

New sewer surcharge means no exemption for local homeowners

Coun. Roy Booth's frequent attempts during the past year to resolve apparent inequities in municipal taxes levied against homeowners along Ann and Ontario Streets in Georgetown came to an abrupt halt Monday night when the town's general committee rejected his proposal to have the homeowners exempted from certain charges.

Coun. Booth faced off against town treasurer Ray King as the committee came to grips with the implications of Halton region's recent decision to implement uniform water and sewer rates, a move which Mr. King contended will automatically resolve the problems first confronted by some Halton Hills property owners even before regional government was introduced in Halton.

HOMEOWNERS' PLIGHT

Coun. Booth was the first to publicly describe the homeowners' plight at a council meeting early this year. At that time, he explained that some residents of Ann and Ontario Streets, as well as others on Maple Avenue and River Road, were being billed for municipal sewer services at tax time despite the fact that their homes are not connected to the town sewer system. The sewer surcharge bills were forwarded to the homes, he contended, simply because they are located within the Urban Service Area delineated by the region.

According to Coun. Booth, Mr. King initially blamed the oversight on the improper programming of the town's computer billing system and reported that the 1978 water bills had

already been issued, too late to rectify the error.

In September, Coun. Booth said, regional council's decision to postpone its first uniform sewer surcharge billing until July, 1979, prompted him to ask the town treasurer about the new system's likely ramifications for the Ann and Ontario Street residents.

Upon receipt of Mr. King's latest report on the problem this week, however, Coun. Booth was alarmed to learn that it is now too late to take the necessary steps that would see the affected homeowners exempted from the sewer surcharge billing. In order to have those particular residents exempted, Mr. King related, the town, then the region and finally the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) must approve an appropriate realignment of the community's urban service area.

DRAGGING HEELS

"I'm rather annoyed that staff has really been dragging their heels on this," Coun. Booth complained, claiming that the treasurer had sufficient direction from council in October to get started on the necessary OMB amendment.

Mr. King denied that he had ever blamed the problem on a computer foul-up, explaining instead that no adjustment on the residents' behalf was possible because the region's mill rate had already been established. The residents could be exempted from the surcharge by pursuing a bylaw amendment through the OMB, he acknowledged, but that route would likely raise more serious problems for the town.

Mayor Pete Pomeroy took exception to Coun. Booth's remarks and speculated that council would not have approved Coun. Booth's October resolution seeking to have the residents exempted, had its members been aware then of the possible ramifications. The move, he said, would set a precedent for dozens of other property owners in town to seek similar exemptions.

In his report this week to the committee, Mr. King explained that all property owners within the Acton and Georgetown urban service areas contributed to the upkeep of Halton Hills' sanitary sewers this year. Most of the homeowners along Ann and Ontario Streets, he said, paid about \$36 each.

An additional tax charge, this time based upon use of services rather than the property's location, is then levied

against property owners whose lands are serviced with sanitary sewers, Mr. King reported. This surcharge amounted to 50 per cent of the individual water bills during 1978, he said, and amounted to about \$26 for an average assessment home.

UNIFORM RATES

The region's adoption of a uniform rates policy, however, will eliminate any inequities in the billing of non-connected homes, he said.

"The introduction of the uniform sewer surcharge on water bills throughout the region will mean in future that all revenue required to fund sanitary sewer operations will be collected as part of the surcharge on the water bill," Mr. King said. "Therefore if a property owner is not connected to a sanitary sewer, they will not be charged a surcharge,

thereby resolving the type of situation that presently exists on Ann and Ontario Streets as well as certain other areas."

According to Mr. King, there are only about 10 properties in urban Acton, along with Beardmore Tamery, that are not connected to the municipal sewer system. In Georgetown, however, there are some 120, most of them along Ann, Ontario, River and Maple Streets.

In advising council against following Coun. Booth's lead and exempting certain homeowners from the surcharge billing, Mr. King pointed out that all property owners in the urban areas pay a mill rate that covers a number of municipal services other than water and sewers, including garbage collection.

"As there is no garbage pick-up for industrial concerns

which nevertheless pay the same mill rate, it could be argued that a separate mill rate is needed in this area," the treasurer noted.

Mr. King added that the precedence of granting a mill rate exemption would ultimately require council to differentiate between properties that have ready access to sanitary sewers and those that are some distance removed, as well as the various types of uses intended and the corresponding hook-up costs.

As suggested by Coun. Harry Levy, the committee voted to rescind the October resolution by which steps were to be taken to exempt the affected homeowners from the sewer surcharge. The committee further recommended to council that no further action should be taken on the matter at the present time.

Councillors' appointments

The selection by the town's general committee Monday night of councillors who are in to fill vacant seats on the variety of public boards and committees in the area reflect some consistency on the town's part.

With all voting carried out by secret ballot, the committee members re-appointed Coun. Les Dudy to his seat on the Credit Valley Conservation Authority. Mayor Pete Pomeroy, meanwhile, will assume the position on the same agency that was occupied last term by his predecessor, Tom Hill.

Committee structure changed

Members of the town's 1979-80 council met Monday night for the first time since their inaugural in a new "general committee" format that combines the finance-administration and public works committees of last year, but the new arrangement will be assessed and possibly altered early in the new year.

The councillors agreed to take turns in alphabetical order chairing the general committee meetings, rotating on a monthly basis. A further suggestion that would see three council members designated liaison persons for the specific areas of finance, administration and public works was tabled until council tackles proposed changes to the town's procedural bylaw in January.

Coun. Roy Booth advised against setting up a "chairman of the month club," warning that the various chairmen will be hard-pressed to schedule future events that fall under another councillor's chairmanship.

THREW OUT BABY

"We went into regional government that way and just threw out everything including the baby with the bathwater," he recalled. "I think we should keep some of the old ideas."

Councillors Russ Miller and Mike Armstrong offered to give the new rotating chairmen system a try, however, noting that three council veterans will head the general committee during its first months of operation, affording the members time to work out any problems that might arise.

"We won't know till we try," rookie Coun. Ross Knechtel agreed.

Being first on the alphabetical list of councillors, Coun. Armstrong assumed the chair for the first general committee meeting, at which the members handled some 24 items of business, ranging in importance from the implications of converting rental accommodations into condominiums to the private sale of voters lists by the town.

The town planning board continues to meet as a separate standing committee of council.

Councillors Roy Booth and Marilyn Serjeantson have both been re-appointed to the Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital Board in a round of balloting that saw Councillors Pat Patterson and John McDonald eliminated as candidates. Prior to the voting, Coun. Booth informed his colleagues that he has served on the hospital board since 1973 as the town of Georgetown's representative and offers liaison with both regional council and the Halton District Health Council.

Coun. Serjeantson assured the committee that her status as a nurse has yet to place her in conflict with the hospital board's operations. Coun. McDonald declined the nomination, and Coun. Patterson was absent from the meeting.

Mayor Pomeroy was recommended by the committee to become Halton region's representative on the hospital board, a position also held by former Mayor Hill previously.

Coun. Russ Miller was re-appointed council's representative on the Ballinacraig Community Hall board by acclamation. Coun. Miller acknowledged that the board's duties are "not demanding," but cited the need for some continuity in the town's involvement and expressed his appreciation for the appointment.

Coun. Miller was also appointed to the Halton Region Conservation Authority along with former Ward 1 regional councillor Pat McKenzie, who requested the appointment as a current Authority member. Coun. Serjeantson lost out in her bid to join the Authority.

Finally, councillors Booth and Ed Wood were selected to represent the council on a special negotiating committee that is working out the terms of an agreement between the town and the Halton Board of Education for the mutual and reciprocal use of town and school board facilities. Coun. Wood fills the seat previously occupied on the committee by Coun. McKenzie.

Coun. Ross Knechtel of Ward 1 was appointed to the board of directors for Acton's Business Improvement Area, as requested by the board. Coun. Knechtel replaces former Coun. Peter Marks.

Noting that Mayor Pomeroy wished to withdraw from the board for the Georgetown BIA, the committee appointed Coun. John McDonald as his replacement for the coming term and re-appointed Coun. Roy Booth, who owned a downtown business until last year.

The committee decided to delay its consideration of appointments from the public to the boards and committees until each candidate can be interviewed. Mayor Pomeroy will head a special committee comprised of a representative from each ward that will assess the 24 nominees on the basis of their views and objectives in applying for the appointments.

The committee will report back to council early in the new year as to its conclusions.



YMCA BABYSITTERS' GRADUATION

Twelve-year-old Nancy Danals (right) is congratulated by Sue Remes and Joanna Dobbin, instructors in the YM-YWCA's recently completed babysitting at graduation ceremonies held Saturday at St. Andrew's hall in Georgetown. Other graduates from the course were: Brenda Archer, Janice Atherly, Michael Hall, Heather Hermetel-Moins, Christine Brown, Nancy Danals, Tammy Giberson, Susan Griffen, Derek Hedley, Shirley Jackson, Patty Kaiser, Debbie Lane, Sheree Lashley, Shirley Nokes, Julie Richardson, Cindy Rutherford, Julie Saunders, Mark Siddall, Paul Smith, Corrine Jollimore, Lynn Terashita, Jennifer Thomson, Ken Tooby, Brian Remes and Tina Vandentop.

BEAUTIFUL FASHIONABLE WARM & COMFORTABLE LEGS

THE FOOTFITTERS Present

LATEST FASHION COCKTAIL BOOTS
FOR THE LADY WANTING FASHIONABLE FOOTWEAR TO COMPLEMENT SKIRTS OR SLACKS. FINE QUALITY LEATHERS.

\$49⁹⁸ up

BE IN FASHION

FASHIONABLE DRESS BOOTS
FULL CALF SUEDE OR SMOOTH GRAIN QUALITY LEATHERS. EXCELLENT SELECTION OF COLOURS TO SIZE 10.

\$27⁹⁸ up

BE IN FASHION

TRULY COMFORTABLE. OUR FASHION BOOTS ARE MADE FOR WALKING. OUR BOOTS WILL EXCITINGLY BEAUTIFY YOUR LEGS. YOU CAN EVEN DANCE IN THEM.

YOU WILL BE IN STYLE with our PURSES & CLUTCHES

IN THE LATEST CLASSY FASHIONS EXCELLENT LARGE SELECTION FINE QUALITY LEATHERS OR TOP QUALITY POLYURETHANES

P.S. MEN -- Here's the chance to buy her that

CHRISTMAS GIFT
We know she will be delighted with such a thoughtful gift.

\$8⁹⁸ up

LADIES AIR STEP AND CELEBRITY DRESS SHOES

Oh So Comfortable. You can even dance all night in them and still dance some more.

LATEST FASHIONS \$27⁹⁸ up
SIZES 5 to 11

MEN'S DRESS SHOES
Sizes 7 to 14 Widths D to EEE
ENGLISH WALKERS, FLORSHEIM, HUSH PUPPIES, JARMAN, McHALE, WALLABEES

Oxfords Slip-ons Dress Boots
Smooth Leathers Suedes **\$26⁹⁸** up

WARM WINTER BOOTS
ALL TYPES IN STOCK..

COUGARS -- Leathers or Fur

SORELS by Kaufman -- Soft toe to Complete Safety

SKIDOO by Kaufman & North-Star -- Small size 8 to men's 13

INSULATED WORK BOOTS --Sylflex Leathers
Soft Toe to Complete Safety

Our Price To YOU Is RIGHT
We Know! Our Regular customers KNOW!
(They Keep Telling Us)
We Have Comparison Priced
And Know Our Prices Are LOWER.

NOW OPEN: To 9 P.M. Monday thru Friday Saturday to 6 P.M. until Christmas.

FLETCHERS family shoes
GEORGETOWN'S FOREMOST FOOT FITTERS
102 Main St., Downtown Georgetown 877-1664

DOWNTOWN GEORGETOWN PRESENTS THE "WINNERS" OF THIS WEEKS CONTEST

● **MICRO WAVE OVEN**
E. Williams
10 Church Street
GEORGETOWN

STILL TO BE WON

● **PORTABLE COLOUR T.V.**
20" Electrohome color

GRAND PRIZE SkyLark Holiday For Two In Florida

SkyLark to Florida's East Coast includes:

- Round trip air transportation from Toronto to Miami
- Welcome briefing and cocktail.
- Transfers between the airport and your hotel and baggage handling.
- Not included: Canadian and U.S. departure tax and hotel service charge and tax. Gratuities
- Services of a resident SkyLark representative.
- Accommodation for seven nights in Florida.
- SkyLark beach bag.

Winner Must Take Trip As Described—Subject To Space Available Before Sept. 1, 1979.

KIDS!

Win 1 of 6 Timex Watches to be given away between now and Christmas.
(Ages 5-6; 7-8; 9-10)

DRAW AND COLOUR A CHRISTMAS DECORATION - WITH YOUR NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NO. BRING IT TO THE HERALD TO OFFICIALLY ENTER IT ON OUR CHRISTMAS TREE

FREE COUPON for a hot chocolate redeemable at Kentner's Dairy Bar when you enter.

FREE COUPON WITH EVERY PURCHASE

ENTER EVERY TIME YOU SHOP

Downtown Georgetown