

Local firm gets contract

By JANET BAINE
Staff writer

Graeme Goebelle received a one year extension on his contract to act as the auditor for the town of Halton Hills.

Council voted eight to four in favor of a resolution reinstating Goebelle, MacAdam, Alexander as the auditor. The vote was recorded and those opposing the extension were Councillors Cathy Gastle, Ron Chatten, Anne Currie and Gail Rutherford.

An out-of-town firm, Peat, Marwick and Thorne had been selected for a five year contract because their bid was \$8,000 less than that of Goebelle, the auditor for 34 years. Goebelle's firm put in a bid which was the fourth lowest,

and Goebelle didn't even receive an interview, since only the two lowest bidders were interviewed.

Council decided to make the one year extension to allow time to set up an auditing committee, to select the auditor and review the performance regularly in the future.

While Councillor Gail Rutherford noted that she realizes that Goebelle has contributed to the community through his volunteer-



GRAEME GOEBELLE

ing, it would be more appropriate to recognize him for that work, rather than give his firm a contract as auditor. She also said that she thought the town may benefit from the experience of the outside firm.

Councillor Bill Robson noted he has been an accountant for 30 years and believes that the town council has every right to reject the staff recommendation to hire Peat, Marwick, Thorne.

"I believe there has been an injustice here. If there had been something going wrong with Mr. Goebelle, he would have been called on the carpet a couple times a year," he said.

Goebelle noted he had never been told anything was wrong with the service he provided.

Jackson pleased with decision

Chamber of Commerce manager Terry Jackson is very happy with council's decision to hire Goebelle, MacAdam, Alexander for the 1994 audit.

"If we don't support our own businesses, we'll be a residential community and there will only be homes here. I commend the members of the council who voted to support local business," Jackson said, adding the growth in the economy of Halton Hills is going to come from within, not businesses coming to town from outside.

She feels very strongly that council should go further and find a way of considering not just the bottom line when confronted by a proposal from a local company, but also the contribution it makes to the

community.

Local companies pay business taxes, which would be lost revenue without local support. They wouldn't be able to sponsor the sports team, contribute a prize for charity or have staff volunteer. The company may have to lay off people, which means those people would be forced onto UIC, something local taxpayers pay for. In addition, the laid-off employees may leave town



TERRY JACKSON

or, because of a reduced income, won't be able to contribute to the local economy.

"(Council) should seek every avenue possible to see favoring local businesses under any criteria they can," Jackson said. "I think it is so important to put into place some system to determine the value of the company to the community...I am so committed to this, and have been for 25 years."

Jackson said that while Goebelle, MacAdam, Alexander is a member of the Chamber, she would defend any local business in the same way.

She pointed out that she believes very firmly in supporting local businesses, and always buys locally.

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