

HUNTSVILLE

This will be an exciting election for Huntsville. There is a three-way contest for both the mayor and councilor for Brunel, with no incumbents in either race.

Mayor of Huntsville

Scott Aitchison

Background: Scott is a real estate agent, raised in Huntsville, who attended York University, and was first elected to Huntsville council 20 years ago. He has served as District Councillor for the last two terms, is the Deputy Mayor of Huntsville and chairs the Town's Planning Advisory and Sustainability Committees. He also sits on the District of Muskoka's Planning and Economic Development Committee. He was chair of the 2010 Ontario Winter Games, co-chair of the 2012 Ontario Para Sport Winter Games and co-chair of the capital campaigns for both Algonquin Grace Residential Hospice and Chrysalis. Scott is the treasurer of the Huntsville-Lake of Bays Chamber of Commerce.

Town and District Priorities: (1) To exercise fiscal responsibility by not assuming debts for capital projects without a payback in savings or revenue; (2) Scrap the Muskoka Tourism Marketing Agency *and* replace it with an economic development corporation for Muskoka which could be partnered with the Chamber of Commerce to advocate for business opportunities and offer job training skills; (3) To minimize tax increases by setting clear priorities for the services needed over a 10 year capital spending period; (4) To have decision makers be mindful not only of the environment, but also be fiscally and socially sustainable (e.g. reduce the carbon footprint and energy costs for operating municipal buildings).

Other Issues: Scott wants to change the tone and culture for city hall employees by replacing the "culture of fear" with one of encouraged co-operation. He would like to work with community colleges in offering hospitality and forestry programs at the Waterloo Summit Centre and to make it a world-class centre for excellence in water quality.

Why is he running? Scott feels his experience as a leader on both the District and Town councils, his youthful energy and commitment to finding cost efficiencies and opportunities for economic growth make him an ideal candidate. He has worked with and learned from five previous Huntsville mayors.

Hugh Mackenzie

Background: Hugh served as Huntsville's mayor from 2000 to 2006, and chair of the District of Muskoka from 1978 to 1980. Hugh is a family man and retired businessman (co-founder, CEO and majority shareholder of Enterprise Canada, a communications and public policy consulting firm, publisher of Muskoka Publications Ltd. and partner of Countryside Broadcasting Ltd.) He has served on the board of the Muskoka Heritage Foundation and Chairman of the Huntsville Hospital. He is a recipient of the Queen's Jubilee Medal for Community Service, served as president of the Huntsville Rotary Club and was co-founder and first chairman of the Huntsville and District Co-operative Nursery School (now in its 45th year).

Town and District Priorities: (1) Time to look inward, stabilize capabilities, evaluate infrastructure needs, and reduce debt loads at both the town and district levels of government; (2) Address the unnecessary duplication of services between the District of Muskoka, the towns and townships and assess the cost benefits of a single tier government model by pursuing co-operative efforts between towns and townships to reduce costs and increase efficiencies (like the Huntsville Lake of Bays Fire Department); (3) Insist on more District accountability; (4) Seek more opportunities for building the local economic base and thereby encourage young people to remain in Huntsville as contributors to our future economic welfare.

Other Issues: There is a need to address OPP policing policy as being affordable to Muskoka and for the province to be cognisant of the seasonal nature of our policing requirements. There is a need to adjust the planning decision model from one where councillors are adjudicators for exemption requests and 'lets make a deal' practices to one where council complies with planning policies as laid out in the Official Plan. Hugh has concerns over the growing gap between 'have and have-nots' and would focus the solution on improving the skill training of high school graduates through a community college co-operative working at the Waterloo Summit Centre. Hugh is concerned with the Deerhurst Village development project becoming nothing more than a means of selling real estate with no amenities being facilitated for the condo owners. He advocates the full bonding for each phase of development to ensure the town is not left a 'white elephant' of incomplete development.

Why is he running? He intends to stand for one term only in a transitional role for stabilizing growth using a model of public consultation and team management to make well informed decisions. He is well connected to all three levels of government, knows how to get results from government ministries and agencies for matters important to Huntsville and the District of Muskoka.

Tim Withey

Background: Tim has served one term of council for Brunel Ward. Tim is family man with a B.A. in Environmental Studies who owns a local insurance brokerage in Huntsville. He has been a resident of Huntsville since 1988. He has served on the hospital board for 20 years, the Fairvern Nursing Home board, Crime Stoppers Muskoka, and is on the Muskoka District Health Council. Most recently he has been chair of the Town's Community Services Committee where he has worked within budget constraints without affecting service performance levels.

Town and District Priorities: (1) To encourage business and industry to locate here by increasing the skills of the job pool of secondary school graduates through the utilization of the Waterloo Summit Centre as a community college training centre; (2) To adapt new technologies to maintain our infrastructure to withstand the variations of climate change (3) To update the Official Plan with flexibility in planning decisions that reduce the bureaucratic process; (4) To have an efficiency audit made of the governance model in Muskoka as a means of eliminating duplication and waste in our system and to rethink the benefits of a one-tier governance model; (5) To be mindful of the environment by protecting the watershed, reducing energy consumption and our carbon footprint, mitigate flooding, and reduce waste; (6) To formulate smart protocol and policy to control and harmonize the type of communication developments throughout Muskoka.

Other Issues: Tim would like to have the town council more actively engaged in the District's governance by having District reports at each council meeting. He would like to see more services across Muskoka being coordinated under an independent authority to increase efficiencies and reduce District costs, like the Huntsville and Lake of Bays fire department.

Why is he running? Tim wants to keep the momentum going with proactive decision-making.

Brunel Ward

Sue Ashley

Background: Sue is a former Royal Bank mortgage manager in Huntsville and current owner of an antique shop by the locks on the Muskoka River.

Town and District Priorities: (1) To make road maintenance a top priority; (2) Maintain the beautification program for the locks on the Muskoka River; (3) Develop a community action plan with the help of an Economic Development officer to attract middle income jobs; (4) Promote a sustainable economy with environmental protection that respects the property rights of home owners; (5) Ensure that rules and regulations for development are consistent and fairly applied.

Other Issues: The pool of affordable housing should be increased through the co-operative efforts of developers and contractors, and the stigma of illegal apartments should be removed to increase the number of low cost rental units. Sue would like see more 'granny suites' made available as housing units.

Why is she running? Sue says she has a reputation for getting things done and she would enjoy the opportunity to put this trait to good use as a public servant. She wants to represent the constituents of Brunel responsibly.

Dan Armour

Background: Dan has lived in Huntsville for 56 years. He is currently employed as an Operation Manager for Medavie EMS Ontario (the Ambulance service in Muskoka) and, has worked as a paramedic from the Huntsville station for 27 years. He has served on the Huntsville Fire Advisory Committee.

Town and District Priorities: (1) Infrastructure must be brought up-to-date. Roads in particular set the tone for the community; (2) Development must be monitored to respect, protect and sustain the environment; (3) Affordable housing is important for the area and economic development could be based on building needed housing projects.

Other Issues: None mentioned.

Why is he running? Council needs a new face and new ideas. Dan takes a proactive role in working with people.

George Young

Background: George grew up in Brunel ward, was in the radio and television business for 33 years, serving 28 years as a sports commentator and reporter with CBC. He represented Brunel for two terms and served a third term as a District councillor (2006 to 2010). He chaired the Economic Development Committee for eight years and was a member of Muskoka Tourism Marketing Agency.

Town Priorities: (1) To focus economic development on road improvement and infrastructure projects over a 10-year period; (2) To create reserve funds for short, mid and long term needs; (3) To encourage job growth in fields which focus on the environment and natural resources.

Other Issues: George sees the aging population and growing need for home care as a responsibility of the province and the District of Muskoka. Affordable housing for young families with limited investment funds can be facilitated through land grants from the town and co-operative building efforts supplied by organizations like Habitat for Humanity.

Why is he running? George enjoys being part of the decision-making process. He hopes to initiate more tourism events and stimulate economic development opportunities to create meaningful jobs in the area.