

Seven politicians considering Halton Region's top job

By **ROD JERRED**

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Two Oakville regional councillors have added their names to the growing list of candidates for Halton regional chairman.

Kevin Flynn and Stephen Sparling are both considering a run for the regional chairman's post.

Only time will tell whether they remain in the race when an open vote of regional council is taken December 7.

"A lot of horses are considering entering the race, but my sense is there won't be as many going into the gate when it happens," said Oakville mayor Ann Mulvale, who is not running for regional chairman.

Jockeying for the top post of the region began in earnest by some in September when the current chairman Peter Pomeroy announced he

would not be seeking another term. Pomeroy, the former mayor of Halton Hills, is facing charges of political corruption and the payment of his massive legal debts is a current centre of controversy. He had held the post for 10 years — the longest term in the 20-year history of Halton Region.

The regional chairman is currently selected by an open recorded vote of regional council — in past elections the vote was taken by secret ballot. The position carries a \$71,226 salary.

The vote will be taken on December 7 as the first item of business at the inaugural meeting of the new regional council.

Candidates do not have to be regional council members.

Besides the two Oakville councillors, other candidates who have

been mentioned as considering the post are Burlington councillors Ralph Scholtens, Joyce Salvoline and Rob MacIssac, Milton mayor Gord Krantz and defeated mayoralty candidate Doug Greenaway.

In her acceptance speech on election night, Nov. 14 Mulvale said she had been approached by two non-members of council who have expressed interest in the job. Although she would not reveal their identities, Mulvale later said they are not residents of Oakville.

If Oakville councillors chose to support one of their own, the two potential candidates, Sparling and Flynn, represent two opposites.

Sparling is a longtime Tory who worked as Oakville-South MPP Gary Carr's campaign manager in the last provincial election, and who unsuccessfully competed against

Mulvale for the Oakville-Milton Progressive Conservative nomination in the last federal election. Flynn represented the NDP in provincial and federal elections in the early 80's, but has not shied away from publicly criticizing the current NDP provincial government.

Sparling said a chairman from Oakville would give the town an extra voice on the 25-member regional council. Sparling believes he could also win support from councillors outside Oakville, because he has always been sensitive to the concerns of North Halton residents and shares the same business concerns of Burlington councillors.

Flynn said on Tuesday morning he had just decided to take a run at the job. His main reason for run-

ning, said Flynn, is to work towards having a region-wide election for chairman in the 1997 municipal election, if not sooner.

"My number one aim is to make sure we never have to do this again," said Flynn.

Flynn said he does not support arguments that the region is too big a constituency to run a political campaign, or that the electorate would have trouble understanding the role of the regional chairman.

"If you've got enough people to help you, it doesn't cost that much (to run)," said Flynn. "I've got enough faith in people that maybe someone in Halton Hills would understand that a person in Oakville would make the best regional chairman, or that someone in Halton Hills would make the best chairman."

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