

Ron Weese steps down as Sport Aurora President

By Jake Courtepatte

In the midst of a changing environment in Aurora's Year of Sport, there will also be a changing of the guard.

After a decade-long term, Ron Weese is stepping down as President of Sport Aurora.

He announced his decision last week at Town Hall during Sport Aurora's Annual General Meeting, which gathered representatives of the 27-member organizations that fall under the umbrella of Sport Aurora.

"I've met many great people, and I've been the recipient of much more than I could ever give back to the organization," said Weese.

He made the announcement in a short President's Report, taking some time to reminisce about his ten years with Sport Aurora.

"It's been a great journey from the early days when none of us really knew what a Sport Council was or why it was important," said Weese.

His dedication to local sport has put him on the Board of the Community Sport Councils in Ontario, which represents 24 locations across the province.

He says this experience has taught him how unique Sport Aurora is.

"There is really no formula for a successful Sport Council, they all differ because their needs in the community differ what I can say is that Sport Aurora is one of those councils that is well-respected and what we do here is watched by others who want to learn."

Under Weese's leadership, Sport Aurora has grown over four-fold from the six-member organization it began as in 2005.

"There were threats to the very existence of sports organizations brought forward at that time our objective was to fix that."

In June of 2007, the Aurora Community Sport Council became incorporated as Sport Aurora.

Four years later, Weese and Sport Aurora were successful in applying for the largest-ever Ontario Trillium Grant for a new organization, a four-year grant of \$204,000.

With the money, Sport Aurora was able to implement coaching education, participation programs like the All Kids Can Play program, and recognition programs like the Breakfast of Champions and the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame.

Sport Aurora Program Manager Laurie Mueller shared her own thoughts about Ron's time with the organization at the meeting.

"You are a mentor to me," said Mueller. "You're sitting in a room with your friends. We don't just work for you, we work with you."

Mueller went on to call Weese's mentorship "immeasurable".

Mr. Weese's nomination to take up the position is Stephen Kimmerer, currently the Membership Director of Sport Aurora. Kimmerer has been along for the ride with Weese he was a Board member on the Aurora Youth Soccer Club, the original Aurora Community Sport Council Board and has now served two full terms with Sport Aurora.

"He has been there for me personally and for this organization more than anyone outside of me could ever know," said Weese. "I know he will serve the organization well."

Meanwhile, Kimmerer understands the magnitude of the shoes he is being asked to fill.

He has nothing but kind words for Weese, calling him "the straw that stirs the drink".

"This organization wouldn't exist had it not been for him. He was the prime mover, he was the motivator," he said. "His knowledge and experience brought us to this point—he has a 30,000 foot view of what goes on in this town."

Weese will continue to serve as the Chair of the Board of Governors of the Aurora Sport Hall of Fame, as well as on the Board of Sport Aurora for at least the remaining year of his term.