

Hagar, Walder and Davis announce candidacy



Roger Davis has announced he'll be running in the 2018 municipal election in Hastings Highlands. This is Davis's first time running for council. / SUBMITTED

By Sarah Sobanski

Hastings Highlands officially has a candidate running for deputy mayor and two more on the ballot for councillor.

Councillor Tracy Hagar is looking to take on the role of deputy mayor if she's elected to council once again. She said she feels she'll have "more opportunity" in the larger role and that she's ready for the step up.

"I feel I will have more opportunity to help the municipality, learn more myself and be a part of making a difference and getting things done by being in the deputy mayor seat, more so than running for councillor," she said.

Last election was the first time she gained a seat on council, but before that she was an avid volunteer helping run popular area events such as Maynooth Madness and the Maynooth mud run.

She's also worked with the ANAF, Maynooth Food Bank and Maynooth Public School.

Hagar has lived in Hastings Highlands for more than two decades. She owned Foxfire Gallery, Gifts & Antiques on Maynooth's main street for almost half that. She said the business is where she has "the opportunity to connect with people."

"I am always available to hear concerns, ideas and help get answers and act to the best of my abilities," she said.

As for the area's top priorities, Hagar said roads are on the list for all municipalities. She's also concerned about the lack of affordable seniors housing and jobs in the municipality, she said.

Councillor Alex Walder will also vie for another term on council as a councillor. He said he's felt support and encouragement to run again.

'I feel that there are more significant contributions which I can and will make to our community,' he said.

Walder was appointed to council in 2016 following the passing of former councillor Mike Leveque. Walder was the runner up for Leveque's seat in the 2014 election.

'During my two years of service on council, I have been an outspoken member of council, sparked and fostered open discussions, spearheaded several initiatives, worked on committees and engaged with and on behalf of constituents,' he said before adding that liaising with the public has been a 'pillar' of his term. He keeps the public informed on council's goings-on with monthly postings on his website www.alexwalder.com.]

Should he be reelected, Walder said he's divided the municipality's top issues into two categories.

The first is locally where he said he wants to focus on municipal services, operations planning, economic development and tourism and increasing non-tax revenues. The second category he said involves provincial goals including 'the full enactment of Bill 68.'

'The public will have rights to access and review the council's actions by an integrity commissioner, hold council members to a code of conduct and have conflicts of interest exposed. I've attended a number of information sessions and am prepared to report and discuss,' he said.

Long-time Hastings Highlands resident Roger Davis has decided to throw his hat in the ring for the first time.

'I've been interested in municipal politics for a number of years,' said Davis. As a new retiree of General Motors, he said, he now has the time to try his hand as a councillor.

Davis has experience in the community as a property owner - he has three properties in different areas of Hastings Highlands. In the '80s he worked with the Madawaska Mines and the Bangor, Wicklow and McClure roads department. He's also a member of the ANAF.

He said when it comes to leadership experience he's held elected positions at GM in Oshawa and with the area's snowmobile and hunt clubs. He helped found the Maple Leaf Snow Skimmers.

'I am quite able to handle situations without bias and prejudice,' Davis said when asked what made him the person for the job. 'I know how to work within a structured environment.'

Davis said there is room for improvement in Hastings Highlands. As a councillor he said he would target funding from the upper tiers of government for roads.

'We as the ratepayers of Hasting Highlands cannot afford to take on this task ourselves as we have hundreds of kilometres of other roads that also need to be repaired and maintained,' he said. 'We must also continue to attract visitors through various events as cottagers' and tourists' dollars really help the bottom line.'