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Publié le 02 avril 2009 à 23h16 | Mis à jour le 02 avril 2009 à 23h24

Le CRTC entrouvre la porte à une 3e fréquence



Archives, LeDroit

[Patrice Gaudreault](#)

Le Droit

Nouveau coup de théâtre, hier, aux audiences du CRTC portant sur l'attribution des deux dernières fréquences FM disponibles dans la région d'Ottawa-Gatineau.

Contre toute attente, le président Konrad von Finckenstein a repoussé la suite des travaux jusqu'à la mi-juin, afin de se donner le temps d'examiner la disponibilité d'une troisième fréquence dans le marché de la capitale, soit le 94,5 FM.

Pression politique

Fréquence adjacente au 94,9 - où Astral Media opère présentement la station CIMF RockDétente - le 94,5

FM pourrait représenter une avenue susceptible de délier l'impasse. Le CRTC, qui avait accordé deux licences FM à des stations anglophones en août 2008, a repris ses audiences cette semaine après avoir reçu l'ordre du ministre de Patrimoine canadien, James Moore, de refaire ses devoirs pour tenir compte de la communauté francophone.

Le président du CRTC a annoncé, hier, le report des audiences au 12 juin. D'ici là, il entend écrire à Radio-Canada afin d'obtenir des clarifications quant à la disponibilité de la Tour Camp Fortune et de son antenne.

En parallèle, Radio-Canada conseillera le CRTC quant à la faisabilité d'une telle entreprise. À la lumière de ces précisions, les huit parties impliquées dans la course aux dernières licences pourront soumettre des soumissions quant à l'utilisation de cette fréquence.

« Boîte de Pandore »

« Clairement, le 94,5 est une partie intégrante de la solution », a déclaré M. von Finckenstein.

La direction d'Astral Media ne partage pas le même enthousiasme, qualifiant l'alternative offerte par le 94,5 FM de boîte de Pandore. « Ce n'est pas la panacée que certains tentent de faire croire », a déclaré Denis Bouchard, d'Astral Media Radio. L'entreprise - qui avait obtenu une licence pour diffuser de la musique anglophone pour les femmes de 34 à 55 ans au 99,7 FM - a martelé hier que le 94,5 ne représentait pas une solution viable pour Eve Radio.

La décision du CRTC d'examiner l'utilisation d'une troisième fréquence a été mieux accueillie dans le camp de la Radio communautaire francophone d'Ottawa. Le projet a d'ailleurs reçu l'appui de l'Association des professionnels de la chanson et de la musique, hier. Son président, Jean-Michel Ouimet, a témoigné devant le CRTC de l'importance d'une telle voix pour le milieu.

Coup de pouce

« Une communauté qui n'est pas visible est une communauté qui ne pourra pas survivre », a-t-il déclaré. « La communauté franco-ontarienne doit avoir un véhicule pour diffuser sa propre culture, ses propres institutions et sa propre identité. »

L'APCM est passée de la parole aux actes, en annonçant un apport financier équivalent à 60 000 \$ par année au projet de la Radio communautaire francophone d'Ottawa. « En plus d'une somme financière fort intéressante en vue de promotion et de publicité, du contenu de plusieurs heures de programmation viendra appuyer la station » a précisé le directeur général de l'APCM, François Carrier.

Le Blues de Bob Walsh

De son côté, le bluesman Bob Walsh a donné son appui au projet du groupe Torres, qui avait obtenu une première licence pour une radio de blues anglophone au 101,9 FM. Il a témoigné de la soif du public pour le blues, un style musical auquel la radio commerciale fait la sourde oreille. Même son de cloche du côté d'Alexandre Petit, de la Virée Blues Boréale. « On ne parle pas d'imposer le blues ; il y a une forte demande », dit-il, rappelant que le Vieux-Hull s'est déjà appelé le Petit Chicago. « Plusieurs artistes de renom de blues et de jazz sont passés là. Il y a une culture et des racines qui sont encore présentes. »

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La plus longue récession depuis 1929 tirerait à sa fin

Publié le 03 avril 2009 à 07h19 | Mis à jour à 07h25



Photo: Bloomberg

À Londres, un passant circule devant un centre d'emploi. Si les analystes ont raison, trouver du travail deviendra plus facile l'an prochain.

Agence France-Presse
Washington

Les États-Unis sont officiellement entrés dans leur plus longue période de contraction économique depuis la crise de 1929, mais responsables et analystes estiment que le creux de la vague n'est pas loin.

La récession pourrait être terminée à la fin de l'année. Le 1er avril, la récession est entrée dans son 17e mois, le Bureau national de la recherche économique (NBER), chargé de dater les cycles économiques, ayant établi qu'elle a commencé en décembre 2007.

La crise actuelle est donc désormais plus longue que celles de 1973-1975 et 1981-1982, qui avaient duré chacune 16 mois.

Toute référence à la Grande Dépression des années 1930 est cependant malvenue: le krach boursier de 1929 a entraîné une période de contraction de l'économie américaine de 43 mois selon le NBER, alors que pour l'instant,

les responsables économiques estiment, ou espèrent, que la récession actuelle s'achèvera avec 2009.

Mais les dirigeants de la Réserve fédérale font preuve depuis quelque temps d'une grande humilité en insistant sur le côté «hautement incertain» de leurs pronostics.

Le président de la Fed, Ben Bernanke, ne déclarait-il pas devant le Congrès en janvier 2008, alors que la récession avait commencé: «Nous ne prévoyons pas de récession, mais plutôt, à ce stade, une croissance lente».

La crise s'avère désormais au moins aussi violente que celle de 1981-1982, ainsi que l'a reconnu récemment Jeffery Lacker, un des dirigeants de la Fed.

Mais elle n'est certainement pas la pire depuis la Grande Dépression, comme le note Charles Gascon, économiste de la Banque réserve fédérale de Saint-Louis.

«La récession actuelle n'est pas la dépression qu'a connue votre grand-père», écrit-il, relevant que le revenu par tête a chuté de 11,7% et l'emploi de 5,6% au cours des douze premiers mois de la Grande Dépression (contre une baisse respective de 0,7% et 2,2% de décembre 2007 à décembre 2008).

Au dernier trimestre de 2008, le produit intérieur brut américain a chuté de 6,3% en rythme annuel, du jamais vu depuis le premier trimestre 1982.

Un grand nombre d'analystes estiment que les trois premiers mois de l'année ont été un peu moins sombres, mais Richard Fisher, un autre dirigeant de la Fed, a estimé mercredi que le premier trimestre avait été «aussi mauvais ou peut-être légèrement pire que le quatrième trimestre» de 2008.

Le taux de chômage atteint désormais son niveau de la fin de 1983 et devrait continuer de monter jusqu'en 2010, puisqu'il reflète la conjoncture avec retard. Ryan Sweet, économiste de Moody's Economy.com, estime «qu'on n'évitera pas un taux de chômage à deux chiffres», comme entre septembre 1982 et juin 1983.

Mais depuis trois semaines, plusieurs indicateurs sont venus apporter une lueur d'espoir: les ventes de détail ont semblé se stabiliser en janvier et février après six mois de baisse, la production industrielle semble ne plus pouvoir tomber beaucoup plus bas, les commandes de biens durables et les ventes de logements ont rebondi après des mois de recul.

Pour M. Bernanke, la fin de la récession devrait arriver «probablement» cette année et «la reprise au début de l'année prochaine».

Prudent, M. Lacker a qualifié récemment d'«espoir raisonnable» l'idée que «l'économie touche le fond à un moment ou à un autre cette année et reparte graduellement».

Pour l'économiste indépendant Joel Naroff, la reprise pourrait avoir lieu plus tôt qu'on ne le croit, dès le deuxième trimestre, «mais le niveau de l'activité restera probablement faible pour un certain temps».

Child-care spaces can't be cut: Cullen

Councillors reject staffers' plan to save money on subsidized spots

BY JAKE RUPERT, THE OTTAWA CITIZEN APRIL 3, 2009

OTTAWA — The city's day-care budget shouldn't be balanced by cutting subsidized spaces, city council's community services committee decided Thursday.

In a revamp of the city's approach to managing the program, city staff suggested shortfalls in the day-care budget be made up by reducing the number of subsidized spaces given to low-income earners.

But Bay Councillor Alex Cullen moved to scrap the idea and replace it with another. "I, as a city councillor, cannot accept the elimination of subsidized spaces," he said.

Instead, the committee's recommendation to council, which will deal with the matter next week, is that any shortfall in the day-care budget should be identified as a "pressure" on the city's overall budget. This means the question of how to fund the shortfall, either through cuts or increased spending, would be debated each year as part of council's budget debates. The alternative would have seen the subsidized spaces cut automatically to whatever the existing budget allowed, without council's intervention.

Child care, and how to pay for it, has been a thorny issue at city hall for years.

Provincial funding for the program and supply of spaces has been flat for several years, while the cost of providing the care and demand for spots have been growing.

As the waiting list to get into licensed day care has grown, the city has been struggling to maintain the existing number of subsidized spaces by increasing its contribution to those spaces each year.

For instance, in the 2009 budget, the city opted to spend \$4.6 million more than planned on day care instead of cutting 700 subsidized spaces to meet council's planned spending target.

Even with this increase, analysis shows private full-fee-paying parents are paying more than their share — and day-care providers are shying away from providing subsidized spaces, because those actually cost them money.

This is not sustainable financially and offers no way for supply to match demand, and city council asked staff to come up with another way.

City staff are proposing a base budget increase of \$1.9 million to bring subsidies up to match the private fee rates, and then to tie the budget increases to a "child-care index," so that the budget will

increase in keeping with providers' costs. However, the plan will not increase the overall number of spaces.

Somerset Councillor Diane Holmes and Barrhaven Councillor Jan Harder said to do this, it's time for the city and people concerned with child care to get together and starting putting pressure on the province to increase its contribution to the program. A group is being put together to co-ordinate those efforts.

THE NUMBERS

- 20,000: Number of licensed child care spaces in the city; 7,000 of them subsidized

- 6,400: Number of families now on a list waiting for spaces to open up; 2,000 of them qualify for subsidized spaces

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April 3, 2009

Teachers' Pension Plan facing \$2.5B shortfall

By THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan couldn't respond fast enough to the rapid decline in financial markets last year and is facing a funding shortfall of \$2.5 billion, according to the fund's chief investment officer.

"People generally should ask, 'Did we do everything possible last year?' " Neil Petroff said in a conference call yesterday.

"Well, we did a lot, but in retrospect we wished we could have done even more and moved even faster. As market dynamics changed, it became apparent that strategies that worked for us over the past several years were no longer effective."

The plan, which administers the pensions of 284,000 active and retired teachers in Ontario, said yesterday its assets declined \$21.1 billion or 18% in 2008.

This was in line with other big Canadian pension plans but underperformed the 9.6% loss of the fund's investment benchmark. This is only the third time in the fund's 18-year history it has registered a loss.

"It hurts to fall off a horse but you've got to pick yourself up and say 'OK, what did we learn?' " said Teachers president and CEO Jim Leech.

"If you have a strategy that works for six or seven or eight years in a row, sometimes it's hard to shoot that strategy in advance of hitting the wall," he said.



April 3, 2009

More schools at risk to close Enrolment dropping in Merivale area

By AEDAN HELMER, SUN MEDIA

Declining enrolment continues to threaten the viability of some schools in the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.

Already reeling from the closures of Torbolton, Fitzroy Harbour, J.S. Woodsworth and Bayview elementary schools, as well as the 2005 closure of Laurentian High School, the board faces the prospect of three more school closures by September 2010.

The latest options were presented Wednesday at an open house attended by about 130 people at Meadowlands Public School, one of seven elementary schools that could soon find itself on the chopping block.

NEW GUIDELINES

In April 2008, the wheels were set in motion to close one or two schools within the Merivale area.

Following newly established provincial guidelines, the board appointed accommodation review committees (ARC) to weigh the options for closures.

Accommodation reviews are already underway in Beacon Hill, where the board is considering closing either Colonel By, Rideau or Gloucester high schools. In the Merivale area, seven elementary schools and two high schools are under review.

Enrolment numbers at Carleton Heights and McGregor Easson public schools are already low and projected to continue a downward spiral, with an average of about 13 students per grade at both schools.

That leads first to classrooms split between grade levels, and next to cuts in programming.

Riley Brockington, vice chairman of the board and trustee for the area, said the status quo "is not acceptable."

"We trustees don't authorize staff to commence this massive study unless we feel that some change is necessary," said Brockington.

'FEWER RESOURCES'

"You have fewer teachers, fewer resources, smaller school budget, less extracurricular activities with fewer teachers to supervise and less kids to participate. In some cases you have neighbouring schools both running at half capacity, and it just doesn't make sense to run two schools in the same community if they're not full."

Under new ARC guidelines, a greater voice is given to residents, and Brockington said he's been hearing from concerned parents and community groups.

"The ARC looks at the value of each school to the student, the board, the community and the economy, and looks at scenarios that they have not concluded are the final scenarios, but put on the floor (Wednesday) night to stimulate discussion," said Brockington.

OPEN PROCESS

"They made it very clear that this is still a very open process, that other scenarios or other options are more than welcome and probably will be put forward."

Public input can be submitted to the board until May 8, with a final decision to be made by trustees in December.

SCHOOL SHUFFLE

Scenarios considered for the Merivale Area:

- Scenario Zero: Status Quo -- no closures.
- Scenario 1: Amalgamate McGregor Easson and Carleton Heights.
- Scenario 2: amalgamate Sir Winston Churchill and Merivale High School as a Grade 7 to 12 school.
- Scenario 3: Amalgamate Parkwood Hills and Sir Winston Churchill as a JK to Grade 8 school.
- Scenario 4: Meadowlands adds French immersion.

HIPPY program gets children off to good start

A home education system, launched 40 years ago in Israel, has arrived in Vanier to help solve the 'school readiness dilemma,' Joanne Laucius writes.

THE OTTAWA CITIZEN APRIL 3, 2009

OTTAWA — Any primary teacher will tell you that children do not enter kindergarten on a level playing field. Some have never heard a bedtime story, while others are almost ready to start reading to themselves. Some can recite the alphabet, others can't even say the word.

Academics and policy-makers call it the "school readiness dilemma."

But they have also grappled with how to ensure that children, even those who live in low-income homes, enter kindergarten at the same level as classmates with more advantages.

Friday in Vanier, an international program launched in Israel 40 years ago will be officially introduced. It has the whimsical acronym of HIPPY — Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters.

It works this way: "home visitors," usually young mothers, visit parents weekly with a simple curriculum the parents deliver to their own three, four and five-year-olds.

The free curriculum, which teaches the basic pre-kindergarten skills, takes about 15 minutes a day to deliver. Parents are equipped with everything they need, from advice on area services to books, crayons and scissors.

Every day, Anne Riel and her daughter Gabrielle follow the curriculum dropped off by their HIPPY home visitor.

This week, mother and daughter have been reading a book in the popular Spot series, which is part of the curriculum. Gabrielle is already adept at listening to instructions and recognizes some letters, even though she isn't even three years old yet.

"My other kids were ready. She'll be even more ready," said Riel, a single mother with two older boys, 10 and 14.

"The teacher won't have to take her by the arm and show her how to cut with scissors."

Bill and Hillary Clinton liked the concept so much they introduced it during Clinton's term as Arkansas governor, and both still refer to HIPPY frequently. The queen of Jordan wants to bring it to her country.

In Canada, where the program is already active in a number of cities, including Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal, supporters believe HIPPY offers advantages to immigrants and aboriginal families who might be unfamiliar with the school system or are hesitant about getting involved.

Ottawa resident Judith Maxwell, founding president of Canadian Policy Research Networks, was easily convinced when some friends approached her about introducing HIPPY to Ottawa. Embassies hosted fundraisers, and foundations and Citizenship and Immigration Canada have provided funding.

Individuals are also digging into their pockets, said Maxwell, who notes that poor performance in primary schools leads to a number of costs to society, including more high school dropouts and higher rates of teen pregnancy, delinquency and crime.

“As soon as I learned about the program, I was sold on it. It captures the essence of the right interventions,” she said.

“If a child arrives at school and finds they can be successful in all the tasks they get, they’re on a positive trajectory that leads to success. I think that’s why people are so excited about HIPPY.”

Maxwell points out that Vanier’s elementary schools are among the poorest performers in Grade 3 standardized tests.

“If you could have Grade 1 classes populated with five or 10 students really ready to learn, it allows other students to piggyback on them.”

Over the years, numerous initiatives have tried to come to grips with the “school readiness dilemma.”

Sesame Street, for example, was launched in 1969 to help give low-income kids a boost in early literacy and numeracy before they entered kindergarten.

In 1995, Ontario’s \$3-million royal commission on learning recommended introducing non-mandatory three-year-old kindergarten, arguing that it would put children from less-privileged backgrounds on a more level playing field and prevent expensive fix-it costs further down the road. But three-year-old kindergarten never materialized in Ontario because of the expense.

“We underinvest in early childhood education in every province but Quebec,” said Maxwell.

Andrew Rheume, the director of counselling and community services of the Vanier Community Service Centre, which will be administering HIPPY, said four home visitors have been recruited for the program so far.

He heard about HIPPY four years ago when he was approached to be part of a program called Parents as Teacher, but couldn’t afford the staff. HIPPY costs about \$2,500 to \$3,000 a year for each family

enrolled.

There are benefits for the home visitors as well as the families, said Rheaume. "In the past, mothers have become home visitors and went on to get jobs in day cares or go back to school," he said.

Across Canada, about 600 children are enrolled in HIPPY and there are about 3,000 graduates, said Debbie Bell, the program's executive director for Canada.

The program lets children learn skills that middle-income families take for granted, she said.

"The schools have certain expectations. If children don't meet that, then they start a downward trajectory. It can affect the rest of their school careers."

The program also helps parents navigate Canada's school system. HIPPY helps them understand the sometimes-confusing vocabulary of schooling, including terms like "story comprehension" and "fine motor skills."

And it helps them learn how to advocate for their child. If a parent can learn to advocate for their child before the child even starts school, they will be an advocate for the rest of their child's school career.

Riel said Gabrielle is more advanced than her older brothers, and HIPPY has helped her excel.

"I think she's the poster child for HIPPY."

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