

Lack of leadership to blame for municipal tax increases

DEAR EDITOR:

In a recent letter, Marshall Horner suggested that this year's significant tax increase was a good idea and in fact we should have had tax increases of 4.5 per cent each year for the past five or six years.

But curiously, Horner then goes on to admit that even if these additional tax increases had taken place, there would be no guarantee that Miltonians would be enjoying more services by now.

I have noted that Horner was also present at December's committee hearings regarding the proposed 6.6 per cent tax increase, where he urged councillors to increase the staffing and spending on Milton's full-time fire service by 10 firefighters this year and an additional 10 in 2009.

Seriously, have we gotten to the point in our planning and

spending process where members of the public are now outlining specific personnel resource requirements for our Town departments? Where's the plan from the fire chief? Without a solid, thought-out plan and without accountability, it's all just tax and spend.

Let me also suggest if we had in fact experienced these tax increases for the past five years, very little would be different today.

A tax and spend approach is very different from a process whereby you first plan, then tax and then stick to the plan. It wasn't the lack of money that has led us to gridlock on Thompson Road, awaiting a mess to come on Derry Road and all of the other issues that are coming home to roost, it was the lack of planning and leadership.

As I suggested in a previous

letter, Miltonians are willing to pay for real value, but where was the five-year financial projections based on the growth, services and infrastructure needs? This growth didn't happen in the past few months; there has been plenty of time for real financial planning.

Milton has experienced sizable revenue increases and the new subdivisions are more than paying their fair share, and it's not like Milton has never built or expanded libraries before or planned services, so why is senior Town staff and council so surprised by the "sudden" service and infrastructure needs associated with this growth?

In the end the public is now expected to shut up and ante up with tax money to try to spend our way out of this mess.

**MIKE RANK
MILTON**

Ministry of Education doing students a disservice with its grading system

DEAR EDITOR:

This letter is in response to the Ministry of Education's policy to allow late assignments without penalty.

I'm a professor at a nearby college. I teach first year communications — English.

This semester I'm teaching students who failed the required fall semester communications course.

When asked why they are repeating the class, they overwhelmingly cite a lack of high school preparation. They say they were unprepared for mandatory and timely completion of work.

Many of these "repeat" students are perfectly capable of understanding the material and passing easily.

My teaching policy isn't to accept late assignments without prior discussion, i.e. late or missed assignments receive a mark of zero. I recognize that there are many factors that contribute to a student's ability to complete work on time, and I make accommodations for individual circumstances.

The Ministry of Education's decision seems to neglect an opportunity to teach key workplace and further training skills. From an employer's or

college professor's point of view, some skills are as essential for success as a student's ability to understand the material.

Self-management is a required component of not only workplace success, but further training success. Self-management includes the ability to work independently, manage time effectively, meet deadlines on time and both establish and achieve goals.

All of these phrases are routinely used in job advertisements, and required for college and university success.

The Ministry of Education is doing a disservice to students and this community by mandating that teachers allow late assignments without consequence.

It not only creates an environment that penalizes students who are dedicated to their education and get their work done on time — whether well or not — but also perpetuates a system of mediocrity that results in young men and women who are unsuccessful in college, university, the workplace and their communities.

**AMELIA STEINBRING
CAMPBELLVILLE**

Town officials consider drilling for water on the escarpment

'Time Capsules' are gems of information extracted from past issues of the Champion and other publications in order to provide a window into Milton's past. Explanatory comment is sometimes provided to place the situation in context.

April 1911

There is talk of drilling for water on the mountain. If enough water can be got that way so much the better. The expense will not be heavy. If drilling does not succeed, the water and plenty of it, must be got anyway. It can be got in the Campbellville direction and conveyed beside the line of the C.P.R. to Milton without any great engineering difficulties. A second reservoir on the same level as that we have will be necessary. The Campbellville scheme would be the more expensive, but the advantages would be great — no more water famine and no more of the trouble there must be and has been in cleaning a single reservoir.

...

John S. Povah left on Monday morning for his home at Vancouver, B.C. after spending the winter at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Hugh Campbell. He lived in Milton in the '60s and found few of his old friends alive. He found Milton greatly improved since he had seen it in its early days. He has lived in the west for a number of years, spending 18 of them in Vancouver. Mr. Povah is in his 87th year, but remarkably well preserved and active.

...

There are few, if any, vacant houses in Milton now and the coming of two new industries each employing not less than 50 hands which is confidently expected, will mean an immediate demand for a large number of suitable dwellings.

...

The Eastman Motor Co. has bought the Willmott buildings, paying \$4,000 and assuming the mortgage and has asked contractors for estimates for the work of completing them according to the original plans. It seems to be practically settled that this important industry will come to Milton within a short time. A

**Milton
Time
Capsules**



removal to larger buildings than those it now occupies is imperative. Its present payroll is \$800 a week. When it has room for the many additional hands it will be greatly increased. The company may ask the town for certain privileges, but no particulars have been received so far.

...

The county council has given instructions for the drafting of a bylaw for the issue of debentures for \$90,000, the unexpended balance of the sum authorized by the government to be spent on good roads in Halton. Payment will be distributed over 20 years, but the money, when received, can be spent as soon as convenient. This will be an improvement on the plan followed since the good roads bylaw was passed in 1907, which was awkward, as it necessitated frequent overdrafts, and slow, though the annual taxation was much heavier than it will be under the debenture bylaw. The decision to issue debentures shows the increased popularity of the good roads movement in Halton.

...

As expected, bylaw no. 441 to guarantee the bonds of Williams & Son Limited, to the amount of \$12,000, was carried last Monday by a handsome majority — 230-4. There had been practically no opposition and the candid explanations given by Mr. Williams at last Friday evening's mass meeting reassured some citizens who had been doubtful. It is understood that as soon as the Williams Company can get possession of the Winn building the work of removing their plant from Brampton will begin.

This material is assembled on behalf of the Milton Historical Society by Jim Dills, who can be reached through the society at (905) 875-4156.

PREPARE FOR THE ROAD AHEAD.

Next Course:

March 11, 12, 13, 14 Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri (March Break) 9:30am - 4:15pm
April 12, 13, 19, 20 2 Weekends 9:30am to 4:15pm

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