

INSIDE AURORA: Year in Review 2017

By Scott Johnston

It's time for our annual look back on the past year in Aurora.

January - By mid-month most Aurorans not only have broken their New Year's resolutions, but can't even remember what they were.

February - A cost saving vote on whether to let more snow accumulate on roads before plows are sent out is delayed when Council members can't get to Town Hall due to snowy conditions.

March - Contrary to what the Town's dogs want, proposed improvements to Canine Commons will not include an increase in squirrels.

April - The Town asks the Federal government for \$90k to celebrate the country's 150th birthday, prompting children across Aurora to start telling their friends hosting birthday parties; ?I'll come only if you give me money to buy you a present.?

April - Aurora taxpayers feel they need a drink of a different sort when they hear that municipal water rates are increasing.

May - The Town justifies its suggestion of slapping an empty property tax on struggling commercial property owners who cannot find retailers to occupy their buildings by describing it as an incentive to find tenants.

May - ?Who needs walls, anyway?? someone comments when it's discovered that some key features were not budgeted for in the recently-constructed Joint Operations Centre in order to keep the project to the original cost estimate.

June - The decision to allow people to vote electronically from home in next year's election rather than going to polling stations is applauded by everyone except the folks at Activate Aurora who are trying to get people up off of their couches.

June - Visiting officials from Aurora's Swedish twin city of Leksand mistake Newmarket for Aurora when they are put up there due to there being no hotels to stay in in our Town.

July - Due to complaints from neighbouring residents about the brightness of proposed trail lighting in the new Highland Gate Park, modifications to the plans mean that one of this space's highlights will be low light.

July - A dead tree in the arboretum is carved and sealed to depict all the local animals that due to this work can no longer use the tree as a den, perch, or source of food.

August - Councillors to be voted in in next year's election will have a bigger workload, not because their numbers are being reduced from 8 to 6, but because of all the explaining they'll need to do to taxpayers to justify their 7.5% salary increase.

September - The Town's Bridge Club is dealt a bad hand when it is forced to relocate to Newmarket, as no suitable space can be found for it in Town.

October - The Town's \$250 prize for the best money saving idea for the budget goes to someone who suggests saving the money by not awarding a prize.

October - Initial fears that drinking and driving may occur due to alcohol being served at the Armory's Canadian Institute of Food and Wine are alleviated when it's realized that due to lack of parking downtown no one will be able to drive there anyway.

November - The Canadian government supplies Light Armoured Vehicles to the Saudi military, and the Aurora Peace Park.

December - Town officials hope the extremely cold weather actually warms up to make temperatures palatable for the outdoor activities of the upcoming Arctic Adventure.

December - Council's successful efforts to keep next year's tax rate so low demonstrate determination, efficiency, and that 2018 is an election year.

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