

# Council OKs pay hike for next term council

By **CYNTHIA GAMBLE**  
Staff Writer

Town council has approved a pay raise for the future council that will begin serving in December 2014.

Council approved the staff report recommending the pay increase at a recent meeting. A Town consultant surveyed council salaries of surrounding communities and recommended that salary for the incoming council of 2014-2018 be the average of that group of municipalities (Milton, Newmarket, Clarington, Caledon, Waterloo and Aurora).

Of that group, the Town paid its elected officials the lowest amount.

It calls for the Mayor's salary to jump from \$58,077 to \$73,008 and a councillor's salary to be increased from \$24,714 to \$29,995. That will take effect in December 2014 when the new council is sworn in. The one-third tax-free allowance will be retained.

Also effective next month, the benefit coverage for all members of council will be extended until retirement.

All councillors will also be provided full OMERS benefits, starting in January.

Each council member will also receive an allocation of funds, \$3,000, to courses and seminars, office supplies, newsletters, drop-ins, and public relations. The mayor's allowance is set at \$14,450.

The Mayor's car allowance will be increased to \$495 per month in January, and further

increased to \$661 per month starting Dec. 1, 2014.

Councillors will continue to receive mileage at the same rate as staff— 51 cents per kilometre.

Wards 1 & 2 Regional Councillor Clark Somerville said it was a six-month process by the Town staff to compare the salaries paid to council in surrounding communities.

A full review of salaries for local officials has not been done since 2004. However this summer, council did approve, a 2.5% "compensation adjustment" (a total of \$7,400 for the whole council), retroactive to April 2013.

Wards 3&4 Regional Councillor Jane Fogal said, "The recommendation is to basically pay us the average of our comparators. ...We should be at least paid average.

"I don't think we should be under-valued for the job we do here," she added.

The staff report, written by Chief Administrative Officer David Smith stated: "The recommended stipend increases reflect the appropriate, fair and equitable compensation levels for the positions of Mayor and Councillor in view of the responsibilities, required time, commitment and accountability associated with these roles. This increase will facilitate the retention and attraction of a diverse and representative pool of candidates from Halton Hills residents wishing to seek election to council."

The key thing, said Mayor Rick Bonnette, is this won't take effect until December 2014 when the new council term begins.



## Chasing the Dream ride raises \$45,000

The second annual Chase the Dream Motorcycle Ride and Show held at the Terra Cotta Inn in August raised \$45,000 for the Chase Galea Foundation which provides funds for Chase Galea, a six-year-old local boy who lives with cerebral palsy and a severe hearing loss. Funds from the event continue to support the Galea family in providing Chase with his much-needed Conductive Education Therapy and other necessary medical supplies and equipment. In addition, Chase's progress is now being monitored by both Erinoakkids and the Shriner's Hospital, whose ongoing research will benefit other children with cerebral palsy. At a dinner held recently at the Terra Cotta Inn, Dave Heydon, event co-ordinator, presented Chase's parents, Shawn and Rachel, with a cheque for \$45,000— 30 per cent higher than funds raised last year. Next year's event will be held August 24 at the Terra Cotta Inn. To view Chase's progress, pictures of the 2013 event and details of next year's event visit their website at [www.chasethedream.ca](http://www.chasethedream.ca). On hand for the presentation were, back row, from left, Shawn Galea, George Farrugia, Dave Hayden, Ed Palmer and Carl Minor. Front, from left, Marian Heydon and Rachel Galea.

Submitted photo

## Chong's Bill would empower local MPs

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"In Canada, citizens exercise only one franchise, one vote at the federal level: A vote for their local Member of Parliament. And they rightfully expect that their local member be empowered to respond to their views and aspirations," Chong said.

"The people of Wellington County and Halton Hills have told me they want a Parliament that is responsible and accountable to the people who elected it. The Reform Act will do

exactly that," said Chong, who added, "I want to thank the people of Wellington-Halton Hills who have encouraged me to introduce this legislation. Their support and encouragement over the years is the reason for this bill."

James Rajotte, Tory MP for Edmonton-Leduc seconded the bill in the House of Commons.

"James Rajotte is a respected parliamentarian," said Chong, "a veteran with years of experience. His support for this Bill is important."

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