

Town favours expanding Regional council

By Bill Rea

Caledon could be retaining its five seats on Peel Regional council, while Mississauga and Brampton could see their shares increase. That is the option that Town councillors voted unanimously to back Tuesday night.

Regional councillors are slated to discuss a report from Regional Chair Frank Dale today (Thursday) on recommendations from the Governance Review Task Force.

The task force, consisting of Dale, the mayors of the three municipalities, the CAOs of the Region and municipalities and the Regional Clerk, have put forth five possible options, including the status quo, according to the Dale's report.

There are currently 24 members of council, not counting the Chair. There are 12 representatives from Mississauga, seven from Brampton and five from Caledon. The option Town councillors backed Tuesday night would see Brampton and Mississauga each get another four councillors. In the case of Brampton, Town CAO Mike Galloway said all members of City council would sit as Regional councillors too.

The motion passed by Town council stated the favoured option recognizes the need for more representation for Brampton while Mississauga would keep its current status of having half the seats at the council table, while maintaining effective representation for Caledon.

"I think it's a good compromise," Mayor Allan Thompson commented Tuesday night.

This would not be the first time there have been changes to the composition of Regional council

When the Region was formed in 1974, Mississauga had 10 representatives, with seven from Brampton and five from Caledon. That was changed to the current distribution in 2005.

"Peel Region is growing rapidly," Dale stated in his report, which is on the agenda for today's Regional council meeting. "Over the next 20 years, the population gap between its two largest municipalities will continue to narrow, while growth in Caledon will begin to accelerate."

He added there is no legislation that establishes a formula for reviewing the size or composition of Regional council.

"Consequently, different factors, including representation-by-population, area and history each have a place when determining their respective representation at Regional council," the report stated.

Dale's report also stated changes have to be implemented by the end of 2017 in order to be in place in time for the 2018 municipal elections.

Regional council will be able to ask the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to approve a regulation to change its composition, and then a Regional bylaw would have to be passed.