

LAST WEEK'S WEATHER

	Hi	Lo	Pcp
Tues.	30	18	0
Wed.	40	17	0
Thurs.	37	32	1.03r,s
Fri.	20	9	0
Sat.	20	-6	0
Sun.	18	5	3.0s
Mon.	20	14	0

Courier Freeman

A PARK NEWSPAPER

Trying to cope with a "tough" teen? "Toughlove" may be able to help. See story, Page 3 this week.

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Over Mayor's Objections Trustees Consider Hydro Firm's Plan

BY RON ROBERTSON
Despite vehement objections from Mayor Paul Claffey, the Potsdam Village Board has agreed to consider a letter of intent for a local hydro power firm to operate the village's hydroelectric facility.

Although the board took no formal action at its meeting Monday night, at least three trustees said they think Adirondack Hydro Development Corporation's proposal is still worth considering in spite of a recent report from an engineering firm that cautions the board against the project.

Adirondack Hydro has agreed to operate the village's hydro plant in conjunction with one it hopes to build in the opposite channel of the

river. The firm would lease both sites and operate the two facilities as one project, with a percentage of the profits going to the village as a lease payment.

A letter of intent, if signed, would not legally commit the village to the project, but would allow Adirondack Hydro to investigate further the project's feasibility.

Claffey maintained at a board meeting Monday night that since the village paid \$1,000 for a study by O'Brien and Gere engineers of Syracuse, it should heed that firm's

won't sign," Claffey said.

Operate It Alone

In a Dec. 30 letter, O'Brien and Gere recommended that the village seek to make improvements to its facility and continue to operate it alone.

Claffey said according to O'Brien and Gere's report "it appears that the village would be much better off if it operates the hydro project itself."

"We have the word of the engineering firm" not to go ahead with Adirondack Hydro's proposal, Claffey said.

Claffey said that the village would fly, too. Rist-Frost engineers of Glens Falls designed and oversaw construction of the hydro facility. The village has filed suit against Rist-Frost charging that firm with incorrectly predicting the power output of the plant.

Trustee Jeffrey Belodoff noted that O'Brien and Gere's conclusion was based on a financial analysis of the proposal, not an engineering one.

"They should make an engineering opinion, not a financial opinion," Belodoff said.

N'wood Constable Takes New Job

NORWOOD — Norwood Constable Alan Mulkin will be leaving this week for a new job, village officials learned Monday night.

Mayor Joseph Mariano said that Mulkin has taken a job with the Elmira city police department starting Jan. 26.

Until a new constable can be hired, the village will rely on part time law enforcement officers and backup from the county Sheriff's Department and State Police, officials said at Monday night's village board meeting.

The trustees voted to approve election inspectors for the March 7 registration day and March 18 election as follows:

For the Republicans, Diane Tebo, Helen Richardson, (registration) and Mary Tebo (election).

For the Democrats, Helen Deugaw and Wilmuth Jarvis.

And the trustees set grievance day hours for 3-7 p.m., Feb. 17.

The trustees approved local laws setting water and sewer rents, and agreed to postpone the February meeting until Feb. 23 after Village Clerk Lorraine Bartlett returns from vacation.

Settlement Expected

Contract negotiations between the village of Potsdam and the Potsdam Police Protective Association (PPPA) appear to be going smoothly, Mayor Paul Claffey said following a meeting with the village's negotiating team.

Claffey said that during a closed portion of Monday night's village board meeting the negotiating team reported its progress in ironing out a new two-year pact with the PPPA.

The current contract expires in May 31.

Claffey reported that he anticipates the negotiators on both sides will reach agreement "quite soon."

The village is represented in negotiations by Administrator Robert Burns, trustees Jeffrey Belodoff and Robert Sullivan.

"It (agreeing to a letter of intent) certainly goes contrary to the independent, impartial engineering firm that came in here and said not to do this," Claffey said.

"I go entirely with the recommendation of the fine engineering firm of O'Brien and Gere," the mayor said.

"I can't see where a letter of intent wouldn't be appropriate at this time," Sprague said.

Must Be Profitable

Belodoff noted that despite the mayor's objections, it is unlikely that Adirondack Hydro would enter into an agreement with the village unless the firm thought it was profitable.

"It's in their interest to make sure this works as well as possible, because they're in business to make money," Belodoff said.

Although O'Brien and Gere recommended the village operate the facility alone, it concurred with Adirondack Hydro's estimate of the amount of power that could be produced if the proposed operating scheme could be followed.

Before a final contract is signed, Adirondack must investigate whether flashboard installation is feasible, if it can obtain a favorable contract from Niagara Mohawk that will allow it to operate both facilities profitably, and if the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission would allow a second hydro plant at that site.

Improvements to the plant suggested by O'Brien and Gere for the village to operate it alone at a greater profit include increasing the height of the two dams with flashboards.

According to Administrator Robert Burns, it is unclear whether state and federal authorities would allow the village to increase dam height and whether the dams could take the structural strain of flashboards.

Adirondack Hydro's proposal includes building a new dam on the west channel to replace the 50-year-old wooden structure and installing flashboards on the east dam. Adirondack Hydro officials say they would pay for the new dam and any structural work necessary on the east dam before flashboards can be installed.

Call Goes Out For Plastic Pails

When the village of Potsdam begins its planned recycling project, it will need plastic five-gallon pails. A lot of them.

According to Trustee Helen Brouwer, chairperson of the village's recycling committee, the village will need a plastic pail for each of 1,500 households.

Brouwer said the pails will be used to collect cans and possibly glass at each household.

Even if the village does not receive the grant it has applied for from the New York State Energy Research Development Authority, Brouwer said, it will develop some type of recycling program and will probably still need the pails.

The pails must be plastic and at least five gallons in capacity, Brouwer said. Such pails are often used to deliver food products to restaurants. Pails containing building materials are also often of this type, she said.

Anyone with these pails are asked to donate them to the village by calling the administrator's office at 265-7480. They can be dropped off at the Civic Center; they will be taken to the public works garage for storage.

DOT Official To Meet With Village Planners

Ray Powers, regional engineer for the state Department of Transportation, will meet with the village of Potsdam planning board at its Jan. 27 meeting.

The regular meeting of the planning board is slated for 7:30 p.m. in the Civic Center board room.

Of primary concern to the planning board is the safety of pedestrians at crosswalks.

Pedestrian crossings across Sandtown Drive (the relief route or bypass) at the Market and Pine street intersections have been deemed hazardous by the board.

There are currently no crosswalk lights or signs at either of the two intersections to warn vehicular traffic that pedestrians have the right of way.

Court Reforms Could Eliminate Surrogates

BY MICHAEL HIRSCH

CANTON — Although several St. Lawrence County attorneys and lawyers have already expressed an interest in running for surrogate judge in 1988, the county could soon be without a separate surrogate division.

The proposed state Uniform Court Reform Act would eliminate surrogate divisions in counties that have populations under 200,000. Since St. Lawrence County has only about 114,000 residents, it would not have a surrogate judge handling only the disposition of estates if court reform is approved.

An amendment to the state constitution, a court reform bill to consolidate the state's courts was approved last year by the state legislature. If the legislature okays the act again this year, it would be decided by the state's voters as early as this fall.

How court reform would affect the anticipated election for surrogate judge in St. Lawrence County has been a matter for debate among the county's attorneys recently. Surrogate Judge John Livingston plans to retire at the end of 1988, after he reaches the mandatory retirement age of 70 in May 1988.

"I don't know how it would work and we haven't been told..." Judge Livingston said. "There has been a lot of fishing, a lot of rumors."

One informed source, however, said that if the court reform act is approved this year, there would be an election in Nov. 1988 whether or not an amendment goes through," said James Cantwell, counsel to the state Senate's Judiciary Committee.

"But if the court merger bill receives second passage and is approved by state voters, the election would be for a JSC (Justice of the Supreme Court) and for a 14-year term and on a county-wide basis."

Changeover

Instead of its current make-up of one Supreme Court judge, one county court judge, one family court judge and one surrogate court judge, St. Lawrence County would instead have four Supreme Court judges handling the same work after court reform is phased in over a three-year period, he said. Cantwell said that county

residents will apparently not have to go to another county for surrogate matters even though St. Lawrence County would not have a separate surrogate division.

"Without anything else happening, all four judges would have jurisdiction over surrogate court matters," he said. Most likely, one judge would be assigned the job of handling surrogate matters as well as other work, he said.

"I think the intent is to have a surrogate available to the people in the county so they do not have to travel to another county," Cantwell said. "But a lot of this will have to be decided by enabling legislation."

State lawmakers have been discussing court reform amendments for several years, but the legislature approved a court reform act for the first time last year. A constitutional amendment must be passed by the legislature twice before it can be placed on the ballot.

"A lot of people were surprised when it passed last year," Judge Livingston said. "It seemed to be one of those rush things at the end of the session."

Cantwell is an employee of state Senator Ronald Stafford (R-Plattsburgh), who was named chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee two weeks ago. He said Stafford has not yet decided whether he will support the act this year.

"Court reform legislation has been around in one form or another for a number of years," Cantwell said. "It has a great deal of support and there are also a number of groups opposed to it."

"Senator Stafford has not made a decision whether he supports it or not, although he did vote for the first passage."

Supporters argue that consolidation of the various court levels would make the court system more efficient.

"The rationale why we should have it is basically because of the confusion among the different levels of court, especially in the area of overlapping jurisdiction," Cantwell said. "There is a feeling that consolidation or merger of all the lower courts would be desirable."

Consolidation might also let court officials make better use of "court resources such as court reporters and clerks," Cantwell said.



BROKEN CHIMNEY — Potsdam firefighter Jim Corbett begins to inspect the chimney that broke at the 86 Elm St. home of Charles and Eileen Gerrish Monday morning. Potsdam firemen responded to the home after the chimney broke while a fire was going in the woodstove. The house reportedly sustained little damage. (Ron Robertson photo)

Emergency Over, But Norfolk Residents Asked To Conserve

BY RON ROBERTSON

NORFOLK — Norfolk's water emergency is over, but town officials are asking residents in the Norfolk and Raymondville water districts to continue to conserve water until the level in the water tank increases.

Town Supervisor Richard Merchant said this morning (Tuesday) that town officials are concerned about the level in the water tower in case it's needed for firefighting. The level has dropped from its usual 90 feet to around 50 feet, Merchant said.

"She's on he way back up again," he said, "but very, very slowly."

Merchant explained that the problem began late Thursday or early Friday when the no. 1 well and pump became too clogged with calcium deposits to operate properly.

Over the weekend, he said, a bearing went bad in the no. 2 pump motor, leaving the no. 3 well to pump all the water needs of the hamlets of Norfolk and Raymondville.

By 9:45 a.m. today, Merchant said, the no. 2 pump was repaired, installed and operating. A backup pump will be on hand by Thursday or Friday in case one of the two operating pumps breaks.

The no. 1 pump remains off, Merchant said, because in its calcified state, it won't pump enough water to make a difference.

A fourth well will be installed in the spring and summer to provide three working pumps for the water needs of the two hamlets, Merchant said.

"We'll be in good shape by summertime," Merchant said.

Plan To Move Fifth Grade Classes Aired

BY BETSY BAKER

A plan to move the district's fifth grade classes from Lawrence Avenue Elementary School to the A.A. Kingston Middle School building is being considered by the Potsdam Central School Board of Education.

At its meeting last Tuesday the school board discussed the plan, which school Superintendent Gary Snell says would allow more natural programming sequences and ease over-crowding.

Snell said New York state's educational programming deals with a kindergarten through sixth grade sequence, and that moving the fifth grade would allow continuity from fifth to sixth grades.

The move would be, in essence, a return to the primary school followed by junior high school approach, Snell said, with fifth and sixth grades under the supervision of elementary principal James Waterson.

Middle school principal Michael Loconti would concentrate on seventh and eighth grades, Snell said, and would have additional responsibilities for handicapped and special education programs.

The move would also ease over-crowding in the elementary school, according to Snell. There are 700 pupils in the elementary school, he said, and 325 in the middle school, a building of similar size. This year the sixth and seventh grade classes are very small, Snell noted, and next year's classes will be still smaller.

The K-6 pupils would follow the elementary school daily schedule, and would not move to the early morning middle school schedule, Snell said.

The plan would allow for a better balance of art, music and special education activities, he said, adding, "I think there is some potential for joint activities such as fifth and sixth grade chorus and band," for example.

Snell said the plan, which was aired last week by fifth and sixth grade teachers, and administrators, was well received by school board members. He said the district's PTSA will discuss the plan on Jan. 22. School board members will consider it again on Jan. 27.

In other school board matters: — Alan Eggleston, high school mathematics teacher, was granted tenure.

— April Martin was hired to teach fifth grade.

The year-end retirement of Elmer James after 17 years as a music teacher in the district was announced.

Runnels Is Recitalist

CANTON — In conjunction with the James W. Hutchison Freshman Piano Competition, the St. Lawrence University music department will present a piano recital by Brent Runnels at 8 p.m. Wednesday in Gilbert Recital Hall. There is no admission charge.



PINEWOOD DERBY — Racing is on the agenda for these Cub Scouts of Norwood's Pack 40 as they prepare for the Jan. 17 Pinewood Derby held in the Norwood Municipal Building. (Maureen Triolo photo)

Bears Take On Albany Saturday; Wave The Victory Pennant On Page 19

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