

## Humfryes keeps one eye on the past and one eye on the future ahead of second term



**By Brock Weir**

There is much to be done in the next term of Council, according to recently re-elected Councillor Sandra Humfryes – and although much has to do with Aurora's future, working hand-in-hand with that future is Aurora's past.

Ms. Humfryes was re-elected in this fall's Municipal Election, coming in second in the Council stakes, just behind John Abel.

She describes Election Night as being slightly nerve-wracking, and one she initially wanted to spend quietly and privately.

“That night it really sunk in how it would feel not to be able to serve again,” she says. “It was a pretty sad feeling and it would have been heartbreaking for me. I would have been able to find other ways to participate in the community, but it would have been a heartbreak knowing where we really could go in the next four years in terms of planning and moving forward with some of the initiatives we started.”

As she watched the results roll in on television at the home of her in-laws, and flipping back and forth to *Dancing with the Stars* when things got particularly edgy, she said she realised she needed to be where the action was at Town Hall to watch the results come in live. She wasn't sure where she stood in the standings, but when she arrived she found she was not only re-elected but re-elected in a much higher position than she was four years before.

“I am really excited for the future,” she said.

Although she was the last of the incumbent Councillors to put their name forward for re-election, the campaign felt like a longer process, she said, as there was “surprising negativity” on the campaign trail from some new candidates “bringing out concerns and accusations” against others she says she feels was unnecessary.

“I think running a positive campaign is the way to do it; positive about what you, as an individual, can contribute to this Town versus trying to really accuse or suspect other things from other candidates,” she said. “The focus should be on what the individual can bring to our town, why you really want to make a difference to Aurora.”

Where Councillor Humfryes was always clear she wanted to make a difference was in fostering opportunities for both Aurora's youth and Aurora's heritage, commitments she reaffirms ahead of this week's Council inauguration.

?One thing I am most looking forward to is bringing the Youth Centre to fruition and bringing that to a really good conclusion,? she says of recent renovations at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex, leading to the creation of Aurora's new Community Space for Youth. ?In this second term, I am also really focused on what works with the Aurora Promenade Study, the revitalization of Downtown, and the key to that is Library Square.

?It is time to buckle down and get those incredible ideas from the last four years, bring them together, and create an environment where it is a place of gathering, a place for celebration, a learning centre, tying in with the Cultural Centre and the Library. We have a lot of opportunity here, there are some great ideas, and I can't wait to buckle down and get some of those moving.?

Working in conjunction with this is the establishment of a new museum for Aurora, an initiative for which Councillor Humfries was a vocal proponent four years ago as a first-time candidate, remaining so throughout the remainder of the outgoing term.

While the completed Aurora Family Leisure Complex is not quite camera- ready yet, the re-establishment of the museum, as a concept, was borne to fruition by the end of this term, but there is still a lot of work to do to make it a tangible reality.

?One thing that slipped right in right at the very end of our last official meeting [before the election] was hiring a curator for our museum,? she says. ?This is exciting and this is what I will be focusing on very strongly for our community. I would like to see an up-and-coming museum that we can be proud of really happen. I want to see the hiring of the curator, move this museum into the place where we always envisioned it to go and be, and that will tie in with our Library Square initiative as well.

?It took 12 months for us to realise [a curator] was the right thing to do. Initially, it was presented to us on what staff was required to support the museum, it was turned down, there was a Cultural Master Plan that had to be done, and even with that happening, it came back to the original staff proposal to hire a curator. I am really excited to see a museum come to full fruition and get going on that. We will have a museum we can be proud of where residents can honour our history and our heritage.?