

Halton board considers new closure policy for schools



MARCHING TO MARKET

Emerging from an early morning fog, the Acton Citizens Band started Leabertown Market day off right for a number of onlookers who were on the streets at 9 a.m., ready to follow the band to their Acton town hall destination. Although under threat of rainy skies, the Willow Street mall got off to a roaring start. Eventually the skies cleared and all the pedestrians and booth-keepers were able to enjoy the festive atmosphere.

Board can reveal salary talks progress

In a move that drew criticism from several trustees, the Halton Board of Education passed a motion Thursday night allowing board salary committee chairman Cam Jackson to divulge progress made in current contract negotiations between the board and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation (OSSTF) to the public.

pros and cons of the motion and felt both parties would end up using the press as a medium for airing their grievances. Trustee Jackson said "the reason for going public would be used positively" as a means of letting the public know how negotiations are going and "not to draw sympathy for either side". Trustee Elaine Riehm adamantly opposed the

motion, saying that public debate would "cloud the bargaining process". She felt the only time progress in the bargaining process should be revealed is when an impasse had been reached. Trustee Len Crozier denied that the intent of the motion was to bring the negotiation process into public debate and said that the public had a right to know where the board and the OSSTF stand since the taxpayers are, in effect, the employers.

With the passing of the motion, trustee Jackson will be able to reveal the progress both parties have made in their negotiations Sept. 17 since he then hopes to have heard the latest demands made by the OSSTF.

School board newsletter still stymied

Attempts by the Halton Board of Education to establish a newsletter were stymied again Thursday night as trustees expressed doubt over the effectiveness and cost of the venture.

suggestions included the appointment of a community relations officer to help clear the lines of communication. Trustee Cam Jackson asked that approval for the newsletter be deferred until the board could further discuss proposals outlined in Aim 7. He felt the functions of the newsletter and the community relations officer would be overlapping.

The board would like to publish a bi-annual newsletter for delivery to all households in Halton region at an estimated cost of \$12,000 in an effort to improve community relations. Some trustees questioned the newsletter's effectiveness in light of the probability that they will appoint a community relations officer at their next meeting.

Trustee Betty Fisher of Halton Hills said the board should wait before it hires a community relations officer until Wally Beavor, newly appointed director of education, joins the board in November. She said Mr. Beavor has had a history of hiring less administrative staff, not more, and that the board may be saddling him with someone he doesn't want.

Jobs complete for students

Herald Special For 35 students employed by the Halton Region Conservation Authority through the Experience '81 program sponsored by the Ontario Youth Secretariat, the summer is coming to an end. The majority of students will be returning to school at either the high school, college or university level. For others, the employment was summer in nature and now it is time to seek fulltime employment.

more projects could be completed. On the whole, the summer was a very successful and productive one.

All the students enjoyed the summer with the Halton Region Conservation Authority. The only complaints about the program were low wages and the limited length of employment as students were hired for only seven to 12 weeks. The university students would like to see this program extended as they are available to work up to 18 weeks. Authority staff would like the program extended so that

In accordance with ministry of education directives, Halton director of education Emerson Lavender has presented a draft policy outlining the administrative procedures for elementary school closures.

The policy outlined for the board of education Thursday minimum enrollment for elementary schools before closure is considered. A minimum of 120 students would be permitted in schools containing grades kindergarten to five, 140 students in schools with grades kindergarten to six and schools with kindergarten to grade eight should have 250 students.

Schools with only grades seven and eight should have 120 students and schools with grades six to eight should have 180 students. The policy outlined the procedures that would be implemented should the projected enrollment in one of Halton's elementary schools reach the minimum within three years.

These schools would be identified after Sept. 30 each year by the area superintendent and a school study group would be established. The group would review the school's enrollment, its facilities and other factors that would have to be considered in the event of a closure.

The study group would submit a report by December of that year and a public meeting would be called in the area to seek reaction from parents and other residents affected by closure.

A point of contention in the draft policy was the statement that a school would be closed within the year after the recommendation to close it is approved. Trustee Jackie Cutmore questioned whether that wasn't rushing things since the ministry will accept a time period of 18 months.

Mr. Lavender said he would look into the matter before the policy comes up for approval. The policy also said the board may have to consider consolidation of schools, entailing redistribution of students. The procedures prior to implementing a school consolidation would be basically the same as those for school closure.

DEATHS

SARGENT, Editha — On Saturday, August 29, 1981 at the Halton Centennial Manor, Milton Editha London, formerly of Georgetown in her 93rd year. Wife of the late Christopher Sargent and dear mother of Editha Ditchfield, Douglas of Georgetown, Skip and Margaret Malzi both of Ottawa. Also lovingly remembered by her grandchildren, great grandchildren and great great grandchildren. Dear sister of Evelyn (Mrs. Sam Walker) of Georgetown and the late Margaret and Walter. Rested at the McClure-Jones Funeral Home, 34 Edith Street, Georgetown. Funeral service was held at St. George's Anglican Church, Monday August 31st, at 1:30 o'clock. Interment Greenwood Cemetery in memory contributions to a charity of your choice would be appreciated.

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