

VOTE 2014: Pullano plans to jump into municipal race this week



By Brock Weir

Aurora businessman Anthony Pullano plans to jump into the municipal election race this week.

Owner of the Aurora-based Embassy Greeting Cards, he tells *The Auroran* he plans to file his papers as a Council candidate this week following lengthy speculation he had been eyeing the Mayor's seat. Although he is submitting his name as a candidate for Council, he has not ruled out a possible mayoral bid.

"I believe I bring a business perspective into the matter because, at the end of the day, Aurora is a corporation just like any large private corporation," he says. "I know what it means to find savings in my business, to reduce expenses, to try and obtain a profit, but there is no profit in running the Town of Aurora because it is all public money.

"Some people do not have an idea what it means to start a business, pay wages, be competitive, and one of the things I would like to see in Aurora is a greater effort in enticing new businesses and corporations in Aurora to increase the tax base."

In looking back over the last few terms of Council, Mr. Pullano says he believes it is time to get away from some of the "petty and personal" squabbles that can creep into debates, including multiple lawsuits brought about by public officials. Politicians, he says, need to develop thick skins in the face of opposition and think twice before launching lawsuits.

"When [businessmen] interact with each other, they don't easily get personally offended," he says. "You're not going to sue someone; we just don't have time for this nonsense. We are out more for the roast than the smoke. We want results and the results in business, and in politics, is doing the best for your constituents and doing the best for your town, as opposed to creating smoke and bad feelings.

"I would like to somehow bring an end to the Aurora Lawsuit Wars. To me, that is a bunch of nonsense. No politician has the right to silence and then sue a citizen. The citizen is our boss. We work at his pleasure and not the reverse. Then there is the fact of politicians suing each other because someone said something the politician didn't like. You're offended? You're in politics. You should have a harder skin than that. It is part of the game. Someone is throwing you a football. Catch it. If you miss it, you don't have to sue the guy."

Rather than filing a lawsuit, it is a politician's job to "understand why the citizen is so concerned" and provide them with a "proper explanation", he says. If that doesn't quell any conflict, one simply has to agree to disagree.

?'[So much time] is spent on personal pettiness and not real business,' he says. '[Councillors] are part-time and you are doing the work of the town on a part-time basis, half your energy is spent on personal issues. A ward system would bring an end to this nonsense because Aurora citizens can directly go to their Councillor who represents them on this particular issue.'

As a practicing Catholic, Mr. Pullano says this faith has given him a foundation in helping one's neighbour and the importance of family, and that would be a valued perspective in the race.

He is a long-time supporter of Conservative and Progressive Conservative politics in the riding of Newmarket-Aurora.