press about lowering the band grant. I said to my husband "What is the matter with that town of Acton, and what about all the public appearances they had played for?" Anyone who has ever played in an orchestra knows how much it takes for expenses and what wonderful times are had by all the audience and players. How is it

money can be spent foolishly in many cases but to my thinking there should not be any question whether the Acton Band should have the grant. The real trouble comes when things are judged by people who know nothing about the real facts.

Perhaps it would do some of these people good to see how Toronto people turn out in support of their orchestra. And I would like to add one more thing to what Mr. Browne had already said. Music is for life and I congratulate him on a very intelligent letter. Good for Mr. Browne.

Dorothy O'Rourke



CHILDREN WATCH with interest while the Raymond Family sings and plays the steel drums at Spyside on Tuesday. Many of the students had been studying different parts of the Caribbean in class.

\$115,857 for grader, trucks

Within five minutes, Monday night, Halton Hills council spent \$115,857 on trucks and cars.

The highest priced item is a \$67,496 grader and snow plow, purchased from Champlain Road Machinery Sales, Brampton.

A six ton truck with snow plow equipment, from

Andrew Murray Motors costs \$39,668 and a 4,000 pound express truck from the same company cost \$3,778.

A four door sedan from Georgetown Chrysler Ltd., at a cost of \$4,897 completed the total.

All purchases were made by tender.

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Wayside gravel pit to save town money

Establishment of a wayside gravel pit in the northern Nassagaweya area was approved in principle by Milton Council at a committee of the whole meeting Monday. The pit, to be owned and operated by D. Bzovey of R.R. 1 Campbellville, would produce crushed gravel at a cheaper rate than area contractors and allow the town to increase its gravel usage without spending more money. Clerk Campbell Thompson told councillors,

appears even more economical than the town running its own pit, he said.

Thompson said the town usually spends \$200,000 a year on gravel, which includes its application. The Bzovey proposal would mean the town can buy a lot more gravel for the same amount, he explained.

Flowers

The town of Halton Hills proclaimed May 14 to May 20 "Flowers of Hope" Week. This is the week the North Halton Association for the Mentally Retarded mail out envelopes of flower seeds, as a fund raising measure.

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