

## Budget deficit

## Town asks IWA to pay leftover \$32,800 dump debt

TRACY KIBBLE  
Staff Reporter

The town's mayor wants to erase Whitchurch-Stouffville's entire dump fight debt from the books before budget day, and is asking Queen's Park to help her do it.

Sainsbury won regional support Jan. 14 in a bid to separate local fundraising efforts from York's pay-back scheme, which would compensate 50 per cent of the town's \$73,363 deficit.

Sainsbury argued the town's \$8,218 fundraising efforts shouldn't be deducted from the total bill before York calculated the amount it would reimburse.

But that still leaves Whitchurch-Stouffville with a \$32,800 deficit — a debt local tax bills will likely reflect if not cleared up before budget day,

Sainsbury said.

"This dump fight left us with a deficit and we can't afford it, nor did we expect it. The costs were dropped on our laps," the mayor said.

And although Sainsbury is "appreciative" that York Region is paying 50 per cent of the town's deficit, she said local taxpayers shouldn't be stuck with one penny of the money spent to keep a dump from Stouffville's doorstep.

The region has so far taken more than \$130,000 from its \$20-million Keele Valley Reserve fund to pay half of each of the six municipalities' dump fees.

But York officials say the reserve account is quickly dwindling, and want the Interim Waste Authority (IWA) to replace the reimbursements given to municipal taxpayers under the provin-

cial participant funding scheme.

That's not fair, Sainsbury says.

She believes the region should be "second in line" to collect paybacks from the IWA — after the municipal taxpayers have been freed of all debt first.

Sainsbury said York's reserve account doesn't affect taxes since it's used as a savings account for landfill and related purposes.

Local debts incurred last summer, on the other hand, have put municipalities in the red, and will directly affect 1993 tax bills, Sainsbury said.

But York officials argue Keele's \$20-million balance won't even come close to the amount needed to build a landfill site for York's trash.

Chairman Eldred King has said it could cost the region more than \$100

million to build a long-term landfill site — before Metro trash is even considered for burial.

He said Halton Region has already spent \$80 million for a 4-million tonne capacity site.

York residents dump 20 million tonnes of trash in Keele Valley each year, reports show.

The mayor is sending a letter to IWA officials this week in hopes to convince the provincial crown corporation that municipal taxpayers should be paid back before a regional reserve account.

"It's a drop in the bucket," for the IWA to pay back municipalities, she said.

The letter, drafted by town engineer Tom Parry, requests money for the town before consideration is given to York Region.

## Metro Toronto 'ripping off' York Region taxpayers in trash fees, politicians say

TRACY KIBBLE  
Staff Reporter

York Region municipalities are getting "ripped off" in tipping fee costs imposed by Metro Toronto, several politicians charged in Newmarket recently.

Metro works department runs and operates the Vaughan-area Keele Valley landfill site, which takes trash from Metro and York. Since 1988, the region's municipalities have enjoyed tipping fee rebates, based on the difference between the gross tipping fee and the actual system cost, determined by Metro. But Newmarket Mayor Ray Twinney accused Metro of exaggerating its operating costs and passing the inflated price onto York taxpayers.

"They're really sticking it to us - we can't let (Metro) push us around," Twinney said.

Metro left York with a \$4.5 million tab last year when it

renewed on a deal to reimburse the region in promised rebates.

The region's municipalities had based their waste management budgets on a \$112-a-tonne rebate, but were told Metro would only give back \$84 a tonne.

That put York's municipalities in a financial crunch, which was temporarily corrected when the region reimbursed each town from its Keele Valley fund. York hopes to collect the difference from Metro in attempts to prove the city renege on a signed agreement.

The rebate shortfall left Markham with a \$1 million shortfall; Whitchurch-Stouffville behind \$190,000 and Newmarket at \$440,000, Twinney said.

"I thought we were going to take these people on - it doesn't take as much to operate (Keele Valley) as they say," Twinney added. Officials believe Metro is losing money each year in

tipping fees and sticking the losses to York taxpayers. York's waste engineer Neil Embree is currently drafting a revised agreement with Metro to "firm up" York's position. CAO Bob Forhan said Metro has been "very receptive" to York's demands this year, more than most. "And we all know why that is," said Forhan.

## SOS takes fight to board

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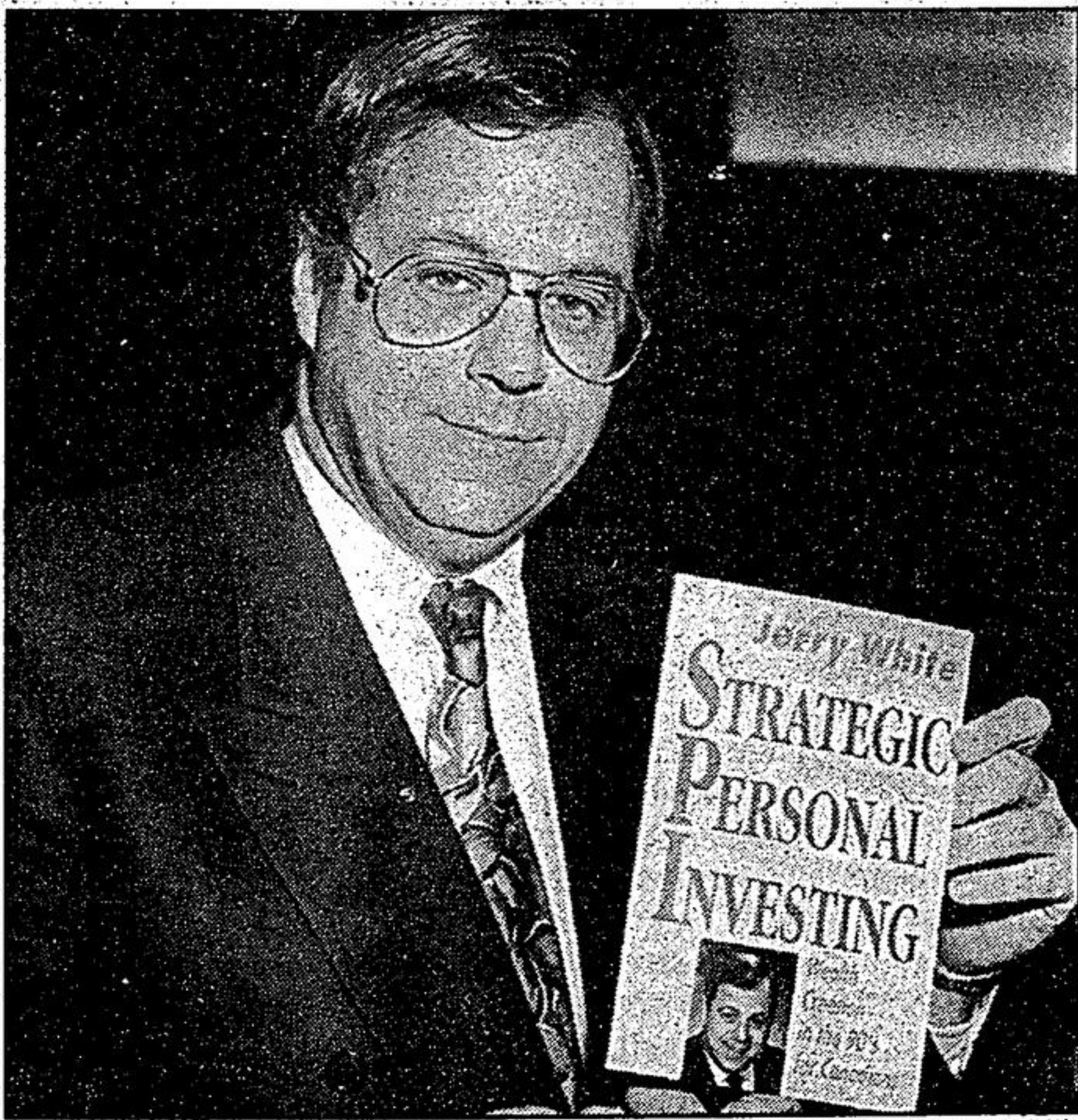
Newmarket taxpayer Jorma Ponka launched an attack on teachers' salaries as the cause of the board's fiscal cutbacks.

He said teachers see students as a "free ride" to high wage hikes. "They are using students as pawns in the process of bargaining."

This was the second budget meeting open to the public. At two previous meetings held behind closed doors, trustees developed a modified list of cut-back options for discussion.

Paring down summer school and adult education, slicing into family studies, industrial arts and music classes, and reducing transportation by \$500,000 are some of the possible cuts under consideration.

A more detailed report will be forwarded at the Feb. 3 public meeting, said Thornhill trustee Harvey Nightingale.



Photo/STEVE SOMERVILLE

## White on!

Finance guru Dr. Jerry White spoke at the chamber of commerce dinner at Spring Lakes Golf and Country Club last week.

## Education

## SDSS examines possibilities for future

BRUCE STAPLEY  
Correspondent

Stouffville District Secondary School (SDSS) opened its doors to the community Tuesday night as part of a campaign to help chart the school's future.

The approximately 50 invited guests pointed to an expanded co-op program, a strengthened liaison between the community and the school, and better use of community resources as being essential for the school to thrive.

Nine "focus" groups, consisting of parents, members of the business community, clergy, and school officials submitted a total of 143 suggestions as to how SDSS could better interact with the community.

The visitors were asked to list ideas they would like to see stopped, started or continued at the school. They were then asked to answer three questions:

1) How is SDSS perceived by our community?  
2) How can SDSS interact with the community to increase student learning?

3) How can the community interact with SDSS to increase student learning?

Some of the guests used the forum to express their concerns over such issues as students clogging traffic on Edward St., the school working in isolation from the community, and the teaching of unrealistic materials. SDSS principal Alan Dickson started off the evening by outlining his Future Committee's plan to restructure the school's approach to education.

"Over the next 10 years the community is going to start to come into the schools," said Dickson, who's committee also includes SDSS vice-principal Jay Hooper, guidance head Doug McCammon, and teachers Diane Patterson and Jan Percy. "We want to begin to involve you in the collection of data."

Dickson said afterwards he thought the night had been a huge success. "It was a positive evening. There were some naysayers, but we feel the only worthwhile change is popular change, grass roots change. Now that we have this data, we plan to lay everything out, and

look for key elements which, once acted upon, will encourage many (new) activities to flow."

Patterson, who is in charge of compiling the data, said certain "super themes" emerged from the discussion. "We were told to do more that is reality-based, get more kids into the co-op programs, and to keep the community informed as to what is going on in the school," said Patterson.

The session was the latest in the committee's year-long consultations, which had previously included staff, students, secretaries, custodians, technicians, and police.

Concerns identified in prior meetings included student assessment methods, the nutritional value of food offered in the school cafeteria, community interaction, interactive learning, the use of mentors from the community, and working with elementary teachers to help ease the transition from elementary to high school.

Dickson said the community members would be consulted again after his committee had finished documenting the data.

received Tuesday night. He said his committee was determined to implement the changes deemed necessary by the community representatives.

"We want to use this information to enhance the climate for learning and the quality of education," he said.

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