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"ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED"

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 1993

Wage and spending freeze chosen over tax hike, layoffs

BY TIM MORGETROYD

The Acton Tanner

Premier Bob Rae's social contract plan to reduce Ontario's \$18.5 billion debt with a three-year wage rollback was approved by Council Thursday night and posted Friday, but there are still a few loose ends to tie up.

"We're doing our utmost not to reduce services during the day, but it does mean all Town employees will have to take off three days without pay this year," said Town administrator Ray King Friday.

"Under the social contract plan

Social Contract affects all

Acton and Georgetown will be equally affected by the Province's budget belt-tightening despite the lopsided administration and services, says an Acton councillor.

Town administration is scrambling to find ways the \$463,462 Queen's Park withheld from the Town of Halton Hills' 1993 budget can be cut without hurting services.

"The overall impact is on the Town (of Halton Hills), not just Acton or just Georgetown," said Councillor Norm Elliott. "There aren't Georgetown programs being cut or Acton jobs being cut; it's all the Town's employees. A lot of Acton people work in the Georgetown area."

He and the majority of councillors voted Thursday to approve necessary budget savings they needed in place before Premier Rae's Aug. 1 deadline for municipal agreement on public sector

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the Town of Halton Hills' budget will be reduced by \$282,549 this year," and by the same amount in the 1994 and 1995 budgets said King. "That's money we had budgeted for we're not going to get now.

"The majority of that amount must be reduced by a reduction in compensation to Town employees," he explained, adding that this is a working figure but the exact amount "will be in that general area each year."

The Ontario government's Expenditure Control Plan has already cost the Town \$180,913 in lost Provincial unconditional grants. Added to the \$282,549 reduction in employee compensation, which is the objective of the Social Contract, the province has cut \$463,462 from the Town's 1993 budget. A five per cent Town tax increase would be needed to raise this amount.

Under the Social Contract agreement newly vacant jobs may not be filled and no provisions are made for increases to wages, salaries, premiums, benefits or for the cost of living period from June 14, 1993 to March 31, 1996.

Pension benefits won't be reduced because full-time workers are forced to take unpaid leaves and Pay Equity and employees earning under \$30,000 will not be affected.

There will be a further report to Council on how other areas will be affected and "we'll be looking at further aspects of the works department," King said.

In the report Council studied Thursday King condemned a strategy of laying off employees for 10

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BUSINESS AS USUAL: The Bank of Montreal has kept its front door open for business during renovations even when there was no front door — or front. Last Wednesday even the noise and heat couldn't make Edna Perkons, bank branch manager, lose her smile. (Tim Morgetroyd photo)

Moment of truth for OHH

BY TIM MORGETROYD

The Acton Tanner

Hide House management is ready to show creditors the restructuring proposal that could reopen the doors in mid-September.

Yesterday (Tuesday) was the day the CIBC — the major creditor — was to have first glimpse of the proposal, Steve Dawkins said Friday. The olde Hide House president added that the other creditors will have to wait until next week.

"We would probably be calling a creditors' meeting about the 27th of August. If the votes which come in before and at that meeting ap-

prove the proposal, we would still be targeting for a reopening in mid-September."

As of Friday Dawkins was "in the final throes of of sorting through the details of preparing the body of the proposal which we will be presenting to our senior secured creditor, the CIBC, Tuesday (Aug. 3)."

Dawkins publicly revealed the general outline of his plan July 22, breaking the news that Jack Tanner's, Flight-Line, the West Wearhouse and 50 local jobs would be casualties of the restructuring plan.

Dawkins had counted on the

long-awaited 3,000-person boost to Acton's population to save many of the jobs. He was convinced if Acton's population hadn't been frozen by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans "we might have at least saved Jack Tanner's and the West Wearhouse."

Flight-Line and West Wearhouse will not reopen but their product lines will be merchandised in themed areas within the olde Hide House walls. Jack Tanner's Table will stay closed and "moth-balled" for one year pending a final decision on how to best utilize that section of the building.

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