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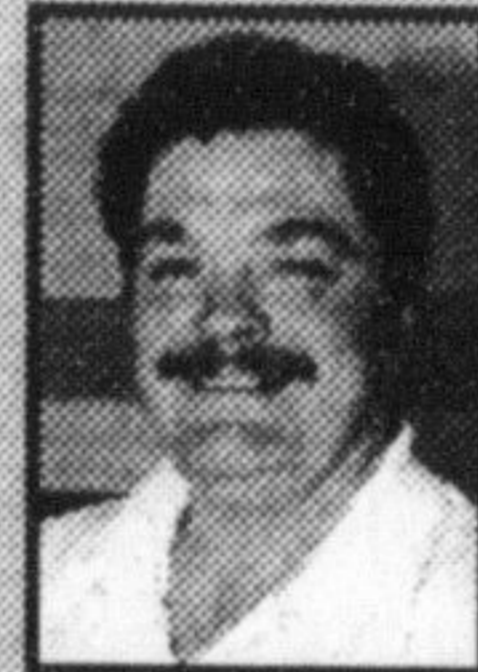
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# Garbage contract decision may be reversed at Region

By RICHARD VIVIAN  
*The Champion*

Reversing a previous decision, the Halton planning and public works committee is taking a combined approach to garbage disposal and recycling collection.

Committee members voted Wednesday to overturn a previous decision granting the Region's garbage disposal contract to Halton Recycling Limited (HRL) and the recycling contract to Canadian Waste Services (CWS) in favour of accepting a combined service bid from HRL.

Though a staff report recommended the previously-passed contracts, some committee members felt the financial benefits outweighed previous customer service complaints.

HRL's bid on the recycling contract came in \$375,822 cheaper than CWS's. And the combined service HRL contract came in \$478,592 cheaper than the previously-approved split contract.

"I think that's significant financial savings," Burlington councillor Mike Wallace said. "I can't ignore that."

Staff evaluations were based 75 per cent on cost and 25 per cent on performance.

In the last year, the Region received about 600 calls concerning HRL's current service (they've held the recycling contract for the last seven years).

HRL Ontario General Manager Bill Waddell told the committee that much of the customer calls resulted from either people putting their materials out late or mechanical problems due to the severe winter.

He also assured the committee that steps have been taken to improve those issues, including the hiring of a new maintenance manager, a 40 per cent back-up fleet for recycling, the purchase of trucks capable of hauling recycling or garbage, and the introduction of his position in March. Previously, company owner Emmie Leung managed both the Ontario and British Columbia operations.

"Our focus is to move forward and put all the resources in place to make sure we're ready, willing and able to not only meet the service objectives of the Region, but to exceed them," Mr. Waddell said.

### Repercussions added

The Region has also added some repercussions should service not be delivered as promised. If services aren't delivered by 5 p.m. the Region can invoke up to a \$1,000 penalty against the company, deducted from its invoice.

With those stipulations in place, Oakville councillor Allan Elgar said he supports the HRL bid. "I feel very comfortable with that."

But not everyone was in favour of giving HRL the combined contract. Regional Chair Joyce Savoline said she's concerned about the affect large contracts like this have on future competition in

the field.

"I think the residents of Halton will be much better served having the leverage with two companies. The number of companies now that exist to collect waste and recycling seem to be reducing. I think that the more people that we can have in the business, the better leverage we have, especially for customer service," she said.

Burlington Councillor Joan Lougheed said she wasn't in favour of the combined contract because the HRL bid received more review and discussion than the other bids.

"I believe that we need to have respect for the tender process and I believe that the other companies did not have the same advantage and same consideration in this second and third time review of this whole process. I'm not prepared to have disregard for that."

Regional council deferred addressing the issue at the July 4 meeting after it was made aware that HRL (based in Burlington) would have to cut 30 jobs if they didn't receive the recycling portion of the contract.

Regional council is expected to formally address the matter Wednesday.

CWS regional vice-president Garth Fowles told The Champion that his company plans to speak at the meeting in the hopes of reversing the committee's recent decision. "We're disappointed — no question about that. But it still has to go through full council, so we'll just wait and see what happens as we go forward."

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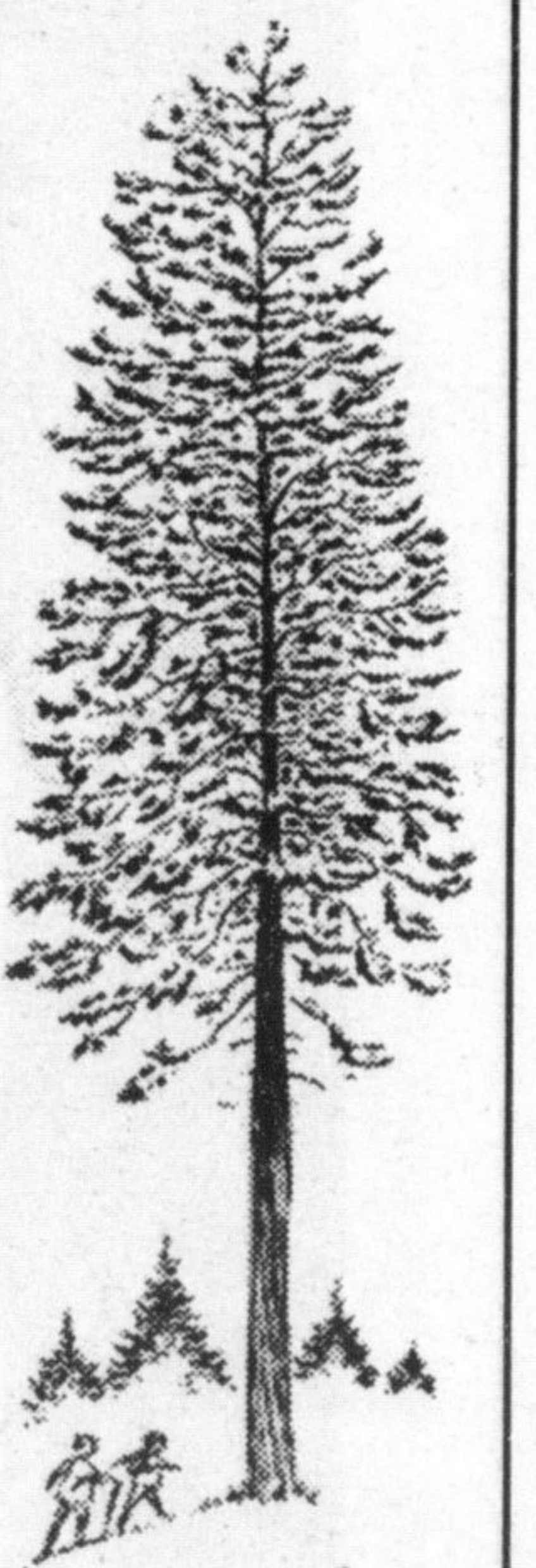
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