

Mayoral candidates proud of the campaigns they ran

By Brock Weir

There could only be one victor, but four men who threw their hats in the ring to be Aurora's next mayor say they are proud of the campaigns they led.

Three of the four mayoral candidates ? Chris Ballard, Geoff Dawe, and Tom Mrakas ? gathered at Town Hall with their families and supporters to watch the results roll in and shared their thoughts with The Auroran.

Mayoral candidate John Abel spent his election night with supporters at the Father's Moustache pub on Yonge Street.

?After the campaign, there is immediately some relief and some excitement about whether or not your message resonates with the residents of Aurora, whether or not what I was hearing about a strong desire for change is going to hold true and whether or not I represent that change,? said Mr. Ballard when asked what was going through his mind waiting for the first polls to report back.

?Really, it's as simple as that.?

Looking back over his time hitting the pavement, he said, no matter how the chips fell, he was most proud of his debate performances in the three all-candidates meetings, hosted by the Aurora Public Library, Aurora Chamber of Commerce, and Sport Aurora respectively.

?What I heard from people was I did a really good job of differentiating myself from the other candidates and trying to look at innovative, outside-the-box solutions for the problems Aurora faces.?

As he waited for results to pop up on the three big screens set up in the Council Chambers, as well as in the lobby at Town Hall, Mr. Dawe said he was feeling the same butterflies he first felt when first elected in 2010.

?I always find this to be the most nerve-racking part of the whole process and it is a tough process to start with, although it is a really great way to lose weight!? Mr. Dawe joked. ?It's all over but the shouting, so you just have to wait. We stayed positive all the time, although I can safely say there were times I wished to go to the dark side, but I was talked out of that because it is not about that, it is about moving forward.?

Mr. Mrakas also highlighted positivity on the campaign trail as he too played the waiting game.

?Anxious, proud, I feel really good about the campaign my team has run and I think we have done an excellent job,? said Mr.

Mrakas. ?I'm looking forward to the results and hopefully the residents of Aurora have chosen me with the honour of representing them as mayor.?

Asked which element of his campaign of which he is most proud, he said, again, it was the positivity on the ground.

?I think it is how positive everyone was and how we kept everything at a high level and stayed with that positivity and talking about what changes I am going to bring to the municipality and how I am going to get them to the next level,? said Mr. Dawe. ?All the work the team has done to get us to the point where we are today.?