

## Highlands East welcomes new CAO/treasurer

**By Angelica Ingram**

For Shannon Hunter municipal work kind of runs in the family.

The Gooderham native joined the team at the municipality of Highlands East in November when she was hired to be the new chief administrative officer and treasurer.

Hunter, 45, follows in the footsteps of former CAO/treasurer Sharon Stoughton-Craig, who also happens to be her mother-in-law. Stoughton-Craig retired from the position after a 41-year-long career with the municipality.

Born and raised in Highlands East, Hunter has worked with various municipalities for the past 24 years, getting her first position at the post office in Gooderham, which was in what was known as Glamorgan back then.

‘I was brought in to look after the post office and provide administrative assistance,’ she said.

Working as an administrative assistant, Hunter went on to work for the Township of Emily, the County of Haliburton and eventually the Township of North Kawartha, where she was the CAO.

‘When I got into the career I loved it, I loved the diversity,’ she said. ‘Every day is a new challenge. It keeps you active, it keeps you on your toes.’



Shannon Hunter is ready to get down to work as the new chief administrative officer/treasurer for Highlands East. ANGELICA INGRAM Special to This Week

The CAO/treasurer began to get the education she needed, doing night courses in Peterborough while raising her young family. ‘I’ve worked hard to get where I am in my career,’ she said. When the position opened up to work in her hometown, Hunter jumped at the opportunity, excited to be working where she was born and raised and in the place she calls home.

Hunter’s roots go deep in the Gooderham area, six generations deep. Married with three children and four grandchildren, Hunter spends her free time gardening, a passion of hers. She also has a passion for the area.

‘The community spirit here, the community volunteers, it’s all just really good,’ she said.

She is looking forward to the challenge ahead and learning the ways of Highlands East.

‘Every municipality they do things in a different manner but at the end of the day it’s the same job, the same work is required,’ she said. ‘I feel very ready ... I feel like there are a lot of things I’ll be able to bring to the table.’

Hunter wants to maintain a progressive community and sees a possible shift in the way technology is used.

The CAO has seen a lot of changes in municipal work over the years and says it can be tricky at times always being in the public eye.

She said her job comes down to good communication and keeping the public informed.

‘At the end of the day I’m a ratepayer too,’ she said.