

Region workers near strike

The Region of York's outside workers are closer to a strike now than at any time in their history. Conciliation talks with Local 1953 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees produced a "no board" report. The union can go on strike 16 days after the report is received in the mail. Jack Rettie, the Region's chief administrator, told council

Thursday he is expecting the report any day. He said the union is seeking a 15 per cent wage increase in a one-year pact, retroactive to Jan. 1, 1979. The Region has offered 6.8 per cent, including fringe benefits, in each year of a two-year contract. Mr. Rettie estimated the fringe benefits demanded by the union

would be worth an additional 3.8 per cent. They include a dental plan and an improvement in pension benefits that alone would cost 0.4 per cent per year in each of the next 15 years. This year, the total cost of meeting the demands would be \$684,000. The local represents 280 em-

ployees including plumbing inspectors, planners, day care workers, welfare officers, roads, water and sewer employees. Mr. Rettie said the administration has set up a contingency plan for maintaining essential services such as water and sewers in the event of a strike. He added that he is qualified to repair traffic lights himself if he has to.

He is expecting the Region and the union local to be invited to mediation talks, "which are a formal kind of conciliation," Mr. Rettie said. The Region never has had to go to mediation before. This is also the first time the union negotiation positions have been made public before a settlement. Regional Chairman Bob Forhan said he is responsible for that decision. He said he felt the public has a right to know what the issues are. Mr. Rettie was instructed to answer questions from the press after Thursday's meeting and he did so with the help of Personnel Co-ordinator Bob Scullion. "I am just presenting the

facts," said the administrator. "I am not going to editorialize." So far as he knows, no strike vote had been taken yet. The employees had "always been a good group to work with and the relationship still is friendly," Mr. Rettie said. The outcome of mediation with Local 1953 will likely have a bearing on negotiations with two other CUPE locals, one representing York Manor employees and the other health unit employees.

These locals have settled all issues except wages, said Mr. Rettie, but the York Manor local is asking for conciliation. Mr. Rettie said the Region has traditionally tried for parity in wage increases among the three locals. Local president Jack Kirkby refused comment on the negotiations, referring reporters instead to Helen Brown of the CUPE regional office. He said Ms Brown would issue a news release yesterday, but she was not in her office yesterday morning.



Not quite the Liberty Bell, but Richmond Hill's own Town Bell, was moved from its location in front of the Wright Street Fire Hall to a new home in front of the new fire hall on Major Mackenzie Drive last Wednesday. Richmond Hill

firefighter, Terry Parker watched closely to see if the cable would hold the bell. It did and the bell was on its way. The bell has been part of life in Richmond Hill for many years. (Liberal Photo by Millie Stewart).

Community Pulse

Can you swim?

Canada Employment Centre for Students in Richmond Hill is in desperate need of students to fill lifeguard positions at apartment and condominium swimming pools in the area.

Supervisor for the centre, Monica Janach, said there are about 20 positions open to those with Red Cross Bronze Medallion Swimming Awards.

To date 1,290 students have registered at the employment centre and 420 have been placed in full time or short term jobs.

There is a scarcity of students willing to do waitress-type jobs, said Monica, and she often receives calls from employers looking for this type of help.

How to reach Gamble

Attention constituents of York North — John Gamble, federal Member of Parliament for this riding, has a new address and telephone number.

Last week Mr. Gamble set up a constituency office at 3 Glen Cameron Road in Thornhill, postal code L3T 1N8, telephone 881-3546.

But, if you have a problem there is no use calling this week. Mr. Gamble is on holidays until Monday, July 9.

Meeting cancelled

Town of Richmond Hill Engineering Committee meeting scheduled for tomorrow, July 5 at 8 a.m. has been cancelled due to holidays of Commissioner of Works Bernie Toporowski.

No date has been set for the next meeting.

Cops settle

A first-class constable's salary will top the \$21,000 mark under a new contract expected to be signed today by the York Regional Police Commission and the police association.

The total increase of 6.7 per cent will be awarded in three stages over the year. Under the old contract, a first-class constable was paid \$19,791.

Only 72 of the force's 300 members turned out to vote on the police commission offer last month, and only six voted against it.

Both sides are expected to sign the new agreement following today's police commission meeting.

Fire destroys big trailer

Fire destroyed a 45-foot trailer and its contents of fibremulch, Monday, as it was being loaded onto a railway car at the railroad station in Richmond Hill.

The trailer was loaded with fibremulch at Fibre Therm Corporation, Richmond Hill.

Richmond Hill firefighters were on the scene for two and one-half hours fighting the blaze.

No cause has been found for the fire and as yet, there is no estimate of the damages.

Fire Department officials are still investigating the blaze.

Strike ends Stran-Steel back in action

Workers at Stran-Steel Building Systems on Industrial Road will report back to work this morning after their ten-week strike. Teamsters Union representative, Keith Coutlee, said members of local 847 voted to accept the company's offer last Thursday and return to work.

An increase of 22 per

cent in wages and benefits was won by the strike, said Mr. Coutlee.

Stran-Steel is a division of Westeel-Rosco Limited and workers had asked management for equal pay and benefits with steel workers in the mother plant in Rexdale.

"They're pretty close now," said Mr. Coutlee, "I think it's a fair contract."

Barrow on hotseat over severance

Regular Ward meetings have been re-instated in Richmond Hill and last week Councillor for Ward 4, Dave Barrow took the "hot seat" facing ten constituents worried about their rights.

The Ward 4 residents were concerned over councillor Barrow's recent vote for a land severance on Rumble Avenue.

Applications had been made to sever this property for seven years, each time being refused by council. Committee of Adjustment or the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB). That is up until June 4 this year when it was

passed with a five to four vote in council.

Brian Bullock of 288 Emerald Isle Court, (the street the property in question backs onto), asked Councillor Barrow why he voted for the severance despite the wishes of 25 out of 29 immediate neighboring properties.

Councillor Barrow replied, in his opinion, the request was a minor variance only, the split would be the best use the land could be put to, and the history of the application seemed to be staff's only reason for refusal.

When asked if he would support

other severances in the ward, Councillor Barrow replied, "I wouldn't object to smaller lots — I think it's the answer to affordable housing."

"Do you think your opinion overrules the opinion of the people in the area, the planning staff, the planning committee and the OMB members," challenged Mr. Bullock. "You are representing Ward 4 — not just yourself, Mr. Barrow."

Councillor Barrow explained to residents he had inspected the property personally before making his decision, but William

Morrison of 295 Emerald Isle Court asked him why he didn't visit any of the neighbors during his inspection to ask their opinion.

Mr. Morrison stressed the fact he felt the apathy shown by residents of the area at the Ward meeting (only 10 residents showed up) was an expression of the frustration felt with members of council.

"It doesn't matter what we say, council will do what they want anyway," he said.

In an interview after the meeting Councillor Barrow said residents in the immediate area are against the severance but other constituents in Ward 4 do not object — in fact "don't care". "I did what I thought was best for all concerned," he said.

Councillor John Birchall, one of the six council members present at the ward meeting, said he felt council had made a wrong decision by allowing the severance — they had not represented the wishes of the people in the ward.

"It boils down to a split in council," he said, referring to the five-four decision. He said he feared the re-application of other residents, throughout the town, who had been turned down in the past.

Keith Morrison, a former Richmond Hill resident considering moving into Ward 4, summed up the feeling of those present when he said, "I think we're beating a dead horse — residents can show their decision next election."

Day Care Centre wins a 30-day stay of execution

Hope shines bright on the horizon for parents using the Seneca King Day Care centre facilities cancelled by a decision announced June 1 and reinstated last Thursday for at least 30 days.

June 1, Seneca College announced the day care centres at the King and Finch campuses would be closed July 31, 1979 due to a need for space and the financial deficit incurred.

Parents from 25 families using the King campus centre protested that two months was not adequate notice to find alternative day care.

Staff and students enrolled in the Early Childhood Education program at Seneca College objected on grounds the loss of the day care centre used as a laboratory school would undermine their program.

Hundreds of residents signed petitions asking the decision be reconsidered, said John Roth, chairman of the Seneca King Day Care Association and the councils of King, Richmond Hill, Aurora and Newmarket all expressed their concern.

A brief presented to the Board of Governors of Seneca College stated, "We believe that the full effects on the community, on parents with children in the centre, and especially on Seneca King's Early Childhood Education Program and the students enrolled in it, were not fully appreciated."

Mr. Roth said members of the Board of Governors approached last Thursday were "very sympathetic and concerned" both for the day care program as well as the Early Childhood

Education course.

The board passed a motion revoking the earlier decision to close the centre and set up a committee comprised of two parents, two governors, two members of the Early Childhood Education program and two representatives from administration of Seneca College.

This committee is charged with presenting an "equitable" solution to the problem which will meet with the approval of all

Seniors' apartment approved for Maple

Vaughan councillors last week unanimously recommended the building of a senior citizen apartment building in Maple.

A non-profit corporation will be formed to construct and operate the 30-unit building on town property next to the municipal offices.

Construction could start before the end of the year, Chris Sheldon, a representative of the ministry of housing said to the applause of about 60 senior citizens who turned out for the meeting.

Several of the senior citizens pointed out that there had been promises of such a building for years.

The \$850,000 structure will be built under a new provincial program which came into effect on April 1 this year. Town staff is recommending that six of the

units be subsidized.

Mayor Garnet Williams said that previous projects had never got off the ground because a building could not get approval on septic tanks or because senior citizens would have had to sell their property in order to qualify for accommodation under previous plans.

Under the plan, the province will pay the difference between the actual revenue from the building and what it deems the revenue from non-subsidized senior citizen apartment buildings in Vaughan would be.

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These ladies can't wait to get started on their 10 weeks' vacation — last Wednesday, school was out for Tracy Rice, 12, (left) and Cheryl Cannon, 11 and the rest of York Region's elementary pupils. The girls both attend O.M. MacKillop but won't return until September 4. (Liberal photo by Steve Pearlstein)

Concerts in Park resume Thursday

The bandshell at Mill Pond Park will be the scene of some "foot stompin'" music this Thursday beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Jack Turner and his six member group, "The Good Time Ramblers" will entertain at the first in a series of "Concerts in the Park" sponsored by the Town of Richmond Hill Parks and Recreation Department.

Guitar player and singer, Jack Turner said he and his group will do a "Charlie Rich-type" routine and will include such favorites as "The Most Beautiful Girl in the World" and "Behind Closed Doors".

For those who enjoyed the "Olde Tyme Fiddling Contest" at the '79 Richmond Hill Spring Fair, one member of "The Good

Time Ramblers" will entertain with a little "fiddling".

Director of Recreation for the town, Lynton Friedberg, said the concerts in the park have been very popular with citizens since 1975 and have drawn as many as 300 people in one evening.

The summer schedule is Thursday July 5, Jack Turner; July 19, Jim Galloway and The Metro Stompers; August 2, Nicol Brown; August 16, Craig Ruhnki; August 23, Paul Grosney and Kansas City Express; and August 30, Craig Ruhnki again.

Parks and Recreation Department supply some chairs, tables and picnic benches but residents are always welcome to bring lawn chairs or blankets to sit on.

Sky (lab) is falling

The only thing Tom Bolton, Assistant Director of the David Dunlap Observatory, is going to do about the re-entry of Skylab is "carry an umbrella".

Dr. Bolton said the odds of anything bad happening were "sufficiently slender" that he wasn't worrying about it.

When asked if any of the students were watching Skylab through the main telescope, Canada's largest, Dr. Bolton said, "A satellite is a satellite, and this one is not of any special interest."