

York education finance committee peeks at 7.5% budget increase

The finance committee of the York Board of Education took a first peek at its preliminary 1979 budget last Wednesday and staring back from the table was a 7.5 per cent increase over last year's approved expenditures or a total of \$86.1 million.

While only initial questions and comments were fielded by board staff last week, the committee is planning as many special sittings as necessary to get the budget down to an "acceptable" level before the March 31 deadline. Committee Chairman Don Cameron has asked for an hour's time at the board's next regular meeting (February 26) to help all trustees, especially the eight new ones, understand budgetary implications

and how different levels of funding through grants and assessment affect the quality and range of programs and services the board will be able to offer.

"I think it would be in our best interest to allow all the other standing committees (program, planning and building, staff relations) the opportunity of participating in making the necessary decisions concerning the budget and then bring them to the board as recommendations," said Mr. Cameron.

No suggestions were made to make actual cuts in the first draft but there was discussion on priority maintenance items and the impact of total dollar figures on the average mill rate across York. Trustees present were Bill Laird, Georgina, David Crombie, Markham, Dorothy

Zajac, King, and Norm Weller, Aurora. Director Sam Chapman and Business Administrator Jack Webber made the presentation.

One uncontrollable aspect trustees are faced with is the fact salaries comprise 76.2 per cent of the total expenditure figure. They were told by staff the contract negotiated with the elementary teachers and the eventual agreement reached with secondary teachers will put the board \$5 million over funds it had originally budgeted for teaching salaries. Those salaries already represent a 6.3 per cent increase in spending over last year on their own, so residents of York Region will not see spending on education stay below that mark this year.

To make things worse, the provincial grant

levels, though all the final figures have not been announced, will decrease about 1.5 per cent to a rate of 4.4 per cent, compared with last year. Mr. Chapman felt it was important that trustees explain to ratepayers towns like Markham are not "footing the bill" for more sparsely populated towns like King because they get more assessment dollars. The government is still working with an equalized assessment system and the municipalities all levy an equalized mill rate — a concept that can keep taxes down if both the town and the school board spend within their means.

"If you're spending under the ministry's grant ceiling, then there is a saving to the province and the taxpayers," said Mr. Chapman. "Your grants will eventually go

down and so do the taxes — but if you spend over that ceiling, it's the ' taxpayer who pays the shot."

At this point in the budget, the board is \$155,800 under the elementary level ceiling but nearly \$2.1 million over the secondary level ceiling. It was mentioned during the meeting that all York residents contribute taxes that pay for secondary education whereas assessment for elementary schools is gathered from different parts of the municipality.

In answering the question whether the first draft realistically reflects what the board will be spending this year, Mr. Chapman summarized the meeting: "Using the instructions requested by the finance committee as a guideline, as appears in our supplementary notes, adjustments to

preliminary figures should be minor," he said. "There are about a half-dozen areas where cutting is possible an example of which is the \$100,000 we've allocated for improvement of shops (wood, metal)."

There are areas slated to get no additional funding this year: a) additional French instruction, since the number of French teachers allocated has already been set by contract; b) proposed repairs and extraordinary maintenance items for Thornhill Secondary (so far not in budget); and another possible new program foreseen coming this year, the Early Identification program (special education) which the province could make mandatory. In that case, teachers or personnel would have to be hired.



Suzanne Cross, 9, of Avenue Road, and Danica Deaust, 9, of Yongehurst, were two of the 35

Richvale Lions Majorettes who spent the weekend twirling at the YMCA.

They twirled all weekend

Thirty-five Richvale Lions majorettes spent the weekend twirling batons.

That's not unusual for these girls... that's what they do best, but this was a special weekend held at the 'Y'.

Sylvia Kernohan, the majorettes head instructor in baton, was their hostess.

She is interested in baton twirling to the extent that she passes her love of the sport on to her students and she makes what is really hard work... fun.

Special teachers were on hand to work with the girls and to teach them some new routines.

The girls were honored to

have as one of their teachers... Andrea Widdall, the 1978 Senior Miss Majorette of Ontario.

Just watching her work gave many a young lady a glimpse of what could lie ahead in the future, after a lot of hard work, of course.

Miss Widdall taught the girls the 'Dance Twirl' to the music of the recrod "YMCA" (what else?).

The Richvale girls were so excited about this weekend two of them celebrated birthdays at the 'Y'.

Anne Kim celebrated her 10th birthday and Nicole Costigan was 8.

Competitor angry

National Transit gets advertising contract

Although the town was accused of being unethical and unjust, this time it did not reverse a staff recommendation. Advertising on the town's buses is being considered for added revenue, and late last year "proposals", "submissions" or "tenders" were requested, from companies known to have expertise in that par-

ticular field. The town engineering committee recommended to council Monday, the offer of a company called National Transit Cards which will give \$3,000 more revenue to the town than its closest competitor.

National Transit Cards offered to solicit and install advertising to be put both inside and outside the town's buses to

the town's specifications and in accordance with regulations and standards set by the Canadian Advertising Council, for \$6,200 over a two-year period.

The closest bid came from a company called Mack Dort Productions Limited which offered \$1,600 per year for a similar service.

Mack Dort and his solicitor attended the regular council meeting Monday to protest the decision of the committee as well as the procedure of the town in asking for bids.

At the meeting Mayor Dave Schiller advised Mr. Dort that when the town decided to sell advertising on the buses it asked the Ministry of Transportation and Communications (MTC) how to go about it. MTC gave the town the

names of three companies who would send in "submissions" or "proposals" for this service, said the mayor, but these were not "tenders".

The offers were discussed in committee and council and a formal tender was asked for.

President of National Transit Cards, Frank Brouwer, was present at the town meetings but Mack Dort was not.

DYNES DANCE

The Oak Ridges Dynes will play a Saturday night game February 24 at Bond Lake Arena. The game begins at 8 p.m. and after the game, there will be a dance.

Everyone is invited to join the players and coaches in the Lions Den for the dance.

Mr. Dort said by not being present and not being informed his competitor was present he was at a disadvantage when tendering.

The tenders received by the town were the same as the original "submissions" or "proposals" received.

"This was our first venture in this sort of thing," said Councillor Gord Rowe, "and we went for the biggest buck."

"It was unethical to tell my competitor what I'm paying," said Mr. Dort.

Mr. Dort asked the council to have the three competitors "start at square one" and re-tender for the exclusive rights to placing advertising on the buses.

The company owner

was supported by Councillor Mike Burnie who said he felt Mr. Dort was "unjustly used" and that council "was wrong in what they did" using "improper procedure".

Councillor Burnie made a motion to have tenders recalled and all those who wish to bid on advertising on town buses supply a tender.

Some of the councillors said they were amazed at the fierce competition in the field and felt Richmond Hill could not help but win by allowing the re-tendering, — but felt that was "highly improper".

National Transit Cards were awarded the contract to place advertising on the town's transit buses by council decision.



Not quite a day old and pleased to see momma, John Paganos has his first picture taken at York Central Hospital where he arrived at 9 p.m. February 18. John is held lovingly by his mother, Olga of Sussex Avenue, Richmond Hill.

Look who's arrived

Last week was fairly quiet in the baby department at York Central Hospital in Richmond Hill.

Four baby boys and one little girl greeted the world during the week, only one on Valentine's Day.

Sunday, February 11

Jeanette and Basil Coyle, Richmond Hill, a son at 4:33 p.m.

Tuesday, February 13

Jacqueline and Real Tremblay, Willowdale, a son at 7:20 a.m.

Julie Anne and Rick Wood, Aurora, a son at 9:16 p.m.

Wednesday, February 14

Beverley and Nevis Battiston, Willowdale, a daughter at 9:11 p.m.

Thursday, February 15

Terry and Michael Tisdelle, Newmarket, a son at 11:27 a.m.

Sunday, February 18

Olga and Peter Paganof, Richmond Hill, a son at 9:27 p.m.

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BABY BONUS WINNER!

The January winner of the S.S. Kresge Co. "Double Your Baby Bonus Draw" was Mrs. Elsie M. Vass, 387 Crosby Ave., Richmond Hill, 884-5613. The amount won was \$40.00.

Any mother could be a winner in the February draw, simply by cashing her family allowance cheque at Kresge's, Richmond Heights Shopping Centre, Richmond Hill and filling out the coupon provided.

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