

IN GOOD COMPANY: Getting Down to Business

By Mayor Geoff Dawe

I hope everyone had a relaxing break over the past few weeks.

I had the opportunity to spend time with my family and reflect on the challenges and successes of the past year. It was nice to see a robust turnout at our Family First Night on December 31. It was a great way to ring-in the New Year.

Now that we have completed our municipal orientation sessions, our Council's focus will turn to the 2015 Budget. Our first meeting will take place on Monday, January 26 at 7 p.m. at Aurora Town Hall. I would encourage anyone who would like to participate in the budget discussion with ideas or questions to attend Monday's session. In addition to the budget overview, we will discuss the results of our recent Citizen Budget survey.

Since my last In Good Company column, there have been developments on the Highland Gate Golf closure I would like to share. In a media release issued on December 23, property owner ClubLink Corporation advised it was entering a joint venture with Geranium Corporation to create a one-of-a-kind residential development on the Highland Gate Golf Course lands.

A copy of ClubLink's media release is available via the front page of the Town website at www.aurora.ca. Additionally, the Highland Gate Ratepayers Association, comprising neighbours of the golf course and other stakeholders, elected their executive members in December. Contact information for the ratepayers association is also available on the Town website.

On the topic of public consultation, I am looking forward to my upcoming Keynote Address to the Aurora Chamber of Commerce on February 18.

I am thankful to the Chamber for providing this annual opportunity to connect directly with members of our business community on issues that matter to them. It is a great forum for discussion and one that provides the chance to discuss the Town's strategic plans.

The event will be hosted at King's Riding Golf Club. Tickets are available at www.aurorachamber.on.ca.

In December, the Town published and delivered the 2015 Waste Management Guide and Recycling Calendar. This is an extremely handy resource, with information on garbage collection, recycling and composting schedules, special waste pick-up dates and events. Copies were sent to homes in The Banner newspaper. If you did not receive your calendar, copies are available at Aurora Town Hall.

Information on garbage collection, recycling and composting is also readily accessible through the Town website (including a PDF copy of the calendar), our free downloadable PingStreet suite of applications (apps) and free downloadable My-Waste stand-alone app.

A friendly reminder to residents that waste must be at the curb by 7 a.m. on your designated collection day. Our waste collection contractors cannot make extra stops to collect late set-outs, as this creates significant delays and impedes service to other parts of the community.

This winter has seen some rather dramatic temperature swings. While recent weather may have us shivering, the good news is that Aurora's outdoor ice rinks are in full-swing. Skating is available in Ada Johnson Park, Confederation Park, Machell Park and Town Park until 11 p.m.

Complementing the winter theme, our annual Arctic Adventure is a great opportunity to enjoy the season. Arctic Adventure takes place on Family Day, February 16 at Town Park.

There will be professional ice carving, snow tubing, ice fishing, snow shoeing, games and great live entertainment. Please visit www.aurora.ca/arcticadventure for schedules and information.

The nomination process has just begun for Aurora's annual Community Recognition and Citizen of the Year Awards. The Town highly values the efforts of volunteers and the many who give back to the community. Help recognize deserving Aurorans, community groups and businesses by submitting an application. Online applications or downloadable PDF copies are available at www.aurora.ca/cra. Nominations will be accepted until March 19.

As a parting thought, I would like to extend congratulations to Neighbourhood Network on the occasion of their 7th birthday. This not-for-profit division of Magna International offers phenomenal community support through volunteer work, charity work and numerous community-based programs. Best wishes for many more successful years!

Until next time, see you around Town!