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Home Newspaper of Halton Hills

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 1981

TWENTY-FOUR PAGES

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Council okays 50 recommendations

Region's revamping begins next month

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer

Halton residents can expect to see major changes in their regional government within the next few months.

Meeting in a three-hour special session of regional council last Wednesday morning, councillors approved over 50 sweeping proposals made in a recent \$75,000 consultants' study aimed at boosting the effectiveness of the region's administration.

In addition, a plan to streamline the region's committee structure, by which councillors make decisions, may be implemented in April.

Under the new administrative structure - which could cost the region \$432,000 in newly hired personnel, the chief administrative officer (CAO) assumes renewed importance as the primary link between staff and councillors.

Having accepted the CAO's position two weeks ago, former regional solicitor Dennis Perlin insisted that only his office should answer policy questions from inquiring councillors.

Although some councillors protested that a stronger CAO's position cuts into council's decision-making power, the management study prepared by Hickling-Johnston Consultants of Toronto has

stated that the CAO needs to improve communications between council and senior department heads.

"In general," the report says, "more emphasis needs to be given to the senior staff's role of tendering policy as well as executing and administering programs."

By going through his office, Mr. Perlin told Wednesday's meeting, councillors are less likely to be confused. He noted that occasionally in the past, regional representatives have been given policy information which has been challenged by the CAO when brought up in council.

New staff positions created by the administrative changes include an executive assistant for the CAO as well as an "information bank" manager, enlarging the scope of the office. Other new staff will fill management and clerical positions within the treasury, planning and development, health and social services departments and the region is beginning to search for a new solicitor.

"Public awareness" is highlighted under the new structure and Mr. Perlin announced that regional staff are working on a "freedom of information bylaw" clarifying what documents and information can be released directly to the public or through the press.

Mr. Perlin later indicated that the region may consider hiring an information officer to provide press releases and handle inquiries from reporters.

The "planning and public works committee", as well as the health and social services, committee will now develop policy ideas, leaving the administration and finance committee to deliberate on the recommendations before forwarding them to council.

Although some councillors argued that the committee chairman should be switched on a monthly basis, others maintained that the committees must have continuity in their leadership, successfully

supporting a one-year term instead. All committee meetings will be attended by the CAO or his executive assistants.

A bylaw to legislate changes in the committee structure - expected in April - will determine the number of members of each body. However, Hickling-Johnston have proposed that eight councillors should sit on each new committee.

One consultant earlier told council that while some changes would be readily noticeable in the next few months, it may take a few years before Halton residents realize the benefits of the new system.

ACTIVAN COUNTDOWN - TOWN'S DISABLED AREN'T STATISTICS

Disabled people aren't just statistics from the census bureau; they're your neighbors, friends and business associates.

That's the message local volunteers want to convey between now and May 1, when "ActiVan" - the special, cross-town transportation service for Halton Hills' disabled residents - finally hits the road for a one-year trial run.

With an objective of \$18,000, the ActiVan advisory committee appointed last year by town council has already raised \$3,000 in public donations. The bulk of the service's \$65,000 first-year cost is being covered by the provincial government, and Levi-Strauss has donated \$13,000. A 50-cent fare will be charged to all service users.

You can find out more about the new service - and about how you can help out in this International Year of the Disabled - by phoning advisory committee members Barb Stephens (877-3920) or Ann Dodds (853-2423).



PEERING THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

The Mad Hatter paid a brief visit to Georgetown Monday morning before returning "through the looking glass" back to Wonderland. And these youngsters at the community's YMCA on Mountainview Road South were glad

to welcome him with a day of games, movies, goodies to bake and other things to do. Sandy Cann, Laurie Gage and Maria Jenkins arranged the Mad Hatter's Day for the kids who dressed especially for the occasion.

Social planning council grant hiked north's volunteer search can begin

A second appeal for funding has earned the fledgling North Halton Social Planning Council \$5,000 to start programs in Milton and Halton Hills promoting volunteerism in the area.

Although the group - formed in November and now boasting a board membership of about 24 volunteers - originally asked the region's health and social services committee for \$21,000, only \$2,000 was recommended to regional council for approval.

Appealing the committee's decision before council last Wednesday afternoon, Georgetown and District High School vice-principal and president of the group, Bill Thom, warned councillors that not getting more money would dampen "enthusiasm" among board members.

There is a demand for a social planning council in North Halton to "form a third component in a strong, regional, social planning (body)," Mr. Thom said. Burlington and Oakville have similar organizations which enhance social services in their area and can tap large professional resources for counselling.

Of the \$21,000, he explained, \$9,700 would be used for non-salary expenses, including programs and administration costs. With additional revenue gained through a funding drive, the North Halton organization had hoped to hire an executive director to co-ordinate programs, the most important of which will be the creation of a volunteer bureau in the area.

"We will continue to investigate other sources of revenue," Mr. Thom said, adding that appeals to Oakville and Burlington United Way organizations had not been "very encouraging".

Awaiting a report on the feasibility of forming a regional social planning council which would include the North Halton, Oakville and Burlington groups, the social services committee had set aside \$14,000 for the proposal.

"But we can't wait until November to find out what will happen to that reserve," Mr. Thom said. "We need the additional operating capital now."

Unwilling to forecast what would happen to the North Halton social planning council if it was forced to operate without regional money, he indicated that it could not start a volunteer bureau.

Council eventually agreed with Halton Hills Coun. Russ Miller, who suggested adding \$3,000 to the committee's grant, pointing out that the North Halton group may be able to share in the regional social planning council reserve, which could be released in November.

Meanwhile, fellow rep Dave Whiting successfully recommended getting the additional \$3,000 from the \$14,000 reserve, commenting that it's better to take from one account and give to another rather than risk bankrupting the region through more donations to volunteer organizations.



UPPER CANADA'S HISTORY RECALLED

Noted actress Pauline Carey was in Georgetown's Cedarvale Community Centre Monday evening to perform her one-woman play recalling Anna Jamieson, the wife of Canada's first vice-chancellor during the late 1830s. Arriving in Toronto in the bleak autumn of 1838, a homesick Anna, visiting her husband, eventually comes to enjoy her surroundings, detailing her experiences in lengthy letters back to England.

(Herald photo)

Raiders make the finals

See SportsWeek inside

Former Georgetown constable

Mike's CPR skills save ill colleague

A Burlington summons server who suffered a heart attack while on duty Feb. 23 owes his life to a Halton regional police officer who once served in Georgetown.

Constable Mike Larson was the first policeman to arrive at the Burlington neighborhood where the coronary attack was reported. He found a special constable from the force, who had been serving summonses, unconscious in his car with no detectable pulse.

Constable Larson removed his stricken colleague from the car and applied cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) until a pulse was



MIKE LARSON

detected. He then accompanied the officer in the ambulance to Joseph Brant Hospital, repeating the CPR procedure five different times en route with an ambulance attendant's help. The stricken officer is now recovering in hospital.

Constable Larson, who is currently serving in Burlington, joined the Force as a Cadet in July, 1978, and was appointed Constable in June, 1980. He has previously served in Georgetown and at police headquarters in Oakville. Constable Larson received his training in CPR while undergoing his recruit training at the Ontario Police College in Aylmer, Ontario.

Constable Larson's only comment regarding the effectiveness of CPR: "It works".

Approved: \$115.7 million school budget

Half of the trustees present at last Wednesday night's Halton board of education meeting successfully defended the board's new \$115.7 million budget for 1981 against a \$2.5 million cut proposed by Oakville rep Bill Herd.

The approved budget will bring an average mill rate increase of 9.7 per cent across the region. Although each town's share of the budget will vary as adjustments are made according to local needs, the result could be a \$44 tax hike for an average assessment of \$7,000.

"The time has long passed," Mr. Herd warned fellow trustees, when taxpayers will support rising education costs in the face of declining enrollment. "Less than one-half of them have children in the system."

The board defeated Mr. Herd's motion 10-5, however, after members argued that recent "add-ons" - including computer labs for six high schools and an expanded French immersion program - cannot be trimmed. Finance committee chairman Noel Cooper cited province-wide cost-per-pupil rates by which the Halton board compares its spending to that of other regions.

"We have one of the lowest in Ontario," he said. "Instructional costs" - mostly teachers' salaries - account for 74 per cent of the budget for a cost increase of \$8.8 million over last year. School operations and maintenance will cost another \$13.1 million, debt charges \$6.3 million and administration \$1.6 million.

As well as its French immersion courses, the board plans to expand its special education services with 20 new staffers and will hire 34 new teachers.

Missing teens found safe by police

Two young Acton residents who disappeared two weeks ago have been found "somewhere" in western Canada.

Details concerning the discovery were unavailable as The Herald went to press Tuesday. However, one police source said that Elaine Smith, 18, of Rosemary Road and her fiancé, Ross Rennie, 19, of Churchhill Road North have been discovered out west, but do not want their exact location revealed.

Except for a follow up to complete the investigation, the case is no longer being treated as a "police matter", the source said.

The disappearance touched off a continent-wide look-

out by other police agencies after Guelph Ontario Provincial Police discovered a car belonging to Lorne and Sally Smith, the girl's parents, abandoned at the Rockwood Conservation Area on Highway 7, west of Acton.

Commenting on the news that the couple had been found, Mr. Rennie's mother, Joyce, said she is relieved both are safe. Complying with the couple's wish, police have declined to give their parents details of the couple's whereabouts.

"But they told the police that they would eventually contact us," Mrs. Rennie said. "They're not young kids anymore and I'm not worried like I was before."



JUST MONKEYING AROUND

Bringing with them extensive backgrounds in puppeteering, Johan and Alison Vandergun presented Lampoon Puppet Theatre's "Monkey Business" to youngsters at the Cedarvale Community Centre Saturday afternoon. Watched closely by kids who lingered after the show, Alison demonstrated some of her

"hand"-work with one of the stars of the performance. The Toronto-based company, founded by the Vanderguns, has toured across Canada and performed (by invitation) in Poland, Russia, Hungary, Holland, Mexico and Japan.

(Herald photo)

Final count gives Julian extra 24 votes

Halton-Burlington's Liberal MPP, Julian Reed, went outside his Norval farmhouse Monday and split a cord of wood.

It was the first hard, physical exercise he'd had since his re-election victory party Thursday night, according to supporter John Minns, and "it's finally cleared his head" of the whirlwind blur left over from five weeks of hard campaigning.

Election return officer Audrey Boron's official count this week gave Mr. Reed a plurality of 518 votes - instead of 494 votes as was originally reported - over Progressive Conservative candidate Fran Baines.

Mrs. Boron reported this week that Mr. Reed received

13,395 votes, Mrs. Baines 12,877 votes and New Democratic Party candidate Chris Cutler 3,508 votes.

Of the riding's 53,198 eligible voters, she said, 29,965 visited the polls Thursday for a 56.4 per cent turn-out. Among the ballots cast, 195 were rejected because they were improperly marked or were cast by ineligible voters; another 48 were left unmarked; and 40 ballots were handed back unmarked by voters who visited the polls but also declined to make a choice.

Some voters may recall that Mr. Reed faced an even tougher challenge in his first bid for election when 72.7 per cent of the eligible voters cast ballots. In 1975, the late Gary Dawkins, Continued on page A3