

Chronicle - Dec 8/01

NEWS A3

w bylaw has teeth

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EST BUREAU

SIOUX LOOKOUT

seemed a safety hazard could be caught running at-large under Sioux Lookout's new animal control

officer Al Shaw said yesterday "emergency clause" to shoot a dog can be enacted only if dogs were in packs, causing damage, or threatening someone.

Under the town bylaw, the head of council could decide whether a dog should be killed as safety precaution.

Shaw said the town would probably rely on animal control officer or the police to dispatch a dangerous

animal control bylaw was approved by council last month and is now in the ministry of the Solicitor General before being enforced.

Under the bylaw will have more fines levied for infractions under the Provincial Offences

bylaw:

Owners will be fined \$50 fine for purchasing a dog licence.

Aggressive or vicious dogs must be

muzzled.

- Dogs can't bark for more than one hour.

- People can own up to three dogs.

- The length of time an animal is held in the pound is reduced from 96 to 72 hours, before it is destroyed.

Shaw said animals are dispatched under the Animal Research Act, which allows a bylaw enforcement officer to kill a dog by shooting it in the head.

There's no space to keep animals, nor do they have the money to ship them 100 kilometres to Dryden for lethal injection by a veterinarians.

With the bylaw changes, Shaw said, council is hoping to convince animal owners to take responsibility for their pets.

In that regard, he said "we're proposing a licence fee reduction" for an animal that is spayed or neutered that is about half the cost of \$28 dog licence.

The township is also working with the local chapter of the Ontario Humane Society on euthanasia issues and to find homes for those dogs held in the pound, Shaw said.

Ontario water rates could soar

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TORONTO — Consumers could see the price they pay for water soar under proposed legislation requiring Ontario municipalities to recover the full cost of providing water and sewer services.

If the legislation introduced by the Ontario government yesterday is approved, the province would be the first jurisdiction in Canada to require full-cost recovery for water and sewer services, the province and environmental groups said.

"(The legislation) would help ensure that Ontario's water services are safe and sustainable for future generations," Premier Mike Harris told the legislature after Municipal Affairs Minister Chris Hodgson tabled the bill.

"This legislation would ensure that municipalities have the resources they need to ensure that their water and sewer infrastructure is modern and well maintained."

Currently, there is a wide diversity in what consumers and businesses are charged for their water or sewer services.

Some municipalities, for example, charge according to usage. Others charge flat rates. But in almost every case, water and sewer rates are heavily subsidized by governments.

Walkerton, for example, had one of the lowest flat rates for its water in Ontario

before deadly E. coli struck the rural town in May 2000.

Under the proposed bill, the cost of operating water and sewer systems, financing and renewing infrastructure would also have to be passed on.

That will please environmentalists who have long argued that in the interest of encouraging conservation Canadians should pay the full cost of extracting water, processing it, and piping it to their taps.

"It's a good principle," Paul Muldoon, of the Canadian Environmental Law Association, said yesterday.

"Those that use a resource should pay for it and right now we're in enormous deficit in terms of infrastructure."

Muldoon says those with low incomes should be cushioned from rate hikes, and Hodgson denied that huge hikes for consumers are imminent.

Full-cost pricing is "long overdue," he said, but any increase in price won't be certain until plans by municipalities are in place, and implemented.

"In some cases, it might mean their taxes go down and their water prices go up; in other cases it might mean their

water prices go down. It's too early to tell that," said Hodgson.

The Sustainable Water and Sewage Systems Act, 2001 would apply to all entities and individuals who supply water or sewer services to the public.

The "regulated entities" would be required to report to the municipal affairs minister about the infrastructure needed to provide the services and the revenue obtained for providing them.

The reports are subject to approval by the minister.

"After the report is approved, each regulated entity is required to prepare a cost recovery plan describing how it intends to pay the full cost of providing the services," the government said in an explanatory note to the bill.

The government may also set a cap on hikes for consumers.

Liberal Leader Dalton McGuinty praised the move "as the right direction to go" to ensure the system is adequately funded.

But he says the system should remain "non-profit."

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario endorsed full-cost recovery as a way of raising money to invest in municipal water systems.

"Full-cost pricing and accounting practices are ideas whose time has come," said Sam Morra, of the Ontario Sewer and Watermain Construction Association.



Chris Hodgson

Disability bill rammed through

BY JIM KELLY

THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

The disability bill that became law yesterday is totally inadequate, MPP Michael Gravelle (L-Thunder Bay-Superior North) said.

Gravelle said the government allowed only one hour of debate on Bill 125 before ramming it through the legislature.

He said the bill is lacking three key amendments: a mandatory component; precise timelines to implement the removal of barriers; and a provision that includes the private sector.

"This simply makes a sham out of the public hearing process," Gravelle said during debate in the legislature.

"Almost every group that spoke at the public session in Thunder Bay last week told the all-party committee that in order for the legislation to have anything other than a symbolic value, amendments had to be added to the bill."

Gravelle said the bill is not all bad.

The one amendment he is pleased with that achieved all party support was the definition of barriers.

In the original legislation, only physical barriers were included in the definition.

But the government was persuaded to expand the definition to include barriers faced by the deaf, acquired brain injured, blind and intellectually disabled.

"As much as I am pleased that the definition of barriers has been appropriately expanded, it still does not make this an acceptable piece of legislation for the disability community," Gravelle said.

"Sadly, this is a government that wants to be able to say they did something to recognize the inequities faced by people with disabilities.

"But even the government's strongest supporters will have to acknowledge that this legislation doesn't come close to meeting the standards that we hoped it would and strongly believe that it should," Gravelle told the legislature.

Thursday, December 13, 2001

THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

Health unit lifts boil-water advisory

HEALTH
BUREAU

Health unit lifted a boil-water advisory down, one to go. Western Health Unit has lifted a boil-water advisory for residents of Red Lake after coliform bacteria was found a week ago in the municipality. Administrator Brian Anderson said yesterday the boil-water advisory was lifted Saturday after two consecutive samples tested negative for contamination.

The health unit had issued the order Dec. 4 after a water sample taken the day before at the Red Lake medical clinic tested positive for coliform bacteria.

Health unit crews flushed water lines and increased chlorine levels to eliminate the contamination.

Anderson said the source of the contamination was not a mystery. "We're assuming it was a contaminated sample,"

RED LAKE

The sample at the medical clinic was taken the same day as three other samples from elsewhere in the municipality.

This is the first time a water sample has tested positive for bacteria since Red Lake's new water treatment plant was launched more than two years ago, health unit officials said.

Meanwhile, Red Lake council is waiting to hear from the province on funding for a new \$11-million water treatment plant for Balmertown, Madsen, Cochenour and MacKenzie Island.

The health unit placed those communities under a boil-water advisory more than a year ago due to the presence of parasites in the water supply.

The communities all have chlorination systems in their water treatment plants to clear impurities from lake-water sources, but lack the equipment that filters out cryptosporidium and giardia.

The parasites can cause diarrhea, vomiting and cramping.

LETTER OF THE DAY

Where has Christmas Spirit gone?

Chronicle - Dec 19/01

FOR many years now, the Township of Pickle Lake in conjunction with the Ministry of Community & Social Services have given Christmas hampers to Ontario Works recipients. The two have always shared this expense. However, this month we were informed the MCSS would no longer be approving this expenditure. A request was made to the Kenora District Services Board to provide the hampers. Again, the township was told they would not be provided.

This would not be such a problem, but Pickle Lake has no other organizations to which recipients can go to receive food, etc. No food bank, Christmas Cheer

Fund, YMCA, or even a soup kitchen. Where is the Christmas Spirit in all this? The Township of Pickle Lake feels this is very unfair to our recipients when it is not their fault that these services are not available to them. They don't even have a place where they can go to get a meal!

The township was determined that these recipients should have the usual Christmas hampers so they were purchased out of the township budget. That's where the Christmas Spirit is!

ROY HOFFMAN

Mayor,
Township of Pickle Lake

December 29, 2001

Ontario imposes tough new drinking water standards

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...f rules*

ADIAN PRESS

NTO — Ontario nursing and schools with their own water systems will now be required to meet tough new standards imposed yesterday by the provincial govern-

ment. Hospitals, retirement homes, long-term care and health care facilities that house people more vulnerable to the dangers of contaminated water will also be covered by the Environment Ministry's new requirements.

The regulations, first unveiled last week, comprise the latest step in the government's Clean Water, the government's provincewide effort to improve water quality and delivery across the province.

Affected facilities will have

to meet the new testing requirements within 60 days.

"Many of our facilities serving children and seniors in Ontario have their own water systems; we need to make sure that water is clean and safe," Environment Minister Elizabeth Witmer said in a release.

Among the requirements of the new rules:

- Regular testing, analysis and a minimum level of treatment of drinking water;
- Immediate notification of health and Environment Ministry authorities by both the water system's owner and the laboratory in the event of an adverse water quality sample;
- Annual reports to consumers and users by the system's owner;
- Lab testing results, annual reports be made public;
- Owners must post warnings if sampling and analysis requirements are not met or if water use should be stopped.

The Ministry of Education has consulted with school boards affected by the regulation and is spending nearly \$13 million to help various schools meet the new rules.

Owners of other private water treatment systems — such as those at cottages, gas stations, and camps — will receive information to ensure clean drinking water.

The requirements are similar to those imposed last year on public water works under the Drinking Water Protection Regulation, after an E. coli outbreak in Walkerton killed seven and sickened 2,300.

The outbreak and ensuing political scandal prompted the Conservative government to impose a series of sweeping changes to drinking water standards.

It also resulted in a lengthy judicial inquiry into what went wrong in Walkerton; the findings of that inquiry are expected in early January.

KDSB reinvests in people in need

NORTHWEST BUREAU

The Kenora District Services Board is reinvesting provincial funding it received for surpassing Ontario Works targets.

KDSB administrator Sten Lif said the board has allocated more than \$252,000 to assist community services identified by groups and organizations as essential.

Projects funded include:

- \$18,000 for a school breakfast program in Sioux Lookout and a Salvation Army breakfast program in Kenora.

- \$21,000 to child recreation in Ignace, Sioux Lookout, Pickle Lake and Ear Falls.

- \$18,000 to help homeless people in Kenora.

- \$19,085 for an early literacy program in Dryden.

- \$34,915 for a Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Program sponsored by the Northwestern Health Unit.

- \$2,630 for an Ontario Works winter works project in Ignace.

Lif said the board's reinvestment has provided almost \$750,000 over the past two years to children, the homeless and special projects for Ontario Works clients.

Chronicle - Jan 10/02

Medical students hit area

New technology to be used by med, physio students

BY JIM KELLY
THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

In what has been hailed as a breakthrough in medical education, some McMaster University students will not be receiving their lessons the usual way.

Students posted in outlying communities will be connected by videoconference for educational discussions and learning.

"This is a breakthrough in medical education using technology," co-ordinator Dr. Kevin Miller said.

"Offering this experience will hopefully encourage students to return for training in our other programs such as Family Medicine North or specialty training after they graduate from medical school," he said.

Tricia Jordan, co-ordinator of community and professional development for Health Sciences North agreed.

"The more time they spend in Northwestern Ontario, the probability of them coming to practise increases," she said.

"Students who have great experiences in the Northwest will hopefully be enticed to practise up here.

"If they like to fish, find someone who will take them fishing to the best spots."

For Christy Cunningham, the attraction of the North is found in cross-country skiing and kayaking.

The undergraduate medical student from Lions Head, Ont., said there's a good chance she'll move to Northwestern Ontario to practise medicine.

"I'm definitely considering it," Cunningham said at Health

Sciences North where 24 McMaster medical and rehabilitation students who began their studies this year were gathered.

"I'm keen on Thunder Bay," she said.

Half of the 24 are medical students; half are physiotherapy students.

Cunningham got to know the area when she was a kinesiology student at Lakehead University for 2 1/2 years.

She's a competitive cross-country skier and was a member of the Big Thunder Nordic Ski Team.

"I'm attracted here because of the great skiing, kayaking on Lake Superior and it's a unique clinical experience," she said.

"I'm a small-town girl so Thunder Bay is high on my list. It's a place where you can develop a sense of community."

The 12 medical students are among 36 who over the next six months will receive family medicine and psychiatric training under the Northwestern Ontario Medical

*"This
is a breakthrough
in medical
education . . ."*

Dr. Kevin Miller
Program co-ordinator

Program.

NOMP has a 30-year history of teaching medical students in Northwestern Ontario.

Jordan said the training is part of the students' final year of medical school.

For the first six weeks, the 12 students will spend time in Geraldton, Kenora, Manitouwadge, Marathon, Nipigon, Schreiber and Thunder Bay.

Jordan said some have decided to spend 12 weeks in the Northwest "creating opportunities for them to spend up to three months integrating into medical practices and community life."

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Municipal leaders to meet next week

NORTHWEST BUREAU

About 60 municipal leaders will head north to Pickle Lake on Thursday for the annual meeting of the Kenora District Municipal Association.

At a Friday session, representatives from the Northwestern Health Unit are expected to urge area councils to adopt smoke-free bylaws for public places and

workplaces.

Other presentations and workshops will look at new funding programs under the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund, how area services boards work, the Connect Ontario Geosmart Initiative, an update on construction of the Thunder Bay Regional Hospital, and development of the Umfreville Trail in Sioux Lookout.

Resolution sessions will run Friday afternoon and Saturday morning.

NDP leader Howard Hampton will speak to delegates at a session next Saturday.

The meeting wraps up with the election of a new executive.

KDMA represents nine municipalities in the Kenora district.

Winter roads a lifeline

BY CARL CLUTCHEY
NORTH SHORE BUREAU

It takes quite a few truck loads of diesel fuel to fill the 20,000-litre tank at the remote Bearskin First Nation north of Thunder Bay.

That's why the band's deputy chief is hoping Northern Ontario's network of temporary winter supply roads opens soon.

"We usually try to bring in as many loads as we can to fill up the tank," Robert Mickenack said yesterday from the reserve of 500 Oji-Cree.

Colder temperatures the last few days have fuelled optimism that trucks will be cruising on roads built over frozen lakes and rivers by the end of the month.

The Ontario government has put aside \$3 million — a slight increase over last year — to pay half the cost of building the roads that service 30 First Nations.

The roads, which last about eight weeks in a normal winter, are used to bring in bulk supplies like fuel and lumber for house construction.

Supplies must be brought in by plane

the rest of the year.

Since a fully-loaded transport truck comes in at about 36,000 kilograms, ice on frozen waterways has to be nearly 75 centimetres thick before it can support such a weight.

Even then, truckers have to watch their speedometers because wave action created by excessive speed can cause even thick ice to break up.

Five years ago a man died when a bulldozer used for building a road near Lansdowne House went through the ice, but such mishaps are rare, said Howie Wilcox, a senior transportation official with the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.

Mickenack said reserve residents also use the temporary roads to go on shopping trips to Sioux Lookout and Pickle Lake — a slow journey that takes about 12 hours.

Many winter-road travellers prefer to drive at night because the routes are winding and it's easier to avoid collisions by detecting the headlights of oncoming vehicles, Mickenack added.

Child care funding biggest concern

By Sylvia Veal

On Jan. 1, the Kenora District Services Board (KDSB) assumed full responsibility for the administration of social housing, both public and non-profit, marking the fourth area service to come under the board.

Social housing encompasses well over 500 units, and the former East and West Kenora Housing Authority offices were amalgamated into the Kenora District Housing Corp. The board retains the corporation to also administer the non-profit housing projects.

KDSB is now administering Ontario Works,

Child Care, land ambulance and social housing.

While each sector has presented its own problems, Sten Lif, the board's chief administrator, says one area of concern at the moment is child care.

"The province is cutting \$200 million out of the children care programs throughout Ontario," he said in an interview last Wednesday.

He was referring to a provincial government initiative to establish 103 early literacy centres in Ontario, coinciding with the electoral districts. "In Kenora-Rainy River there will be one centre, that will report to the Ministry of

Community and Social Services," Lif said. "Our mandate is child care, so what do we do? This is not new money going into this new program; it is being redirected from other programs."

The district board is expressing its concerns to the ministry. "It is setting up another level of bureaucracy," he pointed out, adding that if funding for services is reduced in Kenora district, it ultimately means municipalities will be asked to pay more and programs suffer.

"You should never have to make a choice between sewer and water and good child care," he emphasized.

Lif views child care as

not an amenity, but a need. "How do you attract professional people to come to your community if you don't have good child care?" he asked.

At the same time, Lif says the inaction of the government to go ahead with promised land tax reform also impacts on what municipalities in the district have to pay. "There's probably \$600 to \$800 million in assessment not being assessed in unorganized territories. For example, if there was access to those assessments for property in 2001, everyone currently paying for KDSB services would pay about \$1.3 million less," he said. ☆

NAN leads fresh call for full med school

BY JIM KELLY
THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL

Nishnawbe Aski Nation is taking a leadership role in pressing the province to make Lakehead University a full partner in a northern medical school.

With an invitation from NAN, leaders from across Northwestern Ontario met yesterday at Thunder Bay's Valhalla Inn in a united front to push for Lakehead's equal status with Laurentian University in Sudbury.

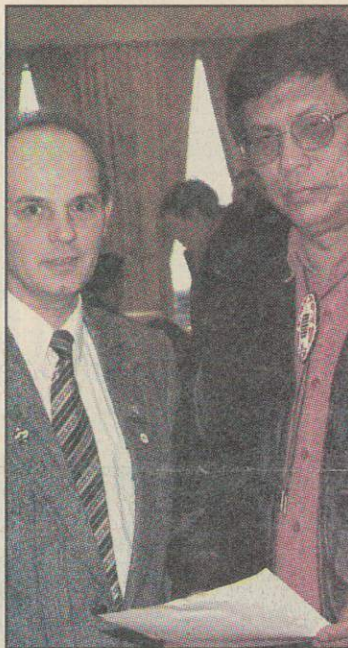
NAN Deputy Grand Chief Goyce Kakegamic asked participants in the four-hour workshop to discuss strategy on how to convince the province to reverse the decision that made Laurentian the medical school's main campus.

Lakehead would host a clinical education campus.

"We must come together with a voice in Northern Ontario," Kakegamic said.

"Accessing quality health care is an issue that belongs to all of us in the North."

Kakegamic said NAN believes a twin campus medical school could better address health care needs of isolated communities.



NOMA president Ron Nelson, left, and NAN Deputy Grand Chief Goyce Kakegamic at yesterday's Northern medical school session.

Lakehead president Fred Gilbert agreed the government must be pressured to change the medical school format.

Chronicle - Jan 15/02

Diamond giant awaits essential site report

CHEY
BUREAU

A feasibility study may advance the diamond mine opening near Attawapiskat Nation.

De Beers is proposing an open-pit mine about 10 kilometres west of the reserve in the Hudson Bay lowlands, with the possibility of creating up to 12 years.

Meanwhile, the Victor project would become a diamond mine in Ontario, producing gem-

A feasibility study, to be done by Toronto-based De Beers, will examine the site's geotechnical properties to best build workers' accommodation.

The exploration camp accessible by winter roads serves as a base for about 50 temporary workers.

De Beers spokeswoman Jocelyn Fraser said if the company supports the project, another more detailed study will be required before the company develops a mine.

Fraser wants to stress that it takes a long time to develop a diamond mine," Fraser said from Vancouver.

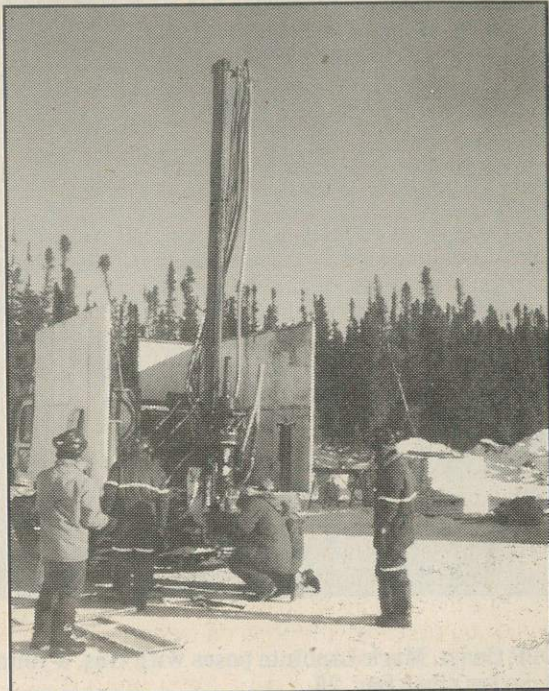
At Attawapiskat, residents have been working at the site as drilling helpers, clerical staff and dental technicians under a memo of understanding with De Beers.

It isn't clear how many Attawapiskat workers will get jobs if a mine is developed.

De Beers says the company tries to ensure that at least half of a mine's workforce comes from the local community, Fraser said.

De Beers is exploring in Northern Ontario in the future, returning to the region in earnest.

De Beers' Snap Lake project in the North-



De Beers is exploring the possibility of a diamond mine near Attawapiskat in the Hudson Bay lowlands. If the project goes ahead, it could create 400 jobs for a period of 12 years.

The mine in the Hudson Bay lowlands in the Northwest Territories is to begin production in 2006, with a projected operating life of 20 years.

Though demand for diamond jewelry fell off in 2001, it is expected to remain strong in the long term, Fraser said.

Diamonds are also used for industrial purposes, but most diamonds found in Canada are expected to have the potential for gems.

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