

Timpson saw mayor's role as 'Captain of the Good Ship Aurora'

George Timpson, who served as Mayor of Aurora between 1977 and 1982, is being remembered for a lifetime of dedication to community.

Timpson's death was announced by Mayor Tom Mrakas on Friday afternoon, as he extended 'heartfelt condolences to his family, friends and all those in our community whose lives he touched.'

'George Timpson served with integrity, dedication and a deep sense of public duty,' said Mayor Mrakas. 'He cared deeply about the future of our community, and his leadership helped shape Aurora and will be felt for many years to come.'

'He was a high school teacher and during his early days as Mayor he continued to teach three classes in the morning and focus on mayoral duties in the afternoon. More recently, George was very involved with St. Paul's Anglican Church and was Cemetery Board Chair and instrumental in publishing their newsletter 'The St. Paul's Chronicle.'

'Though we grieve his loss, we also celebrate his legacy: a legacy of public service, commitment and compassion. His example reminds us of the importance of putting people first, listening to every voice and working together with humility for the greater good.'

Timpson was Aurora's youngest-elected Mayor when he first topped the polls in 1977.

He emphasized the power of teamwork when he donned Mayoral Chains for the first time, and he underscored that once again in his final inaugural speech as Mayor in 1980, an election in which he ran uncontested.

'Personally, I want to thank the electorate of the Town of Aurora for the confidence it has shown in handling of the Town's affairs over the past two years by allowing me an acclamation,' he told his Council colleagues at the inaugural meeting of the newly-elected Council on December 3, 1980. 'I consider the acclamation to be an indication that the electorate is satisfied with the actions of Council, and I can only promise, personally, that I will do my best in the next two years to continue to deal with our Town's business to the best of my ability.'

'In previous inaugural addresses, I have said that 'Government is the vehicle by which citizens achieve their desires through the actions of their elected representatives.' There is no better way to be able to identify those desires than to be involved actively in an election campaign where one is meeting a very large number of the general public. When one has received an acclamation in an election in which there were few, if any, real issues, it is more difficult to learn first-hand just exactly what people are thinking; thus, one has to look at circumstantial events in order to gain some insight indirectly.'

'One such event that must be considered is the fact that those incumbent Councillors who chose to seek re-election did very well in the electoral process. To me, this means that I, if I can call myself the Captain of the Good Ship Aurora, must do my best with the teamwork of good crew members, or Councillors, to continue to direct the future of our Town in the same heading, more or less, as has been followed in the four years I have served as Mayor. This, I assure you, will be done.'

Looking back at his previous term as Mayor, he said it was hallmarked by 'the spirit of coordination, rather than confrontation' and the fruits of that teamwork could be seen all around Town.

'No person exists as an island alone,' he concluded. 'We, as members of Council, need the support and understanding of each other, as well as the constructive comments of approval or disapproval of the general public whom we represent.'

In the days following Timpson's passing, past colleagues and today's leaders also paid tribute.

George Timpson's years of public service, both as Mayor and as a long-serving Councillor, were marked by dedication, integrity and a deep commitment to his community," said York Regional Chair Eric Jolliffe in a statement. "He played a vital role in shaping the Town of Aurora and contributing to the work of York Region, always focused on listening to the people he served and working collaboratively for the greater good. His leadership and commitment will be remembered and acknowledged for years to come."

Former Aurora mayor Tim Jones, who was first elected to Council while Timpson was Mayor, remembered his predecessor as "dedicated to the job."

"I know he lived every hour of it," said Jones. "He aspired to greater things, trying to unseat our Provincial member the day, Bill Hodgson. I did his nomination speech in my first year of politics and I was scared silly! Unfortunately, he was soundly beaten for the nomination by Bill, who subsequently lost the election."

"George saw Aurora through some fast growth and I remember he and [mayoral predecessor] Evelyn Buck getting into some great debates! I will value George for his support and friendship through my political career."

By Brock Weir
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