

CRIME: Town officials, police join forces to combat youth related crimes, such as vandalism

Town takes steps to stamp out crime

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
STAFF WRITER

Traffic violations, teen crime and increased vandalism in Stouffville has prompted a public meeting set for Tuesday, Nov. 24 at 7 p.m.

And cops from York Region Police will attend the session at the municipal office at Sandiford Drive. The police are expected to give pointers on how the public can work with police to best han-

dle serious traffic problems and ongoing acts of vandalism.

As well, Stouffville's first Road Watch program will be launched, officials said. "With an increase in traffic flow, there's been more speeding as well as an increase in accidents," Mayor Wayne Emmerson said.

Road Watch, under the direction of Ward 4 Councillor Cliff Dunkeld, will deal with a host of traffic problems.

Individual members of the public, as well as Neighbourhood Watch and the Block Parents associations are expected to play a role, Dunkeld said. The number and severity of vandalism cases and other crimes suggests there's a strong need for the public to get involved, Emmerson said.

"The goal is to make our municipality much safer," the mayor said.

In the past three months, vandals struck the Ninth Line legion

hall, the train station and Summitview Public School, trashing public property. Mail boxes in the rural areas are being smashed.

Two weeks ago, in one sweep, thieves broke into the train station, a furniture store, a restaurant and a sporting goods store.

Goods and money were stolen, while serious property damage occurred. Police are investigating the incidents.

"It's been terrible," Dunkeld

said. "I can't believe that this much (crime) has hit Stouffville. Something needs to be done."

Parents, young people, the principal and teachers of Stouffville District Secondary School, members of both the Business Improvement Area and the Chamber of Commerce are expected to attend. "It's time everyone jumped on the band wagon. This will be driven by the residents," Emmerson said.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT



STAFF PHOTO/SIGERD WITTEVEEN

Krista Raymer, 8, perfects her skating style during practice at the Stouffville Skating Club in the rec centre Monday.

Public review requested

FROM PAGE 1.

Pool advocate and Ward 6 Councillor Sue Sherban said she didn't know, at this point, if the swimming pool would cost \$2 million or \$4.5 million. This has to be explored, she added.

An aqua fit program is a must, resident Lenor Ramer said. "An aqua fit program is the best exercise you can do for your health," she said.

Meanwhile, Sandy Ramer pleaded with council to bring the pool plan to the public for review. "Ask us if this is what we want,"

Ramer said.

Stouffville east resident Loretta Lavell asked council to consider the financial benefits of linking the pool to another facility. "A pool should not stand on its own," said Lavell.

An aggressive \$600,000 library fundraising campaign is already under way, while a fundraiser for the pool is expected.

Mayor Wayne Emmerson stressed the process to build such high ticket items is long and complex.

"All we're trying to do is get to the next step," Emmerson said.

CULTURE: Town leases old municipal building for \$1 a year

Curtain rises for theatre group as town makes dramatic offer

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
STAFF WRITER

Curtain time is fast approaching. The Clock Tower Theatre Group has been given the go-ahead to renovate the former municipal building into a 400-seat, multi-purpose live theatre facility.

On Tuesday, council agreed to hand over the Civic Avenue building in a five-year lease agreement at \$1 a year, effective Jan. 2.

A Stouffville cultural facility, valued at between \$2 million and \$3 million, came within reach when the municipal offices moved to the Imperial Building on Sandiford Drive in early September.

Veteran theatre consultant Roger Jones told council that with "hard working volunteers" the cultural complex will be successful. "But it has to be multi-purpose," he stressed.

While a number of residents spoke in favour of the project, Sonya Brand and Sarah Parry impressed council the most. The 11-year-old girls made it clear: The Clock Tower Theatre will let children do more than just "sit there and watch a movie."

As part of the deal, The Clock Tower Theatre Group will outline its fundraising, construction and five-year business plan that will demonstrate its ability to undertake, complete and operate the facility as proposed without any assistance from the town.

If the proposal fails, the town would not be asked or be obliged to bail out the proponents, town administrator Merlin Dewing said.



STAFF PHOTO/JOAN RANSBERRY

Sarah Parry, left, and Sonya Brand say having a theatre facility in town will give children something educational and entertaining to do.

The tender on the building attracted two interested parties. As well as the local theatre group, Stouffville resident Don Quarles submitted a bid for a planned venue for the performing arts.

Quarles, an entertainment promoter, told council Stouffville is in dire need of night life. While Quarles did not submit a winning bid, he was invited to join The Clock Tower Theatre Group.

"We are going to have a bang up complex with great theatre," Mayor Wayne Emmerson said.

Doctor 'appalled' by treatment

FROM PAGE 1.

op the property, Murphy said he, his project manager, and his wife were treated "very poorly by town staff."

"We were treated with arrogance, disrespect, condescension, threatening and intimidating demands."

As a 50-year resident of Stouffville, Murphy said he was "appalled" and embarrassed that this town...employs people who

have conducted themselves in this manner."

There are "two sides to every story," Mayor Wayne Emmerson said in defence of his staff. The mayor then told Murphy his development is a plus for the downtown area. "You have put up a tremendous looking building. It is an asset to our community. But, I stand by what was done by my staff," Emmerson said.

Blackburn said all he did was try to get Murphy "to pay a bill on

time." Blackburn then called on Murphy to identify the alleged ill treatment linked to him and others. "Somebody just can't stand up and say this," Blackburn said.

Town lawyer Stan Makuch said he was surprised at Murphy's comment. "The courts found nothing unfounded and the courts found nothing contradictory," said Makuch. When dealing with the public, staff has to take an arms-length approach and "not play favourites," Makuch added.

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