

Town council's hands tied in hydro deposit issue

Mayor Krantz says he can only accept delegation

By RICHARD VIVIAN
The Champion

There's nothing town council can do to help local businesses fight Milton Hydro over demands for sizable security deposits, says Mayor Gord Krantz.

"I think we'd be on thin ground to do anything besides receive this delegation," the mayor said during a Milton Chamber of Commerce delegation to council Monday.

"I caution you (council) about getting into making any other resolutions because of the Corporations Act."

Under the Corporations Act, business operations are the responsibility of the board of directors and not shareholders.

The delegation appeared before council knowing council has no political pull on the issue — even though the Town is the sole shareholder of Milton Hydro, said Chamber President Dawn Case.

"Basically, what we were looking to do here tonight is to give council information to help you understand our position on this security deposit policy," she told council as she introduced three representatives from local businesses affected by the deposits.

All three businesses (MCL Heat Transfer,

Industrial Ceramics Ltd., SKD Company) said the amount of the security deposits will hamper plans to expand their Milton facilities.

"We have plans in place to expand the business and spend about \$13 million to increase employment by over 50 people," said Edward Cooray of SKD.

"Our owners are American and they have over 100 such companies throughout the world. I will not be able to fight for any future capital or increased employment in the town of Milton if this (deposits) is implemented. That isn't a threat, it's a promise."

Earlier this summer, Milton Hydro informed 220 of its largest commercial consumers they would be required to pay security deposits equal to 2.5 months usage at peak rates. In some cases,

those deposits reach more than \$160,000.

The deposits are intended to protect the local distribution company (LDC) against bad debts under the open electricity market.

With the opening of the electricity market in May, LDCs have been left to act as billing agents for power generators and retailers.

As the billing agent, Milton Hydro is responsible for paying generators and retailers for the power whether it can collect from customers or not.

The Ontario Energy Board, which governs the energy market, is currently reviewing its legislation relating to bad debt recovery at the request of both the Chamber and Milton Hydro, along with other LDCs across the province.

Two trains added to Go Transit line

Transportation services in Milton have been expanded, thanks to two additional trains on the GO Transit line.

As of today, a sixth train has been added to both the morning and evening services to and from Toronto.

The new morning train leaves Milton at 8 a.m., arriving at Union Station at 8:52 a.m. Several other morning train times have been adjusted to make this possible.

GO Transit services now leave the Milton station at 6:25 a.m., 6:50 a.m., 7:10 a.m., 7:25 a.m., 7:40 a.m. and 8 a.m.

The sixth train from Union Station to Milton departs from Toronto at 7 p.m., arriving at 7:52 p.m. This has been made possible by pushing the 6:20 p.m. train ahead to 6:10 p.m.

Other trains leaving Toronto en route to Milton depart at 4:30 p.m., 4:50 p.m., 5:10 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Due to early press deadlines in conjunction with the Labour Day weekend, see Steam-Era coverage in this Friday's Champion edition.

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