

Separate board says no to tax hike that would kill debt

JULIE CASPERSEN
Staff Reporter

Catholic trustees voted down a tax hike that would balance their budget in favor of a lower increase that puts the board further into debt.

By boosting taxes 13.8 per cent, the York Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board would have erased its \$16 million shortfall.

"I don't believe we can keep deficit financing like we have. Not balancing will continue the downward spiralling," said Whitchurch-Stouffville/Aurora Trustee Dennis Collins at the April 28 meeting.

But this motion was lost along with a motion to pass the same tax hike as the York Region Board of Education, which finalized its budget with a 6.9 per cent hike April 26.



BOBESICH

Separate trustees went a step further, increasing taxes by 6.6 per cent after a vote of 10 to seven, to the outrage of Education Director Frank Bobesich.

"I cannot understand, given the fiscal circumstances, undercutting the (public) board. It defies all logic. It's beyond all comprehension," Bobesich said, adding future boards of trustees will be left "to fix" the financial straits "perpetrated" by the current board.

The board now has an illegal accumulated deficit of more than \$23 million.

Trustees resolved to balance the budget and wipe out the debt within three years.

For Stouffville separate school supporters, the 6.6 per cent boost will add \$153 to their 1992 tax bill for a final amount of \$2,461, according to board figures based on an average assessment of \$33,237.



Photo: LOFI EMMERSON

Scouts plant trees

Stouffville scouts did their bit to help the environment during a tree planting Saturday at the Bruce's Mill Conservation Area. After working hard, the scouts enjoyed a barbecue.

Residents win 14-day grace

Residents of Sleepy Hollow Estates say their concerns regarding a neighboring estate subdivision proposal have been swept under the planning rug.

Sleepy Hollow resident Judy Scala lambasted officials last week for a "lack of consideration to our very real concerns," after discovering the developer of Hill Top Trail subdivision was going ahead with a zoning amendment without notification to nearby residents.

"Why do citizens have to fight (council)? Are you afraid of stepping on someone's toes, because if you're afraid to do the job perhaps you shouldn't be here," an angry and frustrated Scala told officials.

Scala, representing homeowners in the Sleepy Hollow Estates subdivision, says sever-

al proposed lots in an expansion of the Sleepy Hollow Country Club should be scrapped from the plan because of their close proximity to the golf course.

"I don't care what anybody says - (this development) is a scam," Scala said.

Scala added the residents are concerned with one lot in particular which is situated in a golf ball "hitting zone."

"This is a life-threatening danger and a hazard," she said. Developers have asked the town to allow several of the estate lots to be under the two-acre minimum lot requirement and are willing to go to the Ontario Municipal Board for approval.

But Scala urged officials to defer the plan and asked them

to request the developer screen the lot or put up protection from flying golf balls.

But developer Steve Smith said he has already "bent over backwards" for neighboring residents, and claims he's addressed their original concerns of the one lot.

"The club has spent a lot of money and we thought we addressed all the issues - now we're being asked to address different issues," Smith said.

He added nothing in the plans are "legally incorrect" and said the residents will never be satisfied with revised proposals.

Officials agreed to defer the matter for two weeks to allow residents an opportunity to officially register concerns.

~ Tracy Kibble

Chamber breakfast Thursday

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Chamber of Commerce is hosting a breakfast meeting featuring a speaker from the provincial finance ministry.

Brad Ward, minister without portfolio of the Ministry of Finance, will ask local business people how the government can shape its upcoming budget to

suit the needs and concerns of small business in Ontario.

The question/answer period will follow a breakfast at Angie's Eatery at 7 a.m. Thursday, May 6. Tickets are \$10 for chamber members; \$14 for non-members and can be obtained by calling the chamber office at 642-4227.

Richards on farm equipment dealers' executive

Stouffville resident Don Richards has been elected to the executive of the Ontario Retail Farm Equipment Dealers' Association (ORFEDA.)

Richards, of Chas. Richards & Sons Ltd., was elected secretary treasurer of the ORFEDA for 1993 at the association's 47th annual meeting and convention.

The ORFEDA is a non-profit voluntary provincial association founded in 1945 and is a recognized voice of the Farm Equipment Dealers across the province.

The association makes presentations to the province, trade publications, regular dealer bulletins, conducts training seminars, insurance counselling and legal representations to its members.



RICHARDS

It sells and installs servicing dealers with in-house computer systems and operates the Outdoor Power Equipment Division for Ontario Power Equipment Dealers' services.

The organization is affiliated with the Canadian and North American Equipment Dealers' Association.



Photo: SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Birthday surprise

Stouffville's Gladys Clarkson was greeted by 70 tuxedo clad penguins, set up on her Montreal Street lawn, to help her celebrate her 70th birthday recently.

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