

Letters to the Editor

'Tunnel vision' on dog tag issue

Dear Sir:
Heaven help us from editors with tunnel vision. If you are to write editorials like "Higher dog tag fee answer to soaring costs", give us some facts as well as intelligent thinking on a subject. That editorial lacked both.

It appears that some low groans from Kennel Inn precipitated councils discussion on the subject of canine control costs. Kennel Inn, surely, was aware of the mileage involved when they made their initial proposal. If not, one tends to doubt their business experience. Why compare Whitchurch-Stouffville with Aurora or King? We should have been considered as a separate entity when the original costing was done.

My main concern is with the solution council, and you, seem to think is viable. Raising the fee for dog tags and heavy fines on strays. One I agree with the other is suspect. (Quite frankly since the "Dump Fiasco" any "thinking" the council does is to me highly suspect.)

If the tag fees are increased a couple of things can happen. First, common sense indicates that people, a lot of people will just say "hell with it" and go underground. Listen for things like — "Fido died last year" "No we haven't got a dog" "That was my brother's dog, he was visiting from Medicine Hat" etc. To set up a police action and flush these

people out would cost wads of money and create much ill feeling, and probably wouldn't work.

It may well be that council is enamoured with this idea and insists on a fee increase. Then put the burden on the UNSPAID FEMALE. Our basic problem is dog overpopulation.

The levying of fines, damn heavy fines, on irresponsible people who let their dogs roam free sounds good. May lose a few votes but that's life.

Let Kennel Inn make every mile it travels pay. If a stray dog is seen — scoop it up. Let the owner know the dog has been arrested, that their lackadaisical attitude is going to cost them money to bail it out.

Dogs are like six year old kids, let them roam free and they will get into trouble and they, like kids, can get hurt. Its not their fault, its their nature. No dog living should be confined all the time they need exercise, lots of it. Paradoxical? Not really. We live in an area abounding in Conservation Areas and Regional Forests. Need I say more — let the irresponsible owners get off their fat backs and walk their dogs. Don't jog along the highways causing a traffic hazard, jog through the forest trails — with your dog or even a neighbors.

These suggestions are not just off the top of my head. If they seem radical let council (and editors) check with other municipalities, rural and urban who have faced the same problem. Investigate thoroughly before any permanent decisions are made. Remember the Dump.

GORDON W. JONES
R. R. 3, Newmarket

Bowes replies

to editor

Dear Sir:
Having read several editorials published during my absence, I feel I must belatedly reply and express my own thoughts.

Attending all meetings of the board must surely mean 100 percent attendance. Have you checked the facts to see which trustees or onlookers attended 100 percent of the meetings? I attended board meetings in the past, but when the people of Whitchurch-Stouffville elected their representative and he was doing an acceptable job, I felt the education matters could be left in his responsible hands. I would not presume to attend all the meetings of the committees to which I belong unless I was appointed or elected to that committee.

However, I have kept in touch with all board of education matters. If you have any questions concerning the administration, budget, finance, teacher negotiations, P.S. Ross report or other education affairs, I am sure I can answer them for you satisfactorily.

HARRY BOWES
Hawthorne Ave.

Utility study started

YORK REGION — The Regional Municipality of York has become the site of the province's second major study into the revamping of electrical utilities.

The first study is already underway in Waterloo.

Meeting in Newmarket Aug. 20, the provincial steering committee on restructuring ratified members of a local study team to analyze the operations of York's nine municipal utilities and the Ontario

Hydro rural service area, and recommend a more streamlined electrical service for the area.

S.A. Baldwin of Ancaster, chairman of the steering committee, confirmed G.E. Wright, regional chairman; Mrs. Gladys Rolling, mayor of East Gwillimbury; Bob Forhan, mayor of Newmarket; Garnet Williams, mayor of Vaughan; W. S. Cook, chairman of Richmond Hill Hydro; D.V. McNabb, chairman of

Markham PUC, Don Glass, chairman of Aurora Hydro and H. O'Neill, chairman of Sutton Hydro as members of the local study team. Mr. Cook was subsequently elected chairman of the local study team with Mr. O'Neill as vice-chairman.

They had previously been nominated by the regional council and by the York Regional Hydro Association. Labour representatives will be named later.

Mr. Baldwin said he was pleased that the Regional Municipality of York had taken the

initiative early and had requested a utility restructuring study. He expressed confidence that both customers and utility employees in the region would contribute to the study and that the final result would be more streamlined utility operations.

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Reader asks about cat license also

Dear Sir:
In last week's paper mention was made about raising the dog licence tax to cover the cost of looking after dogs running at large, etc. The question in my mind is, why only the dog owner, what about cat owner and all other people who make demands on Kennel Inn for patrol, rabid skunks, groundhogs, etc? I think the whole community uses the Kennel Inn service sometime or other, not just the dog owner. Would it be possible to put a licence fee on cats as well? And why not? There are just as many cats impounded and destroyed as there are dogs, plus cats can be just the same nuisance with their crying at night, ripping garbage apart and killing birds. If the Kennel Inn needs more money to operate, I strongly feel that the cost should be distributed and not just carried by the dog owner.

I am very interested in cats and dogs and attended several meetings last fall when the Humane Society proposed to raise the fees and wanted \$1.50 per capita. Local municipalities found this outrageous and voted in favour of the Kennel Inn set-up, who had planned to be less expensive, provide better service and still make a profit. However, it never seems to work out as planned, and now they find that they need more money. Well, what else is new? I don't mind paying a reasonable amount that goes toward the care of lost and mistreated animals, but the solution is not in picking up every dog that runs loose, impound it, feed it for a week or more and then destroy it. This is what amounts to these enormous costs of running pounds. I would suggest that the council look more into the aspect of population control, because it is just too easy to get a dog from the pounds, through the papers - free to "good" home - and just as easy to get rid of them again. I hope that council has the courage to put a considerable high tax on unspayed and unneutered animals and in a few years the problem of animal control should have subsided considerably. This is a long-term project, but it is the only one that would work in the long run, plus save a lot of cruelty to dogs and cats. Do you realize that a great majority of people who own female animals, especially dogs, do not even know when their pet comes into heat or how long this lasts, etc? The tax for unspayed animals should be high enough to encourage people to get it done. Breeding Kennel would have to be excluded, I guess, but still their licence should also be raised. \$25.00 does not seem high enough, when you can keep a number of dogs, also do a great deal in overpopulating the dog world, and make great profits at the same time. I am sorry to bother you with such a long

letter and if you do not care too much about animals, you'll probably think I'm crazy. Nevertheless, somebody has to worry about these things. I strongly feel that the dog owner, the responsible dog owner, should not be burdened with constantly rising fees. There are a lot of farmers who never have paid a dog licence, never will! They never tie their dogs and are the first ones to complain when sheep and cattle are being harrassed.


I hope that you will consider some of the points I have made. Would it be possible to attend a meeting, if there will be one on this subject? If so, could you please let me know when this will take place.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

CHRISTEL VON RICHTER
R. R. 3, Newmarket

Editor's Note: This is a copy of a letter written to Mayor Gordon Ratcliff.

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