

Recreation Com. dead

Halton Hills council stuck to its guns, Monday night, and refused to revive the Georgetown Recreation Advisory Committee. They abolished the committee at the beginning of this year despite a strong argument by John Day, a former member of the now defunct committee.

Mayor Pete Pomeroy and Councillor Mike Armstrong squared off on the subject, with Armstrong contending "we shouldn't look a gift horse in the mouth, turning down an offer by volunteers to give their time for nothing to the town."

The mayor charged the reinstatement of the committee would be a complete about-face of a decision made behind closed doors, simply because someone appears personally. He said the vote to abolish the committee was only one short of being unanimous.

Day, speaking on behalf of two other former members of the R.A.C., Claudette Smith and Claire Riepma, challenged the statement by council, made at the time of the decision, that there are many organized groups who can speak for themselves directly to council. He maintained a lay committee, representing no particular interest could relay their collective opinions to council with no axe to grind.

He emphasized the R.A.C. in order to make itself more effective drew up new terms of reference and agreed to expand to cover the whole of Halton Hills. He said council concurred with this. He explained the committee was to report directly to general committee of council on all matters of recreation not necessarily only those matters represented by organized groups.

Council based their decision to abolish the committee, partly on the fact there were few applicants from Ward One and Two, (Acton and Esquesing). Day contended they had been too optimistic in expecting answers since the Acton-Esquesing committee broke up more than two years ago. He suggested, instead, a committee with only one representative from each ward be established, and council appoint a member to the committee which should be reinstated.

Councillor Russ Miller said he had gone to great lengths to find people interested in sitting on the R.A.C. from Esquesing area, and had no luck. He stated people already involved in activities contended the type of "input" to council by the R.A.C. was no benefit to them.

The mayor said he would not support the reactivating of the committee but would consider reviewing it at the end of the year.

Armstrong asked Day if he could find people from Ward One and Two to sit on the committee. Day replied he was sure he could.

Armstrong said he voted to abolish the committee because there were

few applicants. "do nothing until the end of this year would be saying goodbye to the R.A.C." He suggested the matter be deferred until February 12, to give Day a chance to come up with names from each ward.

Councillor Roy Booth pointed out the Wards One and Two R.A.C. was unsuccessful, and the Georgetown one, Wards Three and Four, had only limited success for the amount of energy put in by the members. He said by their own admission they felt ineffectual. He contended the new terms of reference, made the committee more ineffectual.

Councillor Marilyn Serjeantson agreed with Armstrong, and said the committee should be given the chance to work under the new terms of reference.

Councillor Ed Wood said he was the last chairman of the Acton and Esquesing—R.A.C. and found it very frustrating. He said he felt the committee was set up to smooth the transition to regional government and saw no use for it now. "As a citizen of Ward One I certainly have felt no loss since it was dissolved," Pomeroy said deferring the matter and looking for people would lead the committee members down the garden path. "Voting for this motion means we will the R.A.C."

back, whether you want it or not, it is not a matter of deferring for two weeks," said Pomeroy. He said all authority has been taken away from the R.A.C., leaving the group "running around in circles," and unable to do anything.

The motion to defer the decision while Day comes up with names was lost, with only councillors Armstrong, McDonald and Serjeantson in favor.

Pomeroy then put forward a motion to have the possibility of setting up an advisory committee considered at the end of the year if the recreation director feels it is necessary.

Armstrong immediately termed it an insult, after just voting to abolish it.

The mayor said any citizen can come to council at any time and any matter can be reconsidered at any time. This motion passed.

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Swetman's



Toyota pickup owned by Paul Forbes, Arthur St. was totally demolished after it erupted into flames last Tuesday at 5.30, according to Fire Chief Mick Holmes. The fire started after the vehicle backfired near Caroline Nurseries on Hwy. 7.

'Sweatbox' trial

Police deny accusations

Complaints made by 12 prisoners about heat and tight handcuffs have been denied by the two constables charged with neglect of duty and discredit by court.

Constables Arnold Vanciel, 35, and Raj Swaminathan, 39, of the Milton Detachment of Halton Regional Police gave their testimony Wednesday, Jan. 24 at a hearing into the charges.

Cst. Vanciel said he made no note of grievances from the prisoners concerning excessive heat and sore wrists as the result of handcuffs during a paddy wagon trip to Toronto, Aug. 14.

Prisoners had said earlier they had attempted to kick the back door of the van open to get fresh air into the van during the 22-mile trip between the Milton court house and the Metro West Detention Centre.

Several prisoners testified they screamed and yelled profanities at the two officers in protest of the heat. One of them, Griff Branch, was discovered unconscious

from heat exhaustion upon arrival at the centre.

Cst. Vanciel told the court he, himself, was sweating and had opened the van door at the centre in order to let some air in.

He denied he put on the handcuffs tightly.

He said he put them on loosely to allow them to slide around the wrist without injury. He said he heard one of the prisoners tightening the cuffs by squeezing them together during the trip.

When asked by prosecutor Douglas MacConachie why he did not double lock the cuffs to prevent prisoners from closing them, Cst. Vanciel said he chose not to, because of the inconvenience of unlocking them later.

Several prisoners testified they suffered swollen wrists which required medical attention because of the cuffs.

Charges of dangerous and erratic driving made by prisoners were denied by Cst. Vanciel.

During the trip to Toronto, he said he was twice

obliged to brake abruptly to avoid collision with a bus and a construction worker who stepped into the path of the van.

"I had no choice but to slam on the brakes," he said.

A combination of construction work in Milton and on Highway 401 necessitated him stopping on numerous occasions. He also said the trip was made during rush hour traffic.

Cst. Vanciel said he heard one prisoner threaten to tip the van on Highway 401. The threat came several minutes after the prisoners had been rocking the wagon at the court house in Milton before departure to Toronto.

Complaints from prisoner Reginald Harris his jacket had been "stomped" at the centre were denied by Cst. Vanciel.

He said he was carrying an armload of jackets when two fell to the ground. Instead of picking them up, he moved them with his foot a couple of feet.

Nephew killed in ski trip tragedy

The tragedy which killed four Weston high school students and injured many others when a bus collided with a truck near Barrie, Thursday struck here too.

Michael Hurley, 14, who was killed in the crash on Highway 400 was the nephew of Lou and Tony Hurley of Acton.

Mrs. Hurley said until 9.30 Thursday night, the family thought brother

Martin had also gone on the ski trip, and were frantically trying to find word about him.

Martin had changed his mind and did not go, returning home. No one was there since the parents were at the school then travelled to Barrie. He did not know of the crash until later in the evening.

Michael was buried Tuesday after a service at St. John's Roman Catholic Church, Weston.

No damage was done to the denim jackets, he said. They were placed with the rest of the coats in a corner of the room.

He said there were no hooks or hangers.

A 12-year veteran, Cst. Vanciel said he was not disturbed by the events of the day which included foul language, yelling and obscenities from the prisoners.

He said he did not think of calling for help when prisoners made threats to rock the van when underway.

Cst. Vanciel said he heard a commotion in the back of the van during the trip but did not stop to check it. The prisoners were frequently noisy and then silent during the trip.

Cst. Swaminathan said during his testimony the prisoners hooted and yelled and banged the side of the van during the trip.

"It seemed to me they were having fun," he said.

"They would make a lot of noise and then they would quiet down. . . like a bunch of kids on a bandwagon."

In answer to prisoners' complaints about heat, Cst. Swaminathan said, "I did try to find out what they were yelling about but every time I tried to open the sliding window to ask, they just started yelling and spat in my face."

The constable said the ride to the centre was rough because of poor road conditions in Milton and on 401.

Cst. Swaminathan denied prisoners' allegations the van was driven erratically with frequent stops.

He said the two officers did not stop for coffee. Not until the van

reached the centre and the rear door opened did Cst. Swaminathan say he noticed Branch unconscious on the floor.

Both officers said the prisoners were hostile to them at the centre.

Cst. Vanciel said the prisoners defied them to go into the van and bring out Branch.

Branch was later carried out by several prisoners with the help of the centre staff.

The condition of the police van was described in earlier testimony.

Halton Regional Police Cst. Thomas Nicholson said, "Any speeds higher than 50 miles per hour and the whole van would shake."

Fellow officer Cst. Raymond Hendry testified he was riding shotgun in the van one time.

No go for buses

Rural school buses in North Halton were not operating last Thursday after Wednesday's freezing rain and several inches of snow.

Driving was hazardous on several roads throughout the area.

Buses picking up in town students were running that day though and for several hundred Acton students, it was school as usual.

Hydro's own forecasts may scuttle expansion

Ontario Hydro's own forecast of its energy needs "should put the nail in the coffin," as far as its expansion plans are concerned, says MPP Julian Reed.

Reed, a member of the legislature's select committee on Hydro, said the committee is currently examining population forecasts which demographers have been declining because of the birthrate since about 1960.

"Fundamentally, Ontario's population has remained static since 1970," Reed said, noting that any increase in the past decade is due mostly

to immigration and internal migration.

The demographers have been criticized by their peers as making their forecasts of the decline too low, "but in each case it was high," he said.

"The most damaging thing to Hydro is their own load forecast," he said.

The select committee is expected to receive the Hydro forecasts by Feb. 28th at the latest, he said.

He said the government figures indicate 48 per cent reserve over the annual peak load although other figures indicate to Reed that

Hydro is "70 per cent overbuilt."

How the figures are arrived at is by a complex formula involving the reserve in each of the methods Hydro uses to generate electricity and the corporation is including a one third margin on its water generated power, which traditionally has never had a reserve margin, Reed said.

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