

Incumbents have conflicting views of last four years, but share common goal

By Brock Weir

Aurorans go to the polls in just a few short hours and ahead of the election, two incumbents seeking re-election, Wendy Gaertner and John Abel, have very differing views of the last four years ? but are united in their desire to serve.

As the election approaches, Ms. Gaertner says she still believes full information regarding the sale and servicing of Aurora's Leslie Street lands need to be made public.

?Aurora purchased this property with our tax money and sold it for millions of dollars,? she said. ?To me, the failure to disclose this information, once the need for secrecy is over, is not right. This should be public information. It enables the public to know if their politicians have served them well!?

She also has remaining concerns about recent and ongoing renovations at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex. The plans originally called for a Youth Centre, she says, but youth space will account for a relatively small portion of the end product.

?If this is the reality, many of us will be disappointed, and I will certainly want to know if the money collected from developers for a Youth Centre was spent on a Youth Centre that isn't!?

In the end, Ms. Gaertner calls for an end to ?rehashing last election's unproven and misleading ?facts' and insinuations of wrongdoing.?

?This is especially insulting to the public as, in my opinion, I don't think this Council can say it has been above reproach with respect to legal expenditures,? she says. ?In any case, when it comes to incumbents seeking re-election, this is the time for voters to judge how well we have served the community and hold us accountable.?

For Mr. Abel, he looks back on the last four years as a time of returning a ?much-needed civility? to the Council table, and that is something he takes particular pride in.

?This has enabled Council to focus on what we were elected to do: attend to the business of the Town,? he says. ?Under the leadership of Mayor Dawe, we have attracted private sector investment such as 2C residential development and the Bulk Barn head office. With careful and responsible planning the Town has the ability to invest in long-term infrastructure projects such as the Youth Centre and Joint Operations Centre.?

Over the past four years, Mr. Abel hangs his hat on the development of Aurora's Strategic Plan, plans for Capital Repair and Replacement, the revised Cultural Services Agreement between the Town and the Aurora Cultural Centre, the subsequent re-establishment of an Aurora museum, and the securing of the Aurora Armoury by the Town, all sources of pride.

?It is imperative that elected representatives understand and serve the needs of their community,? he says. ?As your Councillor, that is the single force that drives me. Many positive things have happened over the past four years, but there is much work still to be done. I remain dedicated to helping Aurora continue to move forward.?