

POLITICS AS USUAL: Election Season

By Alison Collins-Mrakas

Happy New Year! I hope that everyone had a very happy holiday season.

As it is now 2014, it is officially election time and the campaign for office has begun in earnest ? though some would argue that certain folks, both elected and defeated have never stopped campaigning.

Given some rather inappropriate ?tweets? put out by a couple of municipal council members over the holidays, I would have to agree. But, in any event, as of Friday January 3, we in Aurora have had our first candidate registered to run for Council.

I am sure we will see many more register over the next few weeks and months. I surmise, if past elections serve as any indication, we will see at least 18 to 20 people register to run for Council.

Unlike Toronto, we haven't had any mayoral hopefuls sign their name on the dotted line, but it's still early days for that. I suspect we won't see any mayoral candidates registered for at least a month or two. Unless of course it is a newcomer, then he or she will likely register early so that they can begin collecting and spending campaign money.

Regardless, in light of the fact that election time is upon us, and as I will undoubtedly be involved in the campaign this term ? either directly or indirectly ? I will, dear readers, have to step back from my usual commentary and refrain from writing about Aurora politics for the next 10 months.

As you may know, I have rather strong opinions on a number of matters and it would not be fair to those at the table and those not at the table to single out members of council for their decisions during an election period.

So, though there are a number of very interesting things on the council agenda and I would love to comment on them all, I will not be making any statements or proffering my opinions on same, lest I be accused of bias. Or worse, unfairly call attention to one or more of the incumbents ? either in a positive or negative way.

And, though I know it may seem crazy to those who watch Council on a regular basis, it is more than likely that a fair number of the incumbents will actually run for office again (I know what you are thinking, I wish some would not!). Frankly, I think we will see all but one or two run again. Gluttons for punishment if you ask me.

Clearly, commenting on Council business during the election period will draw attention to those members of council that have chosen to run again.

In municipal politics, name recognition is everything so even if the commentary is negative, putting a Council member's name out there in print isn't fair to the newbies who have put their names forward. They deserve as equal an opportunity possible to run for office as those that already occupy those seats.

So, in the interest of fairness, for the next 10 months, I will change my focus to other political realms ? provincial, federal, perhaps another municipality or two when relevant. My goodness there's no lack of topics for discussion in that regard (food voucher fiascos; calling in the army? I could go on?).

I am looking forward to this year. It will certainly be ?interesting?.

If you have a topic you'd like me to talk about, just send me a quick email. I'd love to hear from you.

So until next week, stay involved stay informed because this is, after all, Our Town.