

The ROCKWOOD Miller

Little interest in budget debate

By Denise Paulsen

Garbage disposal and development charges were the only issues raised at a special meeting of Council convened Monday night at the Guelph/Eramosa Township offices. Three people showed up to hear Guelph/Eramosa Manager of Finance Linda Cheyne highlight the details of the proposed 2010 budget.

"Are they rich?" Bill Carius a resident of Rockwood joked as he commented on the low public turnout at the meeting. "They're incredibly happy with our services," Councillor John Scott remarked.

"What we have here is a status quo budget with reasonable, justifiable and adjusted for inflation rate changes. Any issues that the public had any real concerns with have been addressed," Mayor Chris White said. "In recent years, this is typical. Attendance was higher in years past," White said.

Rockwood resident Eric Stern expressed concern about the hazardous waste management fee of \$10 per visit levied by the City of Guelph in February. White suggested that Stern visit one of the five transfer stations in the County of Wellington where hazardous waste can be dropped off free of charge.

"Is the Township charging enough for

development charges? We appear to be much lower than other areas such as Mississauga, Halton Hills or Milton," Carius asked.

"Our rates are set by what the market will bear. We want to remain competitive. We have done an analysis and have come up with rates that are reasonable," White replied. Carius also asked if big garbage pick-up at the curb is a consideration. "We have tried this in the past. It is not cost effective," White responded.

The most significant increase in this year's budget is the cost of insurance, and an increase in the Grand River Conservation Authority charges. Insurance costs are up \$72,689 and the GRCA levy increased by \$13,584. The budget includes a \$210,307 transfer from the Working Fund Reserve that will reduce the burden on the taxpayer. The overall amount to be raised by taxation is \$4,097,988.00

In the proposed 2010 budget the Township portion of the tax bill will increase by 2.68 per cent. Based on a residential property assessment of \$339,000 the annual average increase is \$22.20 for a total of \$848.08. The 2010 budget is expected to be approved at the next meeting of the council at the Guelph/Eramosa Township offices on Monday, April 19.

Road Rage incident investigated

By Denise Paulsen

A Guelph/Eramosa Township employee, who the township refuses to identify citing privacy issues, was involved in a serious incident late March when a rock was hurled at the cab of his grader by a passing motorist completely smashing the side window of the cab. The employee was not injured. The grader operator was doing gravel recovery roadwork on 3rd Line in Eramosa, north of 20th Side Road.

"My husband is not innocent in this," declared Jodie McDuffy the unidentified employee's wife. "He's no angel," McDuffy said when asked to elaborate. She attended the meeting of council last week to hear Mayor White vigorously defend her husband.

"That was off-the-cuff," White said when asked to comment on McDuffy's unsolicited remark. He dismissed the notion that the township employee may have responded to the motorist in a way that wasn't appropriate.

"We are shocked by this completely unacceptable behaviour. This is a violent act. Our employee could have been injured. We will offer support and all the necessary resources in our power will be made available to help the police with their investigations. We will pursue it until the end," White assured McDuffy. Ken Gagnon, Manager of Public Works said this has never happened before.

The OPP are continuing their investigations into this road-rage attack. The unknown driver of a vehicle had driven by

the grader operator three times before throwing the rock. The township employee was covered in glass but not hurt. The total cost to replace and affix the cab window is estimated at \$780.

Gagnon feels the public should be made aware of the dangerous assault on a member of staff in the normal course of duty. Mayor Chris White and the township councillors discussed the idea of adopting additional measures to help with heightened public awareness to the dangers associated with this type of road-rage behaviour, such as more signage or introducing a fine-related by-law. Preventative measures are being considered to discourage public non-compliance when road works are underway.

Emergency response plans consolidated

By Denise Paulsen

The Township is set to adopt a new Emergency Response Plan that will address how to handle large community emergencies. At the Guelph/Eramosa council meeting last week Linda Dickson, the County of Wellington's Community Emergency Management Co-ordinator presented

the county's decision to amalgamate eight emergency response plans into one comprehensive document.

In the event of a catastrophe such as a tornado, flood, hydro induced black-out, SARS pandemic etc. "this is the ultimate in co-ordination," Dickson explained between the County of Wellington and the seven neighbouring municipalities. "This new plan is not a drastic change for the Guelph/Eramosa township. We are adding content on how to deal more effectively with any emergencies that are above and beyond the scope of the local fire and emergency services department," Dickson said.

The idea is to streamline the eight emergency response plans into one covering the following municipalities: – County of Wellington, Centre Wellington, Erin, Guelph/Eramosa, Mapleton, Minto, Puslinch and Wellington North. In the

event of a large scale emergency, this updated initiative will apply across the board and be of benefit to all the municipalities, agencies and organizations involved.

Evacuation procedures and emergency shelters will be established to provide the necessary food, lodging, registration and inquiry information. The Wellington County social services division will set this up. Hospitals, schools and Red Cross agencies will provide added support. A revision to volunteer management will also be incorporated in the agenda.

Recovery, which isn't prioritised in the current plan, is now a focus in the new document which is being compiled and circulated to all the councils for review and consideration. Once the thumbs-up is given by all eight municipalities, the new Emergency Response Plan will be adopted by the end of May, 2010.

Is there a tax deduction in your driveway?



- Free tow
- Minimum \$ 100.00 tax receipt
- Proceeds help support local programs & kidney research

Call the Kidney Car Hotline at 1-866-788-2277 or visit www.kidney.on.ca

Redeem This Voucher for **\$25.00 Off** Your 2 Hour Appointment (Valid Until June 30, 2010)

Gillan Interiors has the answer to all your decorating dilemmas.

gillan INTERIORS
FROM CONTEMPORARY TO TRADITIONAL

- Colour consultation with paints
- Colour consultation using wallpapers
- Space planning for furniture placement
- Drapery & fabric selections
- Styling advice for your home/business
- Shopping trips/sourcing from here to Toronto
- Get the full colour makeover from a European trained/experienced interior designer.

Karen Gillan, B.Sc Hons — Office 519-856-4832 • Cell 519-820-3086
email: karengillan@sympatico.ca • www.gillaninteriors.com