

FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE: Final Thoughts

Municipal Election 2014: Final Thoughts
By Stephen Somerville

The results are in.

Mr. Geoffrey Dawe is still the Mayor, while we have a few new faces on Council.

Let's see how your humble scribe fared in his predictions.

I wrote that Mayor Geoffrey Dawe would win rather handily over Mr. Gallo ? and he did.

While there were twenty-eight candidates vying for the eight seats, I wrote that there would undoubtedly be a number of surprises come Monday evening, and I was partially right.

Below are the individuals that I predicted would be elected.

1. Tom Mrakas
2. John Abel
3. Alice Lalas
4. Michael Thompson
5. Sandra Humfries
6. Jeff Thom
7. Arshad Desai
8. Harold Kim

I also predicted that the one wild card in this would be Councillor Evelyn Buck. I believed that she was going to either finish 4th or 14th.

The actual results (with actual votes):

1. John Abel ? 6,098
2. Sandra Humfries ? 5,052
3. Michael Thompson ? 4,974
4. Jeff Thom ? 4,921
5. Wendy Gaertner ? 4,605
6. Harold Kim ? 4,098
7. Tom Mrakas ? 3,826
8. Paul Pirri ? 3,760

Mrs. Buck finished ninth, only 41 votes shy of Mr. Pirri.

I was fairly sure that John Abel would finish in the top two, but Ms. Humfries total vote count surprised me. I also thought that Tom Mrakas would finish on top, just edging Mr. Abel for the position of Deputy Mayor.

It is also nice to see some new blood on Council.

Some other, random, post-election musings:

Voter turnout was down over 3% from the last election. This can be looked at in a kind of glass half full/half empty kind of way.

It either means people are somewhat happy with what is going on or they really don't care. I hope that is the former and not the later.

Only 35.74 per cent of us voted. Not great when you think of the important decisions that the Mayor and Council need to make, including what to do with the \$35M Hydro Reserve, improvements on Yonge Street, keeping a lid on tax increases and the like.

These types of decisions really do impact the quality of life in our community and we should - collectively - take our civic duty more seriously.

This writer believes that we should adopt mandatory voting or, at the very least, offer an incentive, like say ?\$X? off next year's property tax bill for those who cast a vote.

There were also two ballot questions for voters to consider.

The first question asked if the number of Councillors, excluding the Mayor, should be reduced to six from eight. 65 per cent of the 12,000 plus votes supported this initiative. Problem was that the 12,000 plus voters in favor of this initiative only comprised 33 per cent of the electorate; 50 per cent of eligible voters are required to make the ballot question a reality.

The second question asked if you support a ward system where candidates are divided up geographically. Only 45 per cent were in support of this initiative, so again, it did not pass.

I salute all those individuals in our community who put their names forward for Mayor, Councillor or School Board Trustee.

Finally, congratulations to Mayor Dawe, the returning Councillors, and a special welcome to newcomers Harold Kim, Jeff Thom and Tom Mrakas.

Good luck.

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