



HAPPY EASTER

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Councillors to get first pay raise in eight years

By IRENE GENTLE
The Champion

At the recommendation of a five-person citizens' committee, town council voted Monday night to give itself its first pay raise since 1992.

Led by former councillor Brad Clements, the committee suggested politicians take home \$13,500 annually, up from the current base salary of \$11,684.

But that amount can vary, with some councillors opting to take voluntary pay cuts while others increase their yearly haul through expenses.

The mayor's salary will also increase to \$40,180. But despite council approval, the pay hike won't take effect until the 2001 operating budget is approved.

That means the ultimate endorsement will be in the hands of the next council, following the November municipal elections.

That was opposed by Councillor Rick Malboeuf, who noted the whole purpose of forming the remuneration committee was to take the responsibility off the hands of the incoming council.

But the current crew shouldn't burden their successors with a policy they don't want, responded Councillor John Challinor.

"We can't tie a future council's hands," he said. That argument was jettisoned by Mr. Malboeuf.

"As far as tying future council's hands, we do it all the time in passing capital projects," he said.

Mr. Challinor disagreed, saying capital projects are usually dealt with on a year-to-year basis, giving the council of the day a say.

The remuneration committee also suggested councillors be provided with laptop computers, Town-compliant software and other equipment.

But council opted to review what, if any, technology

is needed instead.

Mr. Malboeuf also took the opportunity to fight for a \$1,000 expense submission cap, objecting to Councillor Cindy Lunau's \$3,000 mileage costs last year.

But Ms Lunau sits on a variety of committees and often covers off for Mayor Gord Krantz when the Greater Toronto Services Board meets in Toronto, said Mr. Challinor.

"She's been driving an inordinate amount in 1999," he said. "I don't have an issue with her mileage."

Mr. Krantz also came to her defense. "It should not cost money to do Town business," he said. "At least in my opinion, it's not being abused."

Mr. Malboeuf said he wasn't suggesting the expenses had been padded.

In her own defense, Ms Lunau said she sits on far more committees than many councillors.

"If you're going to penalize rural councillors for sitting on committees, the urban councillors had better be prepared to do the work," she said.

The suggestion to cap expenses was voted down.

Despite the loss, Mr. Malboeuf went for broke by attempting to tie a review of council size to the pay issue. But that died a quick death when he wasn't able to garner a seconder.

The whole notion of a pay increase didn't sit well with veteran Councillor Art Melanson, who also objected to receiving any new technology.

"What follows? Office space? A secretary? Limousine use?" he asked. "Thank you, but no thank you."

But Councillor Ron Furik felt the recommendation should be honoured.

"If these five people think that's what we should be getting around this table, I'm of the opinion that's exactly what we should be getting," he said. "The ratepayers have spoken."



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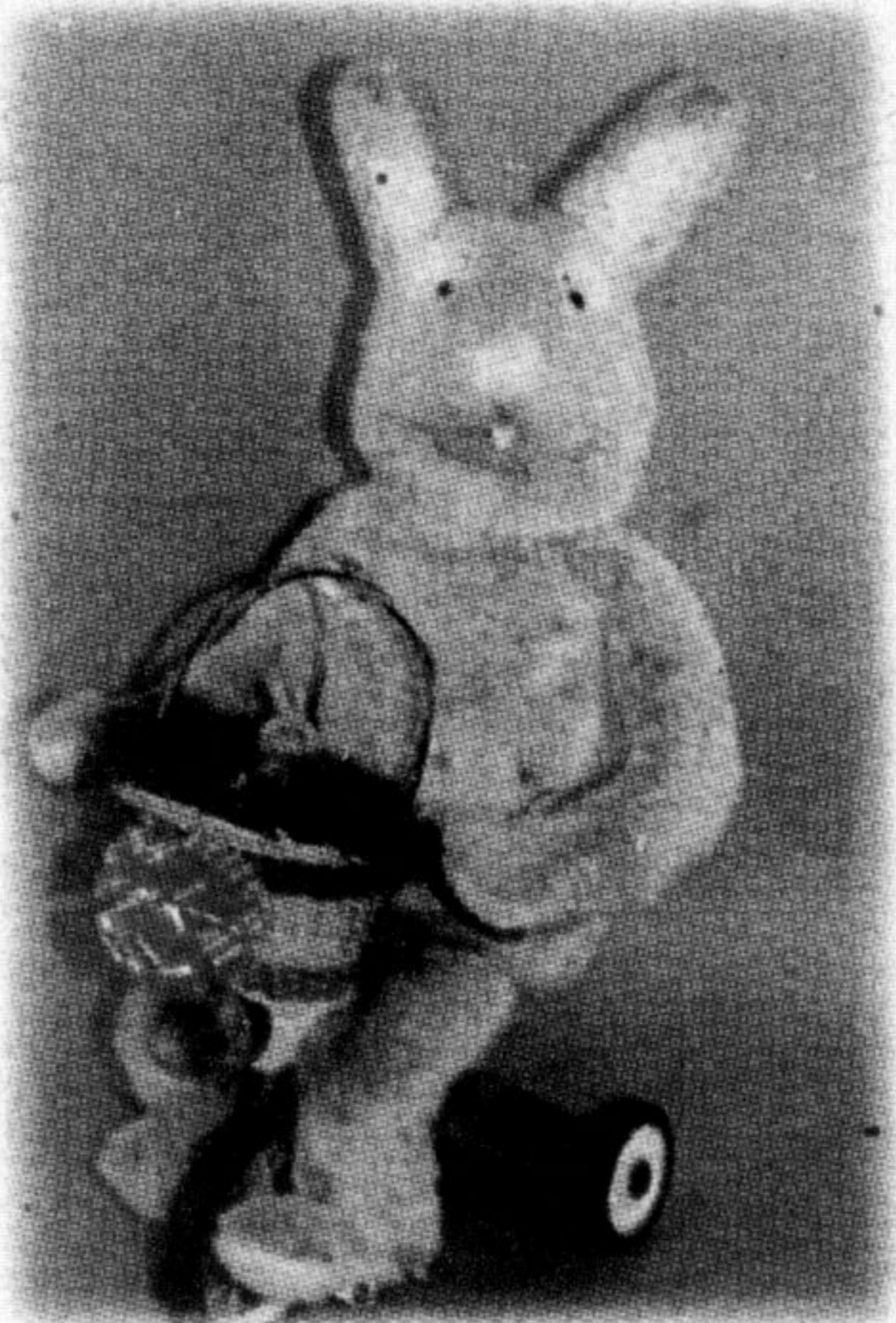
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Trails Master Plan Announcement

The Community Services Department is currently preparing a Trails Master Plan for the Town of Milton

WE WANT YOUR INPUT!!

YOU are cordially invited to attend a **Walk'N Talk and Ride the Routes** on Wednesday, April 26, 2000, from 6:30 - 10:00pm, to ask questions and provide input into the Trails Master Plan project.

At Lions Hall Memorial Arena, 77 Thompson Road. Contact Ken McAlpine, 878-7211, ext 160.

Bring your bicycle or walking shoes.

