

Duignan shoots back at angry councillors

By BRAD REAUME

Special to The Independent/Free Press

Halton North MPP Noel Duignan has returned fire after regional councillors sniped at his call for an investigation into Halton's finances and policy.

Regional officials were angered when they received a copy of a letter in which Duignan requests that Minister of Municipal Affairs Ed Phillip launch an investigation.

Duignan pointed to sections of the recently adopted regional official plan and the water diversion reserve fund, once called the energy from waste (EFW) reserve fund. The fund holds roughly \$10 million. The MPP questions the merit of such a reserve given that EFW has been banned by the province.

During last week's meeting of the planning and public works committee councillors called Duignan's research into question, disparaged his staff, and regional chair Peter Pomeroy took a lengthy shot at "the quality of representation."

Duignan took the regional councillor wrath with a grain of salt.

"That's politics," he said. (Burlington regional councillor Barry Quinn, (Peter) Pomeroy and (Burlington councillor Joyce) Savoline; they're all basically Tories, or Reform.

The regional committee had asked Duignan to appear at one of their meetings.



NOEL DUIGNAN

"Obviously the letter struck a chord," he added. "I'm not going to any of their meetings. I was elected by the people of Halton, not by a group of regional councillors."

Duignan said that many constituents had called him concerned with the possibility of an EFW plant in Halton and about the energy reserve fund.

"EFW is outlawed and banned in Ontario," said Duignan. "From our point of view that's not going to change. Many states are looking at banning incineration."

Duignan said his government is not interested in the money Halton has put aside in the reserve fund. He suggested that it be returned to the people of Halton in the form of tax savings, or be used to prop up program which are being curtailed due to funding restraints.

"The solution is not to burn everything," he said. "They should continue trying to divert as much garbage from the waste stream as possible. Even through Halton is a leader in three R's, they should not stand on their laurels."

Cathy Taylor, one of the MPPs staff members, said information contained in the letter came from a report by regional commissioner of finance Joe Rinaldo.

During the discussion in committee Rinaldo called Duignan's letter "hogwash".

Duignan said the investigation is in the hands of Phillip, who can choose to investigate or ignore his concerns.

Organizers busy preparing for Highland Games

This may be the 19th Georgetown Highland Games, but it's the first time cows are being invited along with people.

The program is already in place for the annual event, which will be held on Saturday, June 11 starting at 8 a.m. and running through the day.

President of the games, Jim Christie said that the event is the first of the season of several Highland Games to be held in

Ontario. It is a day-long event, and attracts competitors from the United States as well as Canada.

This year, Christie and his committee has hired professional promoters and hope to attract visitors from Barrie to Hamilton, instead of primarily local residents.

The event includes competitions in piping and drumming, highland dancing and heavyweight events. There will be a parade from

Remembrance Park to the fair grounds at noon.

The cattle show, which is new this year, will be held in the afternoon, along with caber toss, weight toss and a farmers walk.

Children will have the opportunity to try out highland dancing and get their face painted with traditional Pictish designs, using blue clay. These classic designs were used to terrify the Romans, Christie said.

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