

Shame game

How easily is Health Minister Deborah Matthews shamed?

That really is the question surrounding Town council's decision last week to "put the ball in her court" when it comes to funding the Georgetown Hospital expansion project.

Halton Healthcare Services has indicated \$4.5 million is needed locally to help fund the \$12.1M project. The Town last week promised \$2.682M towards the project and asked the Province to cough up the remaining \$1.864M.

The Town is arguing that, since healthcare funding falls under the provincial bailiwick, it is only right the Province provide cash towards the much-needed project—the first major expansion of the hospital since it was built 50 years ago.

However, the Town is not even asking the Province to pay the lion's share of the cost—only roughly 40 per cent.

It's an interesting tact the Town has taken. In essence they are trying to shame the Province into doing the right thing.

No one is arguing the project, which includes the addition of a CT scanner, isn't necessary. The debate is about how the project is paid for.

The Town (i.e. taxpayers), hospital board and Hospital Volunteer Association are willing to do their part through fundraising ventures.

Mayor Rick Bonnette has had little response from Matthews in his previous pleas and has now invited the minister to tour the hospital (see letter this page).

He's hoping that, with this being an election year, he can apply a little pressure on Matthews. However, will Matthews feel the need to curry favour with local voters who have solidly voted Conservative for several elections?

We certainly hope Matthews wouldn't put politics above local health care needs. If she did, that would really be shameful.

WEB POLL RESULTS

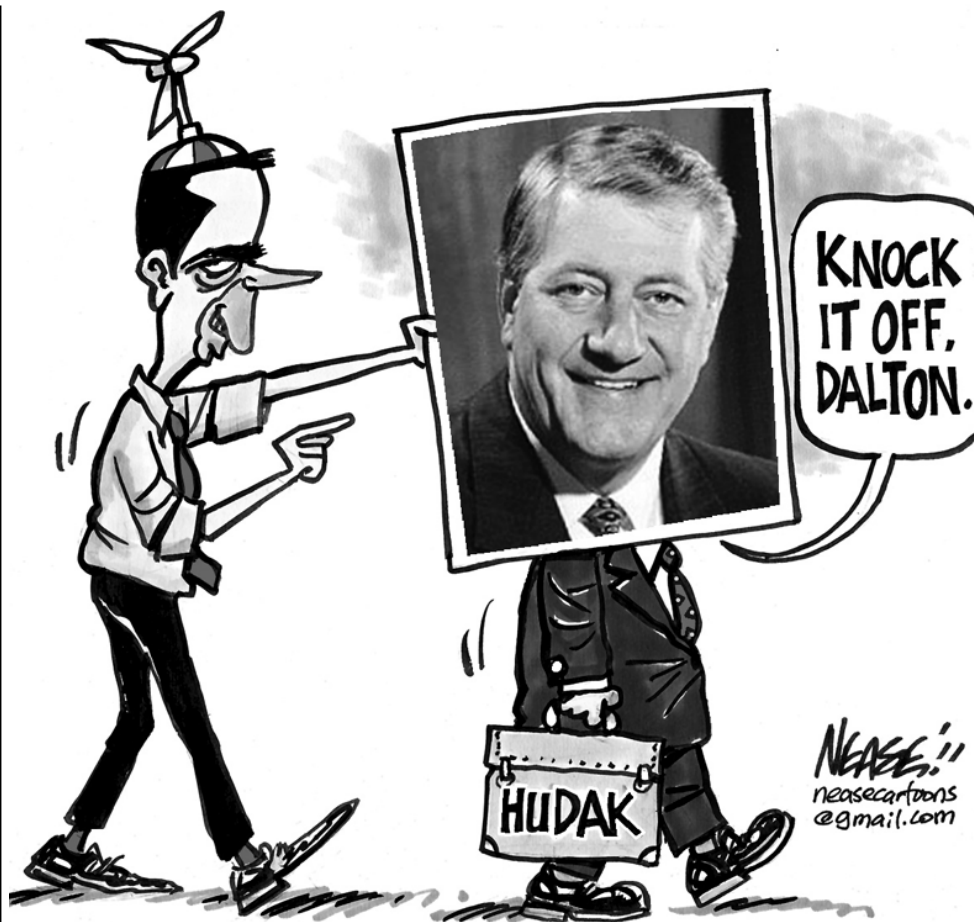
(Go to www.independentfreepress.com)

Town council last week voted to pay \$2.6M towards the \$4.5M needed for the hospital renovation project and pressure the Province into paying the remaining \$1.9M. Do you agree with this strategy?

- Yes. The Town should continue to pressure the Province to pay a portion (84%)
- No. The Province isn't listening so the Town should not waste time and provide all the funding now. (16%)

The Independent & Free Press

The Independent & Free Press is published Tuesday and Thursday and is one of several Metroland Media Group Ltd. community newspapers. Editorial and advertising content of The Independent & Free Press is protected by copyright. Unauthorized use is prohibited.



Steve Nease

905-873-0301
Publisher: Ken Nugent
General manager: Steve Foreman
 (sforeman@independentfreepress.com)
Retail advertising manager: Cindi Campbell
 (ccampbell@independentfreepress.com)
Managing editor: John McGhie
 (jmcghie@independentfreepress.com)
Distribution manager: Nancy Geissler
 (ngeissler@independentfreepress.com)
Classifieds
 Kristie Pells
 (classified@independentfreepress.com)
Accounting
 Rose Marie Gauthier
Editorial
 Cynthia Gamble: News editor
 (cgamble@independentfreepress.com)
 Ted Brown: Photography
 (tbrown@independentfreepress.com)
 Lisa Tallyn: Staff writer
 (ltallyn@independentfreepress.com)
 Eamonn Maher: Staff writer/sports
 (emaher@independentfreepress.com)

Letters policy

Letters must include an address and daytime phone number.

Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 150 words and may be edited for content and/or length.

Publication is not guaranteed.

Email:

jmcghie@independentfreepress.com

Mail or drop off:

Independent & Free Press, 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown, ON, L7G 4B1.

Letters to the editor

Minister invited to tour hospital

(This letter was sent to Deborah Matthews, Ontario Minister of Health. A copy was made available for publication.)

Dear Madam Minister,

Further to my letters dated May 10, 2011, March 8, 2011, and February 8, 2011, I am now pleased to tell you that the council for the Town of Halton Hills has unanimously supported contributing \$2.682 million to the Georgetown Hospital expansion and renovation project.

You can now say the Town of Halton Hills has put our money where our mouth is to support this \$12.196 million project.

Madam Minister, my request for \$1.864 million is still being respectfully asked for. The Town, Hospital Board Foundation, and the Georgetown Hospital Volunteer Association will be making up the balance of the essential expansion of the hospital.

This is the first hospital expansion for the Georgetown Hospital since it was built in 1961. The town has grown substantially since then.

This expansion is important to house the recently approved CT scan-

ner, to consolidate the Diagnostic Imaging Department and to provide co-ordinated responsive diagnostic imaging services in a setting of dignity for those requiring such services.

This expansion is important to resolve the overcrowded Emergency Department which was deterring not only Halton Hills residents, but also a significant overflow of Brampton residents and nearby municipalities.

Madam Minister, I have recently toured the Georgetown Hospital and I would like to personally invite you to Halton Hills to visit Georgetown Hospital to see first-hand what our dedicated doctors, nurses, technicians and staff go through each and every day.

Thank you for your consideration and I anxiously await your reply.

Mayor Rick Bonnette,
Town of Halton Hills

Event moved to 2013

Dear editor,

I would like to thank Ted Brown and *The Independent & Free Press* for providing a great reminder of Homecoming 2007 with a mention that a new chairperson was still needed.

As a result of that story, I am happy to let you know what I will be stepping into the role of chairperson of the Georgetown Homecoming. I would

like to thank Dianne Penrice for all her hard work and support as chairperson.

Homecoming 2007 was a weekend full of activities around town. Georgetown was buzzing with excitement! From the golf tournament on Friday to the high energy dance on Saturday, going down memory lane with old friends as well as making new friends made the event a huge success.

We anticipate the dance will be the highlight again. As the Mold-Masters arenas will be under construction, space may become limited. As a result, the committee has decided to host Homecoming in 2013. We felt that the extra year will be provide a much bigger and better event.

As a lifelong resident of Georgetown and apart of the graduating class of Georgetown District High School in 1989, I am excited to step into this new role. I am look forward to working with the committee as we plan for Homecoming 2013. We have a strong team of volunteers. As we look forward and start the process of organizing, many more volunteers are needed, please contact me at anita.n.bergsma@gmail.com or 905-877-5763 for details.

Please continue to check out the newspaper and Facebook for updates and event information.

Anita Bergsma,
Homecoming chairperson