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Aurora Cultural Centre names new Executive Director



By Brock Weir

Suzanne Haines will lead the Aurora Cultural Centre into the future.

The Cultural Centre Board announced Ms. Haines' appointment to the top job on Friday night, an appointment effective this past Monday, June 5.

Ms. Haines joins the Centre after its founding Executive Director, Laura Schembri, left the position after eight years to pursue an opportunity in Newmarket.

The Centre's new Executive Director comes to Aurora from the Burlington Performing Arts Centre, where she also served as Executive Director.

?The Aurora Cultural Centre is a gem in the community that is growing and changing,? says Ms. Haines. ?As a cultural leader, the Aurora Cultural Centre has shown its purpose and place in York Region. I look forward to working with the staff, volunteers, Board of Directors, and Town Staff and Council to continue to develop and deliver on a strong and vibrant cultural strategy for the residents of Aurora and beyond.?

In a statement, Aurora Cultural Centre Board Chair Craig Mather said Ms. Haines is arriving at the Centre at a ?very exciting time? as they are completing their new strategic plan ?which will take our young organization to the next level in terms of our programming, outreach and growth.?

?Suzanne brings a great deal of experience in the area of not-for-profit organizations, especially in the field of arts and culture,? he said. ?The Board is very excited about the leadership and innovation she will bring, and with our small but very dedicated staff, we will continue to grow as a centre of excellence in all aspects of our work.?

Previous to her position in Burlington, Ms. Haines served as General Manager of the Gateway Theatre in Richmond, BC, and in a management position with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony.

She holds an honours degree in Business Administration with a major in theatre from Wilfred Laurier University and holds a Certified Human Resource Leader accreditation.

Suzanne was awarded the 2010 Ethel Tibbets Arts Award for women of distinction and a Celebrating Women in the Arts in 2008 for her work in Richmond, and is co-founder and past chair of the Richmond Arts Coalition.

As an active member of the community, Suzanne sat on the ActSafe Performing Arts Committee from 2005 ? 2009, the Business and the Arts Committee of the Richmond Chamber of Commerce, and the Tourism Richmond marketing committees from 2008 ? 2010.