

Halton seeks handouts to help solve deficit

By Steve Arnold
Provincial assistance will be sought by regional officials trying to cover a projected deficit at Halton Centennial Manor.

Regional council last week approved a social services committee recommendation requesting provincial assistance to cover the \$218,000 shortfall.

At both the committee and council levels Halton chief administrative officer Dennis Perlin said the Manor deficit was not the fault of regional staff.

The problem was caused, he said, by higher than expected vacancies in the residential care section of the regionally operated home for the aged.

"This is a problem that many homes for the

aged of this type are facing," Mr. Perlin told councillors.

Mr. Perlin explained that the Manor provides both residential care for senior citizens and extended care for those with failing health who do not yet require hospital care.

The Manor's budget was based on having 80 per cent of the beds in the residential section

occupied. Currently, he added, that section is only 50 per cent full.

"This should have been caught before the budget was approved and I have to take responsibility for it as the staff person involved," he said.

Mr. Perlin added that in some ways "we may be the authors of our misfortune in this one area," explaining that

programs aimed at keeping senior citizens in their own homes longer have cut the demand for residential services at the Manor.

Mr. Perlin mentioned service such as the Oakville Senior Citizens Residence on Lakeshore Rd., the Meals on Wheels program and improved pensions "which all take away from the number of people

needing dormitory care."

Coun. Terry Mannell (Oakville) said future problems of this sort could be avoided if the region had a better system of financial reporting so that such trends could be detected earlier.

"We should be better able to predict these situations because we have to be able to

respond to these changes," he said.

Halton already has the planning and administration staff to predict such social changes and to prepare for them, he said adding, "we have the staff to put all these things together and to respond to them quickly."

Coun. Walter Mulkevic (Burlington)

said regional staff have been aware of the trend in residential care for the last two years and that proposed changes at Pettit House are one of the responses being made to the change.

"The situation has accelerated in the last few months so we really aren't responsible," he said.

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Sewer maintenance cut to cover deficit

By Steve Arnold
Budget cuts and aggressive bill collecting are the tools with which Halton officials hope to cover an un-

expected \$280,000 deficit in the regional sewer system budget.

much water was used throughout the region as was expected.

of the current problems. "We're into this because of the way we budgetted," commented

wanted an argument... that we went into the sewer surcharge system prematurely,

budget cuts recommended, about \$217,000 worth, would be chief in the area of preventative maintenance.

Region Appeal continues

Halton Region will continue an appeal against a land severance that would give Milton's Golden Horseshoe Youth Centre a permanent home.

Councillors agreed recently to continue their appeal against the land division committee decision which approved the severance.

In a report to members of the planning and public works committee, Planning Director Rash Mohammed said the severance, which would separate a 2.2 acre lot from the 4.8 acre original parcel, was against the provisions of the region's official plan.

Mr. Mohammed noted that the lot is within the rural part of Milton and that the part to be retained is for residential use.

The official plan, he noted, supports non-farm residential uses only within recognized hamlets, rural clusters and plans of subdivision.

The youth centre has been using a building on the Tremaine Rd. property of Lawrence Scotland for the last 19 years.

Contract worry

A clause in the agreement approved by regional council last week that Halton family counselling agencies will be asked to sign is causing some concern for the agencies.

The agreement, under which the agencies will provide family counselling services to clients referred by the region, contains a clause allowing regional officials "observe and evaluate" and to "inspect all records" relating to the services provided.

When the agreement was presented recently to members of the region's health and social services committee Councillor Dave LaCombe (Burlington) questioned the clause, wondering if it violated the rule of confidentiality between counsellor and client.

Rennie Vivian, acting director of the social services department, admitted there have been some concerns raised about the clause.

Mr. Vivian added that his staff will try to monitor the services provided by the agencies through evaluation forms to be filled out by clients.

"We do have some work to do in that area," he told committee members.

Councillors last week agreed to a package of recommendations from the planning and public works and administration and finance committees designed to solve the problem.

This, officials have explained, resulted in a drastic decrease in revenue for the sewer system.

Coun. Joan Little (Burlington). "We should go back to the tax levy or to some better system than this."

Mr. Mulkevic also questioned the wisdom of proposed budget cuts to balance out the deficit.

"The problem is really chairman of the planning and public works committee, said the

The sewer system problem resulted from unusually heavy rainfall during August and September of this year which meant not as

charge on homeowners, based on a percentage of the water they use during a month.

Opponents of the surcharge system are quick to attack it as the cause

of the current problems. "We're into this because of the way we budgetted," commented

Mr. Johnson, chairman of the planning and public works committee, said the

Cost of selling Halton may double

Halton's budget for business development could more than double over the next two years, regional councillors decided last week.

"This whole program is really quite rich for a region that already has good development and good employment," he said.

Regional chairman Jack Raftis, defending the proposal, said industrial development in the region was especially important if plans for local employment are to be met.

Other councillors, such as Terry Mannell (Oakville), Walter Mulkevic (Burlington) and Milton Mayor Gord Krantz took up the cry for a regional department as well.

"The real emphasis here is to develop jobs for the future and that is best done by a department that looks at the entire region," Mr. Mulkevic said.

Councillors gave their support to a proposal from business development director Matt Fischer which could increase the budget of his department from \$181,065 to \$406,267 by 1983.

"We have people who want to work close to where they live and we have to create jobs for them," he said.

While expressing their support for the principle of business development across the region, councillors reserved the right to comment individually on the various proposals when the 1982 budget is presented.

As well as adding two more people to the department, Mr. Fischer's proposal would allow for increased advertising, the regular release of a business newsletter and the production of audio visual aids to sell the region.

Burlington Mayor Roly Bird, who believes that industrial development should be left entirely to the local level, argued against such a large expansion to the region's department.

"I'm really amazed how we could flip flop from a couple of years ago when we had such austerity measures and were concerned about any increase in our staff to now when we're talking about more than doubling a department," he said.

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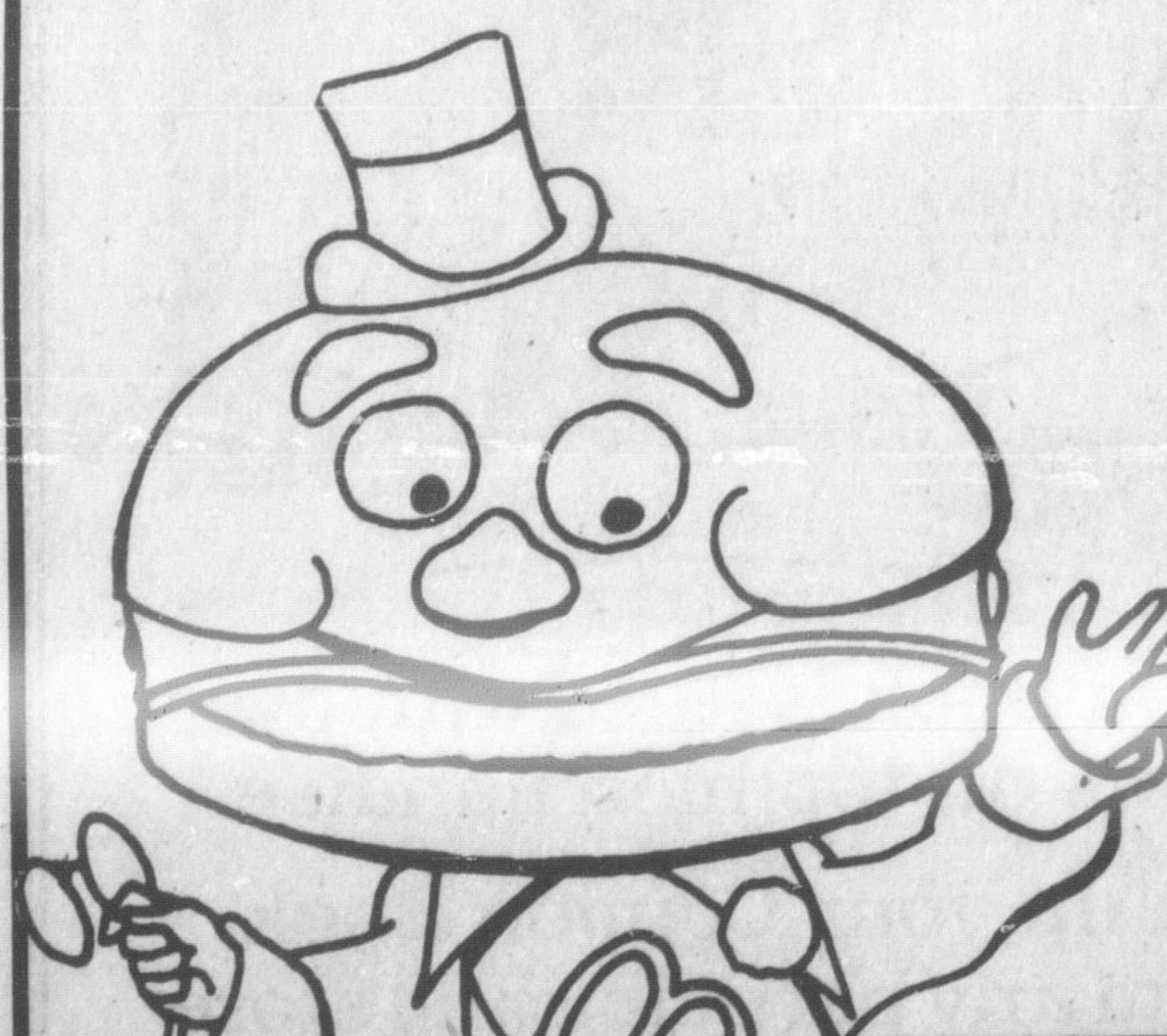
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