

Kenora may ban the air city-owned vehicles

CANADIAN PRESS

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orses a policy to ban smok-
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onday on a proposal to ex-
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t municipal buildings are
free while a few have des-
l smoking areas.

onder if this is going too
ayor Dave Canfield, a self-
ed reformed smoker, said
nmittee of the whole meet-

far as I'm concerned it's
enough," countered Coun.

Parkes, who went on to
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of second-hand smoke.

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would also have an impact
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who smoke. They would no
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travelling to meetings in
y-owned van.

Parkes said councillors
se roadside stops or take
own vehicles for out-of-
meetings.

article - Apr 5/01

Eye van upgrade

The Ontario government will provide \$64,000 to the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) to upgrade the Ontario Mobile Medical Eye Care Unit (eye van) and the facilities it uses in Northern Ontario.

Electrical connections in each of the communities visited by the eye van will be upgraded to meet current electrical standards. Diagnostic and communications equipment aboard the van are also being improved.

Northern Development and Mines Minister Dan Newman said the upgraded service ensures the delivery of needed ophthalmology care to residents in their own communities.

The eye van is a mobile ophthalmology treatment centre. More than 20 physicians alternate using the van to examine, treat and perform minor surgery in 30 northern communities. It began its 29th year of bringing eye care to the north on March 19. ☆

Dryden Observer - April 10/01

Byelection possible for district town

Mayor leaving office at end of month to take top district ambulance job

BY CARL CLUTCHEY
NORTH SHORE BUREAU

Manitouwadge ratepayers may be headed back to the polls this spring to choose a new mayor in an unexpected byelection.

Mayor Jocelyn Bourgoin steps down April 30 when he becomes manager of the new District of Thunder Bay Ambulance Service.

Bourgoin, 40, who was convincingly re-elected to a second mayoral term in November, said the demands of his new job will leave him no time to be Manitouwadge's top politician.

"Realistically, the people deserve someone who will be in town a lot more than I will be," Bourgoin, who will keep a home in Manitouwadge, said yesterday.

Bourgoin is also leaving his job as Manitouwadge ambulance manager.

Some voters said they were annoyed by Bourgoin's decision not to serve his three-year term as mayor and force the town to spend \$5,000 on a byelection.

"It floored me when I heard about (Bourgoin's resignation)," said businessman Kevin Batchilder, who worked on the team to defeat Bourgoin in November's election.

Batchilder said even if Bourgoin was only thinking of applying for the district ambulance position, he should have told voters that during the election campaign.

Others had praise for Bourgoin, saying he has been an effective advocate for the mining town over the past three years.

"Most people understand that (the ambulance manager's job) was a step up for him," Coun. Rob Charron said.

Manitouwadge's six councillors could appoint a new mayor among themselves, but Charron and other councillors con-

MANITOUWADGE

tacted yesterday said a byelection would be the best way to go.

"I think it's the democratic thing to do," Coun. Randy Barnes said.

A date for a byelection, if council approves one, has not been set.

One option not open to council is to appoint former councillor Norm Poolton, who in November ran against Bourgoin and lost.

"Realistically, the people deserve someone who will be in town a lot more than I will be."

Jocelyn Bourgoin

Mayor of Manitouwadge

Poolton said he doesn't know if he'll run again if given the chance later this spring.

District of Thunder Bay Ambulance Service oversees land ambulance delivery in the city and in rural towns between Upsala and Manitouwadge.

The City of Thunder Bay got the nod last year to run the service.

Bourgoin, who becomes a permanent city employee, will oversee a budget of \$8.5 million.

City manager Brian MacRae said he doesn't have a problem with Bourgoin living so far away because Bourgoin was by far the best candidate among about 20 applicants.

MacRae said he expects Bourgoin to also have a residence in Thunder Bay.

and schools to be more accountable

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TORONTO — Ontario will take "aggressive steps" to force its municipalities, hospitals and school boards to account for the way they spend taxpayers' dollars, Premier Mike Harris said yesterday.

"Today, two thirds of every dollar we spend on programs goes to health and education," he said. "And taxpayers are counting on us to ensure that those dollars are spent responsibly."

Harris, whose government has already implemented billions of dollars in spending cuts, suggested towns and cities and institutions supported by transfers from the province have more fat to

trim.

"What we are encouraging and what we're talking about is accountability for the dollars that you have," he said. "Instead of saying 'we need more money, we need more money,' (the government will ask) 'how are you spending the money that you have? How can you spend those dollars more efficiently and more effectively?'"

Harris would not provide details of how the province would measure accountability, or what would become of a municipality or hospital judged to be mis-managing its money.

Those details will be announced in his government's throne speech when the legislature resumes on April 19, Harris said.

Chronicle - Apr 10/01

n minister has busy schedule in city

e A1

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with a feeling of optimism, noting that neither minister said no to the school plan.

"We're looking at the fact that we're still playing, and that our case is so strong that we should be successful," Boshcoff said.

The case being made, he said, looks at factors "including economic development potential, out-migration retention, and that previous programs haven't been as successful as the province had hoped.

"This is a new long-range proposal that includes First Nations and new information technology.

"I'm coming away feeling very determined to see this thing through... We intend to be able to deliver to (Clement) a proposal that should convince his cabinet colleagues."

Clement is to be in Thunder Bay today. As well as attending a Progressive Conservative

fundraiser, he is to meet Boshcoff to receive the 40,000-name Community Letter calling for action on the doctor shortage in the region and attend an editorial board meeting with The Chronicle-Journal.

Clement is also scheduled to tour the new Thunder Bay Regional Hospital site where he is to make an announcement.

Medical school has a chance

BY JOANNE KUSHNIER
THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

A "world-class proposal" in support of a Northern and rural medical school could be just what the doctor ordered to get the project moving.

Five Northern Ontario mayors and the presidents of the Northwestern and Northeastern Ontario municipal associations were asked to upgrade their current proposal during a meeting yesterday in Toronto.



Ken Boshcoff

Health Minister Tony Clement and Northern Development Minister Dan Newman were both receptive to the current proposal, but "had to be non-committal" because the provincial budget hasn't been set yet, Thunder Bay Mayor Ken Boshcoff said from Toronto.

The proposal calls for a medical school to be shared by Thunder Bay's Lakehead University and Laurentian University in Sudbury.

The argument is that doctors who train in the North are more likely to stay in the North, a region hard-hit by physician shortages and turnover.

The politicians are working hand-in-hand with the universities and the Northern medical community to get the proposal off the ground.

Chronicle - April 12/01

Apr 17/81

THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

DRYDEN

80% city tax hike given approval

BY BRYAN MEADOWS
NORTHWEST BUREAU

Dryden ratepayers may face a whopping eight-per-cent jump in municipal taxes this year.

At a committee of the whole meeting last night, Dryden council voted 4-3 in favour of raising taxes that amount to help cover a reduction of \$521,000 in city revenue due to property reassessment, the provincial government's Bill 140 and other downloading costs.

Mayor Sid Wintle told reporters that the tax issue is not a done deal.

"Half the council is looking at a 17-per-cent increase . . . (a tax hike that would raise enough revenue) to put us in a condition that wouldn't adversely affect (city) operations," he said.

At its next regular meeting on April 30, council will make a final decision on a tax increase and other ways to raise revenue including taking \$100,000 from city reserves; \$100,000 from Dryden Telephone reserves; reducing capital expenditures by \$75,000; and finding more operational efficiencies.

Earlier, council had proposed a 2.25-per-cent jump in taxes in the city's \$19-million budget, which increases capital spending by \$3 million over last year and maintains important city services.

However, council delayed implementation of the tax hike until details of Bill 140 were analysed.

The provincial legislation caps industrial and commercial tax rates in Ontario municipalities according to a provincial average, and shifts some of the tax burden to residential ratepayers.

Wintle said there was some good news from the province.

A reduction in the education rate of eight per cent this year will soften the blow of municipal tax hikes, he said.

Wintle said the owner of a residential property assessed at \$150,000 will see

Sewage facilities cost soars

Thunder Bay water pollution plant project tops \$40 million

BENILIO GOMES
THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

Work is still far from starting and the final designs have still to be drawn up, but the cost of adding secondary sewage treatment to the Thunder Bay's water pollution control plant will top \$40 million.

At tonight's committee of the whole (planning) session, city councillors will discuss a report that updates the plan for secondary sewage treatment facilities.

The bad news: the cost of the project has gone from \$31.9 million to \$41.5 million.

Engineering manager Doug Scott said yesterday this was a "substantial" increase, but he added that estimates originally pegged pollution control expansion work at \$50-\$80 million.

A detailed report to councillors indicates three factors are responsible for the increased cost: the need to upgrade control systems and increase the capacity of the

main influent pumping station (\$3.5 million); piled foundations for the various facilities (\$3 million); and other capital works (\$1.1 million).

Other reasons for the increase include differences on estimating techniques and inflation.

The report recommends that council give the go-ahead for final design of the facilities to proceed, that the contract for biological aerated filters (BAF) be awarded in the amount of \$8.4 million, and that

studies be carried out on the impact of the new system on the 110th Avenue causeway project.

Scott said the timetable calls for construction work to be tendered next year and for the project to be finished in late 2003.

The total cost of the work comes in at about \$44 million, but a provincial grant of \$2.4 million offsets the local cost.

• Continued on page A3

Chronicle -
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Province rejects industrial tax hike

By Warner Bloomfield
The City of Dryden is planning to raise residential taxes by eight per cent, instead of the 2.25 per cent agreed upon last month.

At last night's committee of the whole meeting, council directed administration to prepare a new budget, including the tax increase and a \$75,000 cut in capital spending, after the province said it could not raise industrial taxes.

Council also intends to

use \$100,000 of reserve money and draw an extra \$100,000 of telephone company dividends to make up the \$520,000 in lost tax revenues.

The eight per cent hike in levies will bring in an additional \$250,000.

The matter comes before council for final approval on April 30.

In March, council approved a preliminary budget based on a 2.25 per cent tax increase across the

board. The city had asked the provincial government for permission to increase industrial taxes to make up for the lost tax revenues after its large industrial assessment came in lower than previous years. However, provincial regulations insist that industrial and commercial taxes cannot exceed a specified ratio of residential rates.

Since industrial and commercial rates in Dryden already exceed those ratios,

the province will not let the city raise the industrial levies.

Councillors debate

Last night's decision did not come without debate. Three councillors, Brian England, Velma Silver and Anne Krassilowsky, argued against drawing money from reserves and Dryden telephone. Instead, they proposed increasing taxes

Council hikes residential rates eight per cent

but deeper cuts to city services were not manageable.

"If we cut any deeper, we would be closing doors and that's not acceptable," he said.

He added council plans to start next year's budget process much earlier to try and find more efficiencies and avoid further large tax increases.

Mayor Sid Wintle, as well as councillors Brown, Joe Delaney and Brian Collins, favoured the eight per cent increase. ☆

2% tax increase gets council nod

First hike in 3 years for area town

BY BRYAN MEADOWS
NORTHWEST BUREAU

FORT FRANCES

Fort Frances ratepayers will see municipal taxes jump two per cent this year.

Mayor Glenn Witherspoon confirmed the tax increase, saying town departments found necessary savings in their operating budgets to make up for a significant drop in tax revenue due to property reassessment.

"We had about a \$380,000 assessment (reduction) from Abitibi-Consolidated Inc.'s mill" to deal with this year, he said.

Witherspoon said the community is in less trouble financially due to reassessment because the town relies less on its major industry for tax revenue than, say, the city of Dryden.

While Fort Frances relies on the local mill for 30 per cent of its tax revenue, the Weyerhaeuser mill in Dryden pays about 52 per cent of that city's municipal taxes.

Witherspoon said his council is still looking at how the province's Bill 140 affects tax rates and may have to adjust tax levies for the second installment in the fall.

Bill 140 caps industrial and commercial tax rates in Ontario according to a

provincial average and shifts some of the tax burden to residential ratepayers.

The two-per-cent tax hike is the first increase in three years for Fort Frances ratepayers and only the second in nine years.

Three years ago, council hiked taxes by almost six per cent to pay for millions in debentures for a new auditorium and second arena.

Meanwhile, Dryden ratepayers may face an eight-per-cent jump in municipal taxes.

At a committee of the whole meeting last week, Dryden council voted 4-3 in favour of raising taxes that amount to help cover a reduction of \$521,000 in city revenue due to property reassessment, Bill 140 and other downloading costs.

Council is to make a final tax decision on April 30, as well as on other ways to raise revenue including taking \$100,000 from city reserves; \$100,000 from the Dryden Telephone reserves; reducing capital expenditures by \$75,000; and finding more operational efficiencies in the budget.

Chronicle - Apr 23/01

Nault travels to Mishkeegogamang for school opening

Harmen Meinders
STAFF WRITER

The new Missabay Community School in Miskeegogamang First Nation was officially opened on April 19. The Honorable Robert Nault,

Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, traveled to the community to take part in the ceremonies.

"This new school reflects the spirit of Mishkeegogamang First Nation," said Nault of the school that

offers many new facilities for staff and students.

The school features one kindergarten classroom, nine standard classrooms, science facilities, a library resource centre, a multi-purpose area, a gymnasium and areas for staff.

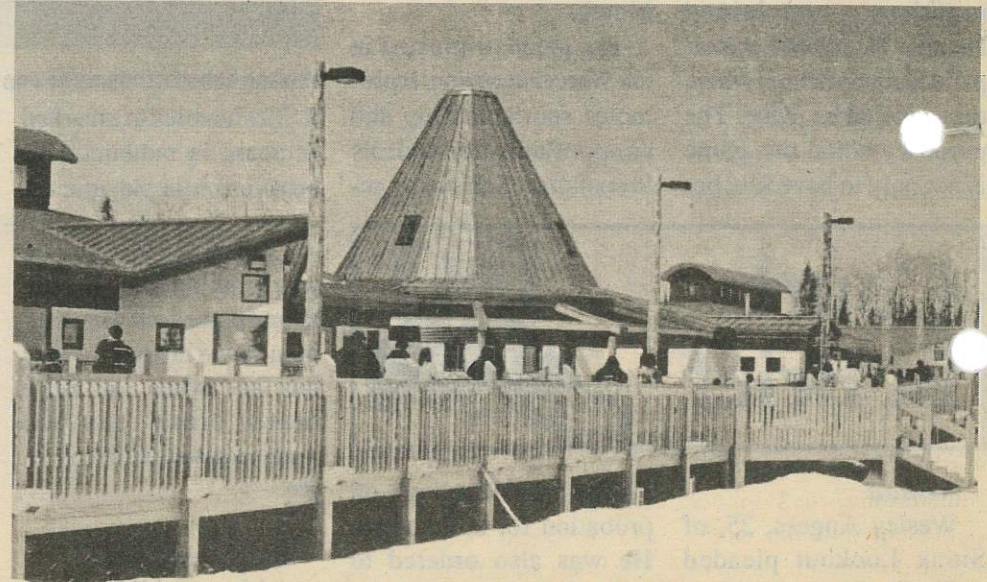
"This new school is an excellent example of the positive relationship between Mishkeegogamang First Nation and the Government of Canada," said Chief Ronald Roundhead. "This relationship is based on the treaty signed in 1905 right here in Mishkeegogamang and its importance is

still felt today as we continue working together to build a strong community.

About 170 students from K4 to Grade 8 will attend the school this year. Maximum capacity is about 255 students. The community plans to expand its education programs to include grades nine and

ten next year.

"Education is an important tool for us to use as we continue our journey towards healing physically and spiritually," said Roundhead. "For this reason, this new school is dedicated to our children and youth, today and for generations to come."



Submitted photo

A view of Missabay Community School in Mishkeegogamang from the lake side. The central teepee shaped structure is surrounded by "pods" that house the gymnasium and the elementary, intermediate, and secondary areas. Community members were very involved in the design of this unique facility.

Tell us what you think!

Tell us what you think!

Your Perspective

Question of the week:

The municipality is reviewing the job of fire chief to determine whether or not the position warrants a full-time employee. Do you think the job needs a full-time employee? Why or why not.



Tony Tavares, mill worker

No I don't think it should be a full-time position unless they combine another job with it such as bylaw officer because there are only fires and emergencies so often.



Tom Kuzemczak, radio technician

I think it should be a full-time position because I want to know that if my house catches on fire the firefighters know their job and how to do it and I think it's the chief's responsibility to ensure that.



Sherry Bower, social worker

Yes I think we do need a full-time fire chief. Because we have volunteer firefighters we should have a full-time chief to do the organizing and oversee the affairs of the fire department on an ongoing and consistent basis.



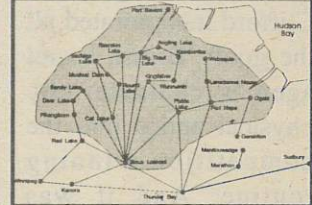
Dan Fraser, bartender

I don't think Sioux Lookout needs a full-time fire chief. Since I moved back here a few years ago I can only remember two or three fires. There just aren't that many fires so I don't think a full-time chief is necessary.



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Perception Chief's Concern

Continued from page A1

I am very disappointed at the comments that were made by the mayor and councillors," he said, adding, "they have succeeded in perpetuating a negative stereotype of aboriginal peoples among the public."

Other recommendations in the Front Street report call for:

- Town bylaws be reviewed to limit loitering.

- Bar hours to be adjusted.

- Efforts be made to increase First Nations involvement in solving problems.

- Town support of beautification projects on Front Street.

- Step up community policing efforts and foot patrols in the area.

Meanwhile, Sioux Lookout provincial police have cited the "self-destructive behaviour" sometimes witnessed on Front Street for an almost 20-per-cent jump in number of liquor violations and disturbances officers responded to last year. The 4,483 calls police investigated last year, 2,668 related to liquor violations and disturbances, an increase of 431 violations over the previous year.

Const. Bob Neelin said alcohol consumption is increasing in Sioux Lookout.

"There seems to be more people bent on destructive behaviour... for lots of complicated reasons," he said.

"I think it is a community problem," Neelin said.

He said "proactive things are being done by police and other social service agencies to try and curb such problems," Neelin said, the corner hasn't been turned yet.

"Hopefully, we'll see changes in time,"

Report riles native leader

Proposal for homeless misunderstood, mayor says

BY BRYAN MEADOWS
NORTHWEST BUREAU

SIoux LOOKOUT

Nishnawbe-Aski Nation Chief Stan Beardy has blasted Sioux Lookout council over a proposal to return aboriginal street people to their home communities.

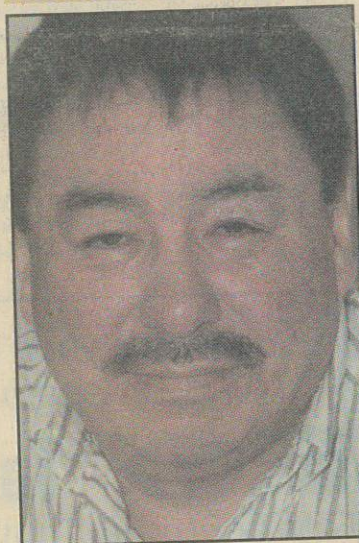
"(In most towns) marginalized people, street people and people with addictions or mental illness... are considered a community responsibility requiring social support systems."

"However, in Sioux Lookout they are regarded as outsiders to be gotten rid of," Beardy said in a news release.

Bardey was taking aim at town councillors who commented on the report Front Street Improvement Project.

Authored by a citizens committee, the report makes recommendations to prevent drunkenness and loitering on the town's main street.

Mayor John McDonald said Beardy has misunderstood the intent of a recommendation



NAN Chief Stan Beardy

about helping someone in trouble return home.

"Something was missed by the media in reporting (the recommendation)," McDonald said.

He said a decision to help a

person return home would be "a mutually agreed upon arrangement with (their respective) First Nation leaders."

"We're not about to force anyone... (or) give them a ticket home," he said.

"But if they are out of money and, or in trouble, we want to help... We have seen some awful situations."

While Beardy said the recommendation targets aboriginal people, McDonald said that is not its intent.

"It is not restricted to First Nations people... we want to help anyone in trouble," he said.

He said something has to be done about a serious problem with alcoholism and loitering in the downtown.

Instead of "shipping First Nations people back home," Beardy said, the focus should be on poverty, homelessness, addiction and social dislocation.

Chronicle - Apr 28/01

• Continued on page A3

NOMA delegates have plenty of issues to discuss

BY BRYAN MEADOWS
NORTHWEST BUREAU

It appears not enough has been said about provincial downloading. The topic will be front and centre at the 55th annual Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association meeting in Fort Frances.

Fort Frances Mayor Glenn Witherspoon said there should be some lively debate on the issues facing area municipalities.

"I think there will be a lot of conversation about taxes, Bill 140 and reassessment," especially among leaders whose municipalities lost several thousands of dollars of property assessment and revenue due to provincial government initiatives, Witherspoon said.

More than 200 municipal delegates are expected to attend the three-day conference which begins Thursday at the La Place RendezVous motel.

Thursday sessions on Bill 140 and performance measurement for municipalities are expected to be well-attended.

Witherspoon
said performance

FORT FRANCES

measurement will interest delegates due to new government rules about accountability.

On Friday, former AMO president Michael Power will deliver a speech on the meeting's theme, Governing in the Fast Lane.

Following Power's address, Confederation College president Pat Lang will discuss the college "as a community capacity builder" and David Eryou of Eryou Barristers will talk about the political risks of not managing risk.

Delegates will get a chance to grill Northern Development and Mines Minister Dan Newman, Health Ministry Tony Clement and other ministry representatives at an afternoon session.

Saturday sessions will focus on agriculture, the 807 Northwest Network and how to craft a Heritage Fund proposal.

MLAs and MPs will address delegates on their priorities for 2001.

The meeting wraps up with NOMA business and election of the executive.

Chronicle - Apr 30/01