

Council rejects offer of free help

Wednesday, May 7/08

Clarington councillors chose not to accept the offer of a volunteer to help in setting up a public information session on the proposed energy from waste (EFW) facility.

Mr. Dave Renaud of the Canadian Auto Workers Regional Environmental Council told councillors Monday night that his organization recently ran two public information sessions at a fraction of what the Municipality reports it would cost to run a public forum.

"I'm offering you my volunteer services to assist in this public forum at no cost," Renaud told councillors. He reported that the May 2007 EFW forum hosted by his group, held at the CAW Hall in Oshawa, cost approximately \$2,600 to put on, and the January forum cost \$4,200.

Clarington's CAO Mr. Frank Wu reported to council last month that a public information session, involving experts on the subject and a moderator would cost the municipality, between \$21,000 and \$39,000 to run.

When Councillor Gord Robinson suggested that council take Renaud up on his offer, as there seemed to be quite a discrepancy between his price and the one reported by the CAO, Wu replied there was no discrepancy in his price which was arrived at through careful research. "A private individual in the private sector can do it [host a meeting] cheaper," he stated. "My figures need no clarification and no correction," Wu said.

Despite repeated requests from the public for the municipality to host a public information forum on EFW, Clarington council are going forward with information sessions as part of council meetings. Two representatives from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment were invited by the Mayor to speak at Monday's council meeting. They spoke on the environmental assessment process^o required for landfill sites.

At the end of the council meeting, Councillors opted to thank Renaud for this presentation, and not act on his offer.

Council meeting goes into overtime



A group of anti incineration protesters held a rally in downtown Bowmanville on Monday evening.

As with the council meeting in February where the Mayor invited guests to speak on EFW, Monday's meeting went past the 11 p.m. curfew. In addition to the Ministry of Environment representatives who were invited by the Mayor to speak on landfills, MPP John O'Toole, and Mr. Wayne Robbins of Darlington Nuclear presented their annual address to council. At approximately 10:15 p.m. councillors voted for a 15 minute recess, and at approximately 10:30 p.m. the delegation portion of the meeting began. Seven members of the public had registered to speak to council and at 11:00 p.m. three of these members had not yet spoken when Councillor Gord Robinson put forward a motion to reconvene the council meeting at 9:30 Friday morning. That motion was not passed. At this time Mr. Jim Richards, who at the previous council meeting was banned from speaking to council until he apologizes for calling Regional Chairman Roger Anderson a "bully," made an audible noise. Mayor Abernethy asked Richards to behave or leave the meeting, to which Richards made a comment, and the Mayor asked him to leave.

Councillor Charlie Trim suggested that as there were only two delegates left, (one of the delegates, a high school student had already left the meeting), council should break after they had spoken.

Councillor Mary Novak said she could not attend a Friday morning meeting as she had a meeting at the Region to attend at that time. When Mayor Jim Abernethy asked all councillors to check their schedules Councillor Willie Woo said he didn't have to check his schedule, if the meeting was held during the day, he could not attend as he has a full time job. Councillor Adrian Foster, the only other councillors with a job, said he too had commitments during the day time.

A motion was made to reconvene at 9:30 Tuesday morning, which was adopted.

At the Tuesday morning meeting Councillor Gord Robinson said that he found the comments made by Ms. Catherine McKeever on Monday night, to be disrespectful. Robinson said that in keeping with the procedural by-law, McKeever should be asked to retract her comment that the Metroland paper and Roger's Cable TV were biased against the incinerator, before being allowed to speak to council again. None of the councillors in attendance could second Robinson's motion, as they were not aware that McKeever had made comments of a disrespectful nature. "Relating to Robinson's request," Councillor Trim said, "I think I could support it, but I want to make sure what was said." As the Monday evening portion of the meeting was televised, councillors have access to a taped version of the meeting. It was agreed the clerk would review the tape and report back to councillors if any disrespectful comments were made by McKeever.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 Tuesday morning.