

# Councillors concerned about approving new fire service agreement with Guelph/Eramosa

By RICHARD VIVIAN  
The Champion

Plans to initiate a reciprocal fire service agreement with the Township of Guelph/Eramosa were halted — at least temporarily — after concerns were raised about their ability to provide the service.

"Until you can show me evidence that response times will be better I'm not ready to support this," Councillor Barry Lee said of a reciprocal agreement presented to the Milton community services committee last week.

"I'm really concerned that response times will not be any better. In fact, they could be a lot worse."

Milton Fire Chief Harold Penson presented the reciprocal service agreement as part of an effort to improve response times to the north end of town. Committee members deferred the agreement with Guelph/Eramosa until the Town council meeting Monday.

Other reciprocal agreements with the Town of Halton Hills and City of Mississauga were approved.

Time trials haven't been conducted with Guelph/Eramosa firefighters, but they're

physically closer than the Halton Hills firefighters who currently provide service to north Milton, Chief Penson said.

"We haven't had them (Guelph/Eramosa fire department) come into the area for years and the only way to monitor them is to actually do it (respond to an incident)," he told the committee. "But the only way to get them into the area is to have an agreement, because they can't come in without an agreement."

Both Halton Hills and Guelph/Eramosa fire departments consist of volunteer firefighters.

But Chief Penson's comments did little to relieve Mr. Lee's concerns.

"I don't want them going backwards and forwards. If they don't know the area, they'll get lost. It's taken years for Halton Hills to get to know the area and I'm not willing to part with that until we have some further evidence," he argued.

"I'm not prepared for my residents up there to be scapegoats to find out whether it (reciprocal agreement) works or not."

Prior to the issue being raised at town council, the committee instructed Chief Penson to meet with the Guelph/Eramosa fire chief to discuss routing to ensure appropriate geographic knowledge of north Milton.

## Couple ordered to stand trial

A Fourth Line couple charged with drug offences will stand trial.

Douglas Weil and Agnieska Wojyanowska were charged June 14 after Halton Regional Police seized 251 marijuana plants and hydroponic growing equipment from a Fourth Line home.

A preliminary hearing, held to see if there's sufficient evidence against the accused to go to trial, took place March 12 and April 8 in Ontario court (provincial division) in Milton.

Mr. Weil and Ms Wojyanowska are each charged with producing a controlled substance, possession of a controlled substance and possession of a controlled substance for the purpose of trafficking.

The couple will appear May 6 in Ontario court (superior division) to set a trial date.

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