

Mayor takes exception to Kean's letter, issues challenge

(Re: Coronation is complete, says Kean. August 7, 2014)

As readers of the Auroran will know, I rarely respond to items published unless they are so far over the top that they need to be addressed. Such is the case with Mr. Kean's letter of August 7.

I am not sure of the source of his animus towards me - it certainly wasn't there when he sought and received my support for his run for Council in 2001 and again in 2004 (including a sign on my lawn) - but it certainly seems to have clouded his judgement.

Mr. Kean's main point seems to be this Council has 'wasted taxpayer's money?', and goes on to list a variety of sins committed - real or perceived - most of which are attributed to me, including that my 'regime' will have the largest deficit in the history of Aurora. Deficit - Aurora does not have one.

A look at our independently audited statements posted on the Town's website will show that we actually have a small surplus. The Ontario & Federal Governments both have deficits - large deficits. The Town does not.

The Town does have capital debt (as do all levels of government). That is really the only way we can finance facilities for our residents. The same financing scheme most of us use to buy a house. I did, and I suspect so did Mr. Kean. It is interesting that Mr. Kean did not have a problem with debt in either of his Council terms when the [Stronach] Aurora Recreation Complex project was conceived, approved and built.

The largest component of that debt will be the new Joint Operations Centre - which is being funded from development charges, not taxes.

And speaking of taxes - Mr. Kean contends we are wasting taxpayer's money. Compared to whom? Or what? Or when?

If you review the tax increases for the last 20+ years, you will see that the years he was a Councillor were the years of Aurora's highest tax increases. And by a wide margin!

I could go on, but I believe I have made my point.

However, I am pleased that Mr. Kean made some money by betting on the outcome. My suggestion is to take that money, register as a candidate for Mayor in the upcoming elections, dust off your old election signs and start pounding the pavement.

I would look forward to the public debates.

Mayor Geoffrey Dawe
Aurora