

## Question of the Week

*What features would you like to see included in the new arena design?*

"Instead of building a big fancy arena, they should provide us with more equipment for Hunter Park." – Nan Cameron, Essex

"Better dressing rooms, showers and bathrooms." – Lyle Little, Essex

"Somewhere warm to be. The only thing I hated (about Essex Memorial Arena) was being cold." – Michelle O'Neal, Essex

### Next week's question:

A decline in Bingo revenues has been reported by local non-profit organizations. What can be done to replace Bingo revenues?

A letter to the editor is not necessary. Simply **CALL DAN** at 519-776-4268, ext. 13 to leave your response. You must provide your name and phone number.

You can also drop us an email at [essexfreepress@on.aibn.com](mailto:essexfreepress@on.aibn.com) or FAX us at 519-776-4014.

Please be brief – 25 to 40 words. Deadline for responses: Monday at 9 a.m.

# Unified public ambulance service considered

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Because Windsor also pays into the operating costs of the service agreement some members considered the request. Other members felt additional information other than KPMG's report was needed.

A delay past Sept. 29 would essentially mean a delay to the next county council. The current county council will be considered "lame duck" after Sept. 29 and will be unable to make any major decisions.

Councillors ultimately decided to hear a presentation by Roger Bryan and Robin Dyson from KPMG. Their report states that a public service provider "appears to be the most preferred model of those interviewed," that cost savings does not appear to be likely with a private system and the Amherstburg volunteers should be incorporated into the county's full-time staff personnel.

Councillors were divided but ultimately supported a motion by Deputy Warden Nelson Santos to research a way to hire Amherstburg's

volunteer paramedics, develop a contingency plan to take over operations of the current private ambulance service providers and develop a plan to consolidate the service into a single public provider model.

"In essence the recommendation is saying that we need a full report before we can go ahead and that's what I'm looking for," Santos said in an exchange with Tecumseh Mayor Gary McNamara.

"I'm actually disappointed that the staff would recommend this without doing their homework first," Leamington Mayor John Adams said about recommendations by County Chief Administrative Officer Brian

Gregg included in Santos' motion. "To just say go public by June 25, 2007, I can't accept that."

McNamara wanted more information about the benefits of a unified private system as a comparison before he could support the motion. He said much of the KPMG report indicated its findings were based on assumptions.

"Before we can make a decision we have to make sure we have all the information we need to make a qualified decision, not a knee-jerk decision," Amherstburg Mayor Wayne Hurst said. "I think the additional information needs to be forthcoming."

Santos' motion passed. A

report based on Gregg's recommendations and consideration of a private model of service will be presented before a vote on either option is held.

The delay was criticized by some paramedics who feel councillors have enough information to make a decision.

"I think this was just a waste of time," said Ian Nash, the chief steward of the Service Employees International Union Local 1.0n. "They're not making themselves responsible for what's going on. The system is messed up. You can't have four different contracts and expect things to run smoothly."

## Councillors increase warden salary

BY SARAH FISHER

Essex County councillors voted Sept. 6 against the recommendations of the Essex County Remuneration Review Committee and increased the salary of the warden but agreed to a new policy about payment for meeting attendance.

Councillors voted July 20 to table a discussion about the 18 recommendations made by the committee. On

Sept. 6 the group reviewed and voted on the suggestions one by one. The majority of the meeting was spent addressing the salary of the incoming warden.

Warden Mike Raymond announced this summer he was not running for re-election as mayor of LaSalle. He was among the members that voted for a motion that would increase the next warden's base salary from \$42,872.96 in 2005 to

\$44,000. The committee had recommended the warden be paid a base amount of \$44,000 without additional compensation for meeting attendance. The salary increase, brought in a motion by Kingsville Deputy Mayor Katherine Gunning, would allow the new warden to earn \$100 for meeting attendance for a possible overall salary of \$49,300. The motion passed unanimously.

SEE WARDEN SALARY, 8



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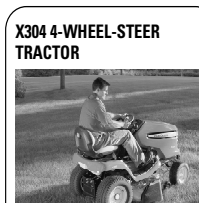


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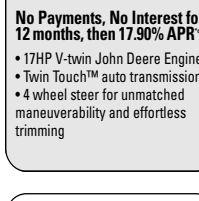
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