

Parents Protest Increases

Day Care Centres Have Reached "Saw-Off" Public Support - Rowe

A "saw-off" has been reached in the amount of "traffic" the public can bear in the way of supporting day care centres in region, York Regional Councillor Gordon Rowe of Richmond Hill, told a meeting of council last week.

Mr. Rowe, who said he'd always been an advocate of the centres, made his comments following a delegation of parents from the area, who, although lauding the centres, especially the Richmond Hill one, decried the increase in rates, recently approved by the region.

Under the new fare structure, care for a single child will cost \$25 a week, two will cost \$45 and a family of three will pay \$62.

The delegation, three women and one man, also objected to the policy of the centres, whereby parents withdrawing their children during vacation periods, had to continue to pay the regular fee to hold their places in the centre.

However, following a motion by Richmond Hill Councillor Lois Hancey near the end of the discussion, council agreed to reconsider its policy in this area.

OBJECTING FOR OTHERS
Despite their objections to the increases, three of the four parents, said they were objecting on behalf of those who couldn't afford the hike.

Dave Baker, of Aurora, who said his wife had been advised by their doctor to go back to work following a death in the family, said he felt the payment should be based on a family's income. He said he didn't want to be a burden on the taxpayer and would pay what was involved.

He described the day care facilities as "fantastic" and said he had seen a "tremendous change" in his child since enrolling him.

He said he felt people who couldn't pay should be subsidized.

Said Councillor Rowe: "I was always under the impression people in welfare get this charge borne as a welfare cost. Nobody is deprived if the need is demon-

strated." Councillor Hancey said that Baker had been speaking about what is "commonly known as the working poor."

NOT FAIR

Barbara Fleming, 58A Richmond Street, Richmond Hill, said she didn't think it was fair that parents should have to keep on paying when children were on holidays.

"Are you asking that their places be kept vacant until September?" asked Mayor Evelyn Buck of Aurora. "Are you aware there's a waiting list?"

Mrs. Fleming said that the centres never operated with less than full capacity. When asked by Mrs. Buck what she felt about paying when children were off sick, Mrs. Fleming said each case should be considered on an individual basis.

Mrs. Fleming said she also felt parents weren't kept well enough informed about the policies of the centres.

Dr. Owen Slingerland, commissioner of health and social services, said he thought the supervisors did keep the parents informed. However, they couldn't spoon feed everyone in the region.

Why couldn't parents ask themselves he said.

Mayor Robert Forhan of Newmarket agreed. If not informed, parents could always inquire on their own.

He said, too, he was under the impression the region paid subsidy to those who needed it.

Marilyn Rumble of RR 2, Gormley, said she felt parents should have been informed about discussions going on about the increases. "It means a large portion of my salary will go to pay for this increase," she said. "What about the people who don't qualify for subsidy?"

Dr. Slingerland said he couldn't accept the statement that a person on low income couldn't afford the increase. If they couldn't, they would be subsidized.

ORIGINALLY \$18
He said there had been increases in subsidies, but no increase in day care rates since 1969. However, he later admitted to being in error on this when Mayor Buck pointed out the original rates had been \$18 and then had gone up to \$20.

Mrs. Rumble said she wasn't at the meeting to get a subsidy for herself. "Then you should be paying \$28," said Dr. Slingerland. "When you apply it doesn't matter what you're making, if you can prove your indebtedness is greater, then you can be subsidized."

He said, too, that with the amount of newspaper coverage given day care centres, and other means, he couldn't understand how people could say they hadn't been communicated with on the

centres.

Mayor William Lazenby of Richmond Hill, chairman of the health and social services, said the increases weren't connected with the cost of living, but with the fact that all costs were going up. He said council had tried to set a fee that would more closely approximate the cost per child. If left at \$20, every child would have to be subsidized.

When the needs were so great, the facilities should be expanded, said Mrs. Rumble.

METRO COULD HELP
Mayor Lazenby agreed. "Do you have a plot of land you want to give us?" he asked.

He said also he didn't see why Metro couldn't purchase services from the region for people such as Mabel McGeachie of Don Mills, who said the increase represented a 40 per cent hike for her, as she lived outside the region and didn't qualify for subsidy.

She said she would hate to withdraw her child from Richmond Hill. "I can't tell you how happy I am with the centre," said Mrs. McGeachie, who works in Richmond Hill.

Mr. Rowe said the fees could also be used as income tax reductions.

Mrs. McGeachie said she paid out \$2,400 a year for day care and was allowed to deduct \$1,000.

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Thornhill Secondary, King Senior Public Win At Chess

Teams from Thornhill Secondary School and King Senior Public School were the winners in the York County School Chess Tournament. The competition was held at Huron Heights Secondary in Newmarket February 8, 9 and 10 under direction of Teacher Fred Tierney of St. Joseph's Roman Catholic School, Aurora. There were two divisions, secondary and elementary.

Teams from secondary schools were invited to participate in a Swiss tournament. The organizers were disappointed but not surprised at the poor response from the secondary schools.

Seven out of 15 of the schools in the region sent teams. They were Thornhill, Dr. G. W. Williams in Aurora, Markham, Stouffville, Sutton, Huron Heights and Newmarket.

TEACHERS LACKING
A spokesman for the organizers attributed this poor response to the fact the majority of secondary school teachers have not been in the classrooms since January 31. Teacher involvement is necessary for activities such as chess clubs which function within the schools.

Thornhill Secondary dominated the division with Jonathan Shaeffer and Peter Hess winning all their games. Michael Muttart and Kamran Mehra were other members of the winning team which scored 20 points out of a possible 24.

Williams and Markham schools tied for second place with 13½ points each. Stouffville was third with 10 points.

ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Sixty-four elementary schools entered teams and there were play-offs in each of the four school areas. The top three teams from these areas went on to the county tournament.

King Senior's Bill Cole and Lorne Newton placed first and second on an individual basis. Shawn Corrigan and Stephen Trivett were the other members of the team which scored 16½ points. They were closely followed by St. Joseph's of Aurora with 16 points. James Robinson Public, Markham, came third with 14 points.

"LIBERAL" CARRIERS
Although their school has no chess club, two grade 7 students from Roselawn Senior School were trophy winners in the recent York County School Chess Tournament.

Both carriers for "The Liberal", Philip Mansfield, 126 Westwood Lane in Richvale, and Stephen Cage, 28 Brightway Crescent, entered the tournament as individuals. In the area preliminary games they were adjudged good enough to enter the county finals.

In the first round they tied for third place with five points out of a possible six, just behind Bill Cole and Lorne Newton of King Senior. It took three tie-breakers to put Stephen slightly ahead, but both received trophies. Stephen also won a trophy in the area competition.

Questioned about their expertise, Philip explained, "We play together quite often. We are in the same class at school."

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