

Members angry over letterhead

Regional Councillors sitting on the Region's Administration Committee exploded at the suggestion that they as councillors should not write to constituents on official regional letterhead stationery.

"I've never heard anything so stupid. The staff is saying council shouldn't reply to constituents on regional letterhead," Burlington Councillor David Coons said.

"Councillor Coons is absolutely right," Councillor Ron Planche of Oakville said.

Chief Administrative officer Ernie Reid explained that the staff wasn't concerned about the councillors using letterhead but wanted council to pass a resolution authorizing the use if that was the feeling of council.

He said there is the danger of someone receiving comment from a councillor on letterhead and accepting the opinion as a council policy instead of an individual's opinion.

Councillor Coons said he'd never known it to be a problem in his nine years on council. He said council acted by resolution not by letters councillors may or may not write.

Councillor Mac Anderson of Oakville said he had no problems in that regard because in his three years with the region he had never written a letter.

Expenditure approved

Bug spraying to cost \$9,149

Despite criticism from Milton councillor Jim Kerr, and Oakville councillor Laurie Mannell of Community and Social Services last week approved a budget of \$9,149 for a mosquito-spraying program.

The program will spray certain public lands with the chemical abate, in the hopes of controlling the breeding of the encephalitis-carrying insect. Because the spraying is only being done on public lands, councillor Kerr suggests it would be ineffective.

"We're only spraying five or 10 per cent of the land," he

said. "Is that effective?" Oakville councillor Mannell agreed with Mr. Kerr.

"It's a waste money, let's use it for something we'll get results from. I just can't see that at all," he said. "I can't see that there is any benefit whatsoever to the taxpayers. We're not spraying all the spots where they breed or live."

Regional public health inspector Jim Powell explained to the committee that the purpose of the program was not to eliminate mosquitoes, just to cut down their numbers as much as possible. He explained that

the mosquitoes will live on birds, but when the mosquito population gets too large they attack humans, and this is when the disease is spread.

There were four fatal cases of encephalitis in Ontario last year, and five the year before said Oakville councillor Ron Planche, but there were 70 additional cases reported that were not fatal. He was in favor of the program.

Mr. Mannell was not convinced, however.

"We're killing off birds by the hundreds," he complained. "They're being poisoned by insecticides. If we had sufficient birds we wouldn't have to worry about

mosquitoes."

Mr. Mannell wanted the money spent on education programs, to teach farmers and gardeners how to use insecticides properly.

Mr. Powell issued a report on abate to committee members, which showed it to be one of the least dangerous insecticides, and harmless to birds, fish and higher forms of life. Abate does adversely affect minute animal life in ponds, the report said, but the effects are short-term.

Last year the region budgeted approximately \$24,000 for the program, of which \$8,000 was subsidized by the province. Because

some of the materials bought last year can be used in 1977, the expected cost of the program is \$9,149, of which the province will pay \$5,330.

The committee reviewed the program last year, but withheld final approval until the report detailing possible side-effects of abate had been received.

Two-car collision

An Acton woman was treated for minor injuries at the Georgetown Hospital after she was involved in a two-car collision at the Highway 25 and No. 22 Sideroad intersection at 7:30 a.m. Friday, according to the Milton OPP.

Dolly Deshaies, of Speyside Auto Body, was southbound on the highway when she attempted to make a left turn onto No. 22 Sideroad when a collision occurred between her and the car behind her driven by Jack Pope, of 179 Poplar, Acton.

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Protest sales tax

Halt Regional Council's Administration Committee is urging council to join in Niagara Region's protest to the provincial government.

Niagara is upset because of the province's decision to apply sales tax to equipment purchased for installation in water treatment and pollution control facilities.

In a memo to the committee Regional Treasurer Don Farmer said the change in provincial legislation would add considerably to the cost of buying the equipment.

Currently there are five plant expansions - either construction, out to tender or about ready to be tendered.

Grant request denied

Halt Region's Community and Social Services Committee turned down a request for a grant from the Oakville Meals on Wheels group last week.

Noting that Meals on Wheels programs operate in Burlington, Halton Hills and Milton as well as Oakville, the committee suggesting financing was a local responsibility.

Before sending the Oakville group home, however, the committee suggested they look into possible cost-saving involved in appointing a regional supervisor for all four programs, and return with a report. Oakville already has a paid co-ordinator, while the other three do not.

Milton councillor Jim Kerr was in favor of a grant, but he was out-voted.

"There should be a grant given," he said, "it's an excellent program."

Health budget up 7.5 per cent

Halton Region's Board of Health budget of \$2,248,000 was approved by the Region's Community and Social Services Committee at a meeting last week.

A general health department budget of \$1,683,072 had already been approved last year, but the committee was asked to vote on new programs including family planning (\$31,000), home care

(\$416,425), and North Halton mental health care (\$104,200).

The recommendations must now go to the provincial ministry. The province pays 75 per cent of the general health budget, and 100 per cent of the cost of the new programs. Halton region's share of the total cost for 1977 will \$435,229, up from last year's \$389,974.

The general budget rise is

7.5 per cent.

An expenditure of \$9,149 was also approved for the abatement spraying of mosquitoes, started last year. Of this, the province pays 75 per cent of the material costs, but the municipalities must provide labor.

Included in the budget is \$11,800 to change seven Registered Nursing positions to Public Health Nursing positions. PHN's are paid about \$2,000 a year more than RN's.

Registered nurses are graduates of community college programs, while public health nurses are university graduates or the equivalent.

The Regional Health Department has 34 PHN's now, and 18 RN's. Seven of these 18 would be changed by attrition, and not by out-right firing of the seven nurses.

Health Council names executive director

William C. Leonard has been appointed executive director of the Halton District Health Council, it was announced this week.

He assumed the post March 21.

The Halton District Health Council is appointed by the Minister of Health to advise on the planning and co-ordination of health care services in Halton.

Mr. Leonard (Maj. Gen., Ret'd) spent his career in the armed forces, retiring in the last few months. He last served for a period of two years as chairman of a committee to NATO on arms standardization. Prior to that he served as commanding officer of Canada's Armed Forces in Europe.

The District Health Council has also established offices on

Trafalgar Road in the former Oakville Board of Education building between the Public Works building and the Oakville Public Utilities Commission offices.

Council Chairman Terence F. Baines said it was felt the location would be most accessible to the entire region.

The Council has recommended to the Ministry the establishment or expansion of three programs involving psychiatric out patient services. One is at the Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital, one at the Health Unit and one is an expansion at Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital in Burlington.

It is expected two of these three programs will be approved for funding by the Ministry shortly, the chairman reported.

Committee goes in camera

Voting on a proposed 60 per cent increase in the Halton Children's Aid Society budget was postponed until after an April 5 in camera meeting.

The regional Community and Social Services Committee was expected to discuss and vote on the budget last week but on the request of chairman Walter Mulkeiwich the discussion was held over until an informal meeting between the CAS and committee members could be held.

Committee members expressed the desire for more details about the society and its budget before voting. The committee in particular wants to discuss personnel matters, and for that reason the meeting will be held in camera.

"If you want to have frank discussion from both sides you have to be in camera," said Halton Hills councillor Pat McKenzie.

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Loss of power irks committee

Members of Halton Region's Administration Committee are annoyed because they have lost some of the power the committee once held.

At a recent council meeting council decided that all committees would submit their budgets to council directly instead of having the

Administration Committee review them and suggest cuts prior to the budgets going to council.

Oakville Mayor Harry Barrett said the responsibility for budget review should be returned to the committee. He noted that the formation of the Community Services Committee eased the load and made it possible for the Administration Committee to take the time to delve into the budgets.

Burlington Councillor David Coons said that there were certain councillors who had pet projects and he said he suspected those councillors didn't want the administration committee delving into matters which they considered sacred.

The committee will recommend a change in policy to council. Meanwhile a special meeting of council has been set for April 6 to review the entire operating budget.

21.5 cents per mile

In an attempt to offset increased costs in gasoline and car repairs Halton Region's Administration Committee has recommended an increase in the mileage allowance for councillors and employees.

The increase will see the rate jump by one per cent per mile to 21.5 cents for the first 500 miles and 18.3 cents per mile for miles travelled over the first 500.

Seven per cent raise for staff

Seven per cent pay increases were approved for 172 office, clerical and technical employees of Halton Region by the Region's Administration Committee Wednesday.

The adjustment is comparable to that settlement awarded to the members of IBEW. Outside workers at the region are represented by that union.

In a report to the committee, Personnel Director Dennis Camm said the region was restrained in what it could offer by the Anti-Inflation Guidelines but he felt the rates being paid were competitive.

Raises of six and seven per cent were also awarded to people in management and supervisory positions. Ceilings of \$1,600 were put on increases for positions.

During the same meeting the committee approved a suggestion by Mr. Camm that would provide for a reproduction of the coat of arms as well as a gift worth about \$25 upon retirement. The gift could be in merchandise or cash.

Raise for chairman

Brian Fletcher, Halton Land Division Committee's new chairman, will receive a \$5,000 stipend per year.

That represents an increase of \$1,000 over the amount paid Les Preston who served as that committee's first chairman. He held the post for three years.

Mr. Preston was appointed by council to chair the committee for the first term, but Mr. Fletcher was elected chairman at a recent committee meeting.



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