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Representation changes

Region rejects increases

NEWMARKET — Markham lost Thursday in yet another attempt to increase its representation on York Regional Council to reflect a 50 per cent increase in population over the past six years.

In a 10-3 recorded vote with three councillors absent, the region deferred the issue pending the outcome of provincial studies of Metro Toronto, Niagara and Ottawa regions.

Markham Councillor Ron Moran called for an increase in Markham's representation, noting his municipality is under-represented with a 50 per cent rise in population and 43 per cent hike in assessment.

He was supported by Richmond Hill Mayor Dave Schiller who called for a 1-15,000 ratio of councillors to constituents, with an additional councillor added when two-thirds of the required population increase is reached.

any change at this time over threats that provincial muscle would be called in.

It's ridiculous to have to go to the province to get what is "rightly ours in the first place", commented Alma Walker, Markham councillor.

Currently the region is equally divided between north and south representation, with Chairman Garfield Wright tipping the balance to the north. An increase in southern representation would give the south control over regional council.

Aurora Mayor George Timpson said he is reluctant to see representation based on a 1-15,000 formula as it would put Aurora well into the future before it could increase its strength.

He suggested as a second tier government the region should base its representation equally by municipality with two councillors from each area.

A council based strictly on population could, as it increases, become "so unwieldy that it will not be able to function".

Newmarket Mayor Bob Forhan called for a deferral pending the results of studies currently underway in the province.

He noted the region should consider eliminating municipal boundaries in regional representation.

"We may have to realign the whole method of thinking," he said.

Mayor Forhan added with planning frozen in rural areas the "imbalance on council could leave a few people's heads spinning".

Markham is seeking a better voice for its municipality, Councillor Moran said, adding the municipality is not complaining of being shortchanged.

"I'm just saying that representation by population should be adhered to," he said.

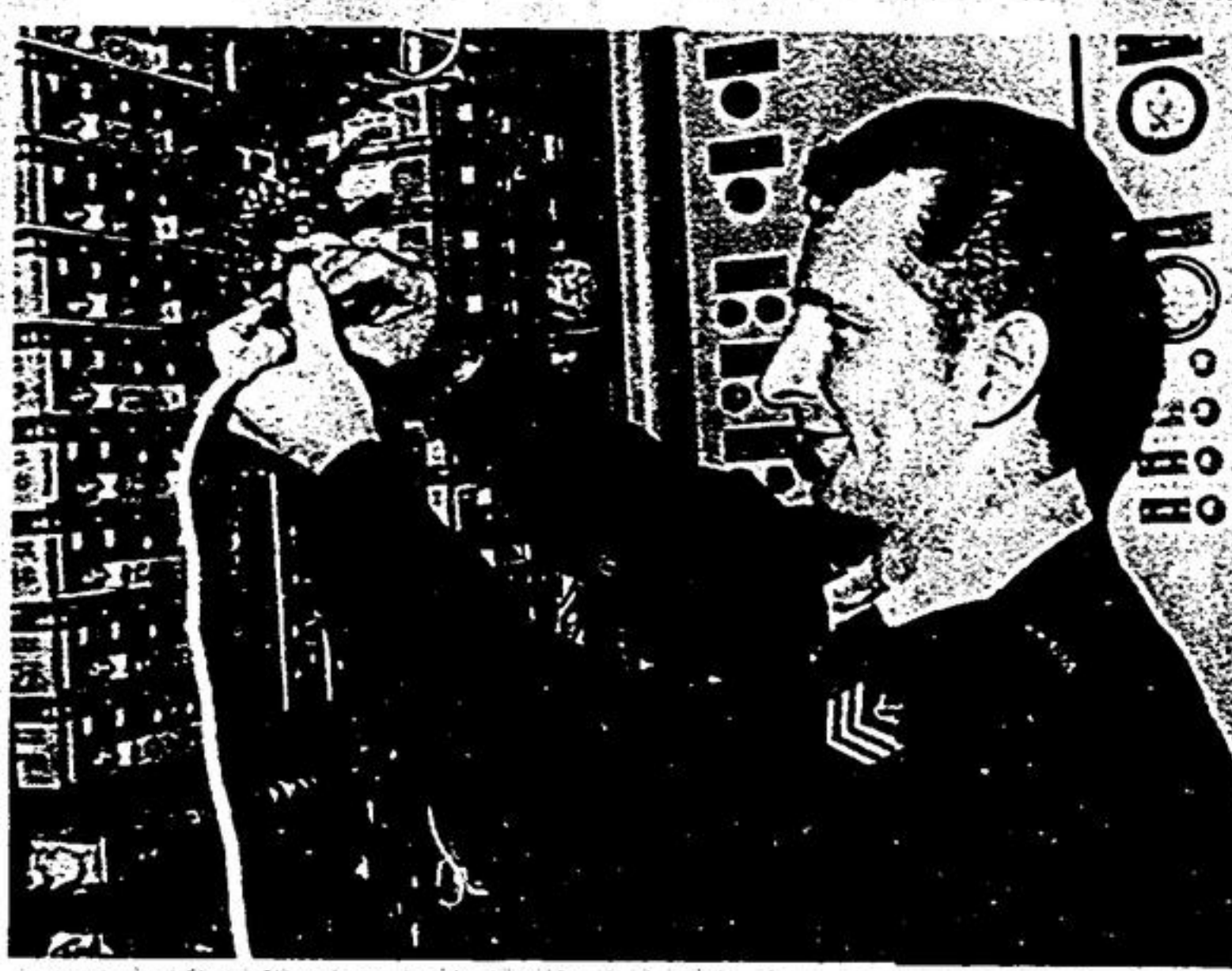
"If any change is recommended in the boundaries of York we don't know what the population of the region will be," countered Mayor Forhan. He was referring to the Metro Toronto study currently under way by John Roberts, former premier of the province who was commissioned to study the metro area.

He noted that study could recommend some of the southern areas of the region be annexed to Metro Toronto.

Reports of Metro Toronto, Niagara and Ottawa regions are expected sometime this spring.

Council backed Mayor Forhan's call for deferral with only Mayor Schiller, and Councillors Walker and Moran rejecting the motion.

Markham Mayor Tony Roman, King Township Mayor Margaret Britnell and Georgina Township Mayor George Burrows were absent.



Sergeant Don Eddington, a radar technician, conducts a maintenance check in the radar dome at CFS Gypsumville, Man. He joined the Canadian Forces after completing his education at Stouffville.

Board referring back kindergarten report

AURORA — A report on establishment of junior kindergartens in York Region public schools won't come before the York County Board of Education before March 14, board chairman Craig Cribar said Thursday.

The issue was sent back to the three-member chairman's committee earlier this month after the committee had recommended that staff prepare a progress report on junior kindergartens by May.

Three trustee motions, including a call for an experimental pilot program that would be compared to junior kindergartens operated by other boards and studies on the educational and financial implications of the program, were to be considered in the staff report, the committee recommended.

"We're going to have to refine our recommendations somewhat," Mr. Cribar said Thursday.

The entire board will have to make the political decision as to whether junior kindergartens will be introduced, he noted.

The committee role, said Mr. Cribar, is to bring in a report outlining the options available and

the implications of each option.

While the issue was last brought before the full board two weeks ago, King trustee Dorothy Zajac questioned how the board can introduce new programs when there are not enough funds to operate current programs properly.

"We find ourselves in a period of great financial restraint," she noted. "We have cut back severely on our library account and teachers are complaining they're short of supplies."

Fellow King trustee Margaret Coburn said parents who have contacted her don't favor the introduction of junior kindergartens.

"I can't really feel we're justified in spending time on this," she noted.

Richmond Hill trustee Bob Houghton said junior kindergartens should only be introduced if the program can be offered on the same basis across the region.

Equalization in other school programs currently does not exist, particularly in the northern half of the region, he said, and the idea should therefore not be considered at the present time.

The one member of the chairman's committee who opposed the initial recommendation, Whitchurch-Stouffville trustee Harry Bowes, said the education ministry told all boards a year ago that "new programs should not be introduced at the present time."

Only 21 in region

Rabies cases drop

NEWMARKET — Rabies took a holiday in York Region last year.

There were only 21 rabid animals discovered in the region in 1976 compared with 88 the previous year, for a drop of about 75 per cent.

Rabies normally goes in cycles, said Larry Hancey, senior public health inspector with York Region. The peak year in the recent cycle was 1975.

The statistics also include a rabid cow in East-Gwillimbury Township in December for which four people were given vaccine.

Antitoxin is given with care to people who have handled animals, noted the inspector.

"It's a calculated risk whether the vaccine will cause other difficulties," Mr. Hancey said.

Before administering vaccine tests are taken to see if the animal is rabid.

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Hours for go-karts extend by council

GOODWOOD — Go-kart enthusiasts will get an additional two hours to run their machines on the weekends, Uxbridge council decided last week.

Jean Bell, speaking for Goodwood Kartway owner Mario Petti, appeared before council and asked for an extension of the hours for operating concession karts.

Mrs. Bell pointed out that the four-stroke concession karts were very quiet and that no neighbours lived close enough to be bothered by them. Only the unmuffled, two-stroke racing karts, whose hours of operation were already severely restricted, caused a nuisance, according to Mrs. Bell.

She also said that previous cutbacks in the operation of concession karts had caused a lot of economic hardship to Mr. Petti.

Council agreed and granted a two-hour extension from 8 to 10 p.m. on weekends for concession karts.

"They are actually no noisier than a lawnmower," commented Councillor Mac Meyers, "and we have no restriction on those at all."

More land wanted for museum site

UXBRIDGE — A request by the Uxbridge museum has been referred to the planning committee.

The museum's historical society had asked for more ground for the Quaker Hill site.

Council has decided to look into the matter right away since several subdivisions are planned near the site.

Farmers not exempted

UXBRIDGE — A proposal that farmers obtaining a retirement plot off their land be exempted from paying lot levy fees was voted down by council last Thursday.

Councillor Mac Meyers, who proposed the \$600 exemption, argued that a bona-fide

farmer has paid his share on everything all his life and should be allowed to have a lot on the land he has farmed all his working days."

Councillor Gary Herrema disagreed. "I don't think it's right that one segment of society should be treated differently

from the rest," he said. John Paxton, the councillor from Goodwood, pointed out that it would be very difficult to decide who is a bona-fide farmer, and whether the severed parcel is really a retirement lot. Councillor Alan Wells also argued against the motion.

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- creation and funding of group homes and other kinds of community accommodation
- increased numbers of workshops and life skills programs
- early infant stimulation programs, parent relief and development projects
- access for developmentally handicapped people to a full range of community services.

All of these activities aim at achieving a better quality of life for Ontario's developmentally handicapped, and at making their experiences as normal as possible.

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For more information, or to receive the free booklet "Serving the Mentally Retarded," contact your local Ministry of Community and Social Services office, or write to:

Mental Retardation Community Services Development Branch 3rd Floor, Hepburn Block, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario M7A 1E9

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