

Council Chambers
December 6, 2010

**The inaugural meeting of Guelph City Council
convened at 7:00 p.m.**

Present: Mayor Farbridge, Councillors Bell, Burcher, Dennis, Findlay, Furfaro, Guthrie, Hofland, Kovach, Laidlaw, Piper, Van Hellemond and Wettstein

Mary DuQuesnay lead the singing of O Canada.

Lois Giles, City Clerk opened the meeting with a short silent prayer.

Lois Giles, City Clerk administered the Declaration of Office to the Mayor and Members of City Council.

Mayor Farbridge presented Council pins to the four new members of City Council:

- Councillor Dennis
- Councillor Furfaro
- Councillor Guthrie
- Councillor Van Hellemond.

Mayor Farbridge presented her inaugural address.

1. Moved by Councillor Dennis
Seconded by Councillor Furfaro

THAT the Mayor's Inaugural Address be incorporated into the minutes of this meeting.

VOTING IN FAVOUR: Councillors Bell, Burcher, Dennis, Findlay, Furfaro, Guthrie, Hofland, Kovach, Laidlaw, Piper, Van Hellemond, Wettstein and Mayor Farbridge (13)

VOTING AGAINST: (0)

Carried

Mayor Farbridge's Inaugural Address.

Good evening and welcome to the inaugural meeting of the new Guelph City Council for 2010 to 2014.

I was honoured two weeks ago to recognize those who served during the last term of City Council, and in particular those who will not be returning this term. We owe them our gratitude for the contributions they have made to our community.

Tonight, I would like to welcome our new Councillors to the horseshoe - Todd Dennis, Jim Furfaro, Cam Guthrie and Andy Van Hellemond. Congratulations and thank you for stepping forward to serve your community.

Congratulations also to returning Councillors Bob Bell, Lise Burcher, Ian Findlay, June Hofland, Gloria Kovach, Maggie Laidlaw, Leanne Piper and Karl Wettstein. Your continuing commitment is much appreciated.

I am proud to be returning for a third term as your Mayor and I am grateful to the voters of Guelph for their continuing support.

In this last election, I received a strong mandate from our community to attract jobs; protect the environment; build strong neighbourhoods; and to put people first at City Hall. This builds upon the good work of previous terms of Council and will frame the City's agenda for the next four years.

We have a well-deserved reputation as a community that considers the environment, the economy and the well being of people when making decisions.

Ten years ago, this concept of the "triple bottom line" was new and might have been viewed as a barrier to business development. Today it is recognized as simply good business. It is the way we conduct the City's business and it has become our strategic advantage as a community.

Members of Council, our job is to deliver results to our community – more jobs, better environmental stewardship, strong neighbourhoods. We will deliver these results – and put people first at City Hall – by demonstrating good leadership, sound strategic direction, and consistent oversight.

Council hires one employee, the Chief Administrative Officer, who ensures that decisions of Council are carried out. The CAO works with a five-member Executive Team and ensures the delivery of high quality services in a timely, responsible and cost-effective manner.

Our current Chief Administrative Officer, Hans Loewig, will be retiring at the end of 2012. I would like to recognize Hans for his leadership over the last term. We look forward to working with you for the next two years.

This Council will have the important task of choosing the next Chief Administrative Officer and making sure we

continue to have excellent leadership in place to manage the organization.

Each new term offers the incoming Council an opportunity to improve upon and strengthen the City's long and successful history of strategic planning. This term, we can improve our strategic planning by better integrating long range financial planning and performance measurement into the process and strengthening the alignment of our strategic goals and objectives with departmental work plans.

And finally, Council must provide effective oversight to ensure that the work of the organization aligns with the strategic direction established by Council and that we deliver results to our key stakeholders – our taxpayers, customers, employees and the community as a whole.

I would like to issue a challenge to my colleagues tonight – to have Guelph set a new standard for municipal governance in Ontario.

Our taxpayers want to know that their money is being spent appropriately and wisely. Our customers want to be treated fairly and with respect. Our employees want to be engaged by an employer of choice. And our community expects results.

Our corporate values – integrity, excellence and wellness – express our commitment to the people we serve.

To better ensure taxpayer's dollars are being spent appropriately and wisely, the Audit Committee has identified the need for an internal audit function reporting to Council. This will allow Council to more effectively ensure the right controls are in place to deliver value for every tax dollar spent.

We hire our employees to do a job for us – a job for which they have the professional expertise and experience. But as in any other organization, we need to ensure that the City's goals are being achieved. Council's Governance Committee will be working to establish a performance measurement and reporting framework to ensure accountability and transparency for service delivery. Another way to ensure value for every tax dollar spent.

Whether they are riding the bus, taking part in one of our many recreational programs, or sorting their waste for curbside collection, the citizens of Guelph deserve to be treated fairly and with respect. Management is implementing a "Service Excellence Strategy" to improve

the consistency of customer service across the organization.

Our employees should be treated in the way we expect them to treat our customers. Our "People Practices Plan" will ensure we continue to attract and retain the talent we need to deliver exceptional municipal services to our community.

As a Council, we can add value by setting the tone from the top and supporting management's initiatives for improving customer service, risk management and performance.

And finally, all of this good work will be for naught if we fail to communicate our performance to our stakeholders – taxpayers, customers, employees and our community. The City's recently approved Communications Plan provides a strong framework to ensure we achieve excellence in accountability and transparency to the people we serve.

The people we serve want to see integrity in the way we do our business. They want to know that everything we do is in their best interests. They want to have confidence that we are up to the job. And they want results.

I now want to take a few minutes to discuss some key issues for our community in the coming months that relate to jobs and the economy, community wellness and environmental sustainability.

Intercity competition for jobs will be intense in the coming years as our economy recovers.

Guelph is a great place to invest because we have shown prosperity and sustainability go hand in hand. By making sustainability and quality of life a hallmark of Guelph, we are attracting the jobs and investment we need to thrive. We must continue to promote this strategic advantage.

The newly established "Business Champion" at City Hall will continue to improve our ability to meet business needs. Through the retooling of City Hall, we will be better able to respond to several business-led initiatives aimed at making Guelph a regional centre of innovation. Along with our champions for Community Energy and Downtown Development, we are implementing the recommendations of our Economic Development Strategy – Prosperity 2020. The Community Energy Initiative continues to prove its value as an economic development strategy, as will our Downtown Growth Strategy.

We have secured the future employment lands we will need to increase jobs as our community grows – the Hanlon Creek Business Park and the Guelph Innovation District.

Servicing and land sales in the Hanlon Creek Business Park must continue expeditiously. We must also report back to the community on our economic and environmental commitments for this development.

Planning for the Guelph Innovation District, in collaboration with the Province, must also begin in earnest so we are ready with new lands as the Hanlon Creek Business Park reaches its full capacity.

And we need a proactive strategy, despite the obvious challenges, to redevelop brownfield properties throughout the city.

We are recognized as the most caring community in Canada because of the level of volunteerism in our community. Guelph has a long history of strong neighbourhood groups and neighbourhood organizing. And our community and social service organizations have a reputation for collaboration that is well known beyond our city limits. There are several collaborative initiatives currently underway in the community. Their goal is simple – to better utilize existing resources to improve the level of support and the delivery of services to our community by working together.

These are remarkable community assets.

We have an opportunity at City Hall to support and build upon these assets. There is a growing consensus in the community that we can do better in meeting the social needs of our residents – seniors, children, people with disabilities and those living in poverty.

The Strategic Neighbourhood Engagement Framework approved by the last term of Council commits City Hall to strengthening the role of our neighbourhoods in community life.

The Community Wellness Plan will provide an overarching community vision and set of guiding principles to facilitate the more effective allocation of resources to make a lasting difference in the lives of people in Guelph.

We all have a role to play and each of us needs to understand how best we can make a difference.

The Taskforce for the Elimination of Poverty has identified three priorities for our community - affordable housing, food distribution and transportation. Of these three priorities, the provision of transit service is a core municipal business. It often makes sense to focus on what is within your control and to do it right to make a difference. Our Transit Growth Strategy offers us that opportunity.

Guelph is a recognized leader in environmental sustainability, which contributes significantly to our quality of life. Now it is time to bring more rigorous measurement and reporting on our performance so we can demonstrate we are "walking the talk" at City Hall as well as understand our community's performance relative to other cities.

The City responds to many events and issues on a weekly basis. The effectiveness of our response to an immediate issue is important but so too is our ability to identify the longer term opportunity for community building – our current issue with the Farmers Market is a good example.

We are a growing community and expected to increase our population by approximately 50,000 people in the next 20 years. Members of Council, we are here to manage that growth. One of our most significant challenges will be resolving the financial sustainability of that growth so we can remain one of the most caring and safest cities in Canada, with a quality of life among the best in the land, while remaining an employer of choice, providing excellent customer service and delivering value for every tax dollar spent. There are only so many resources and good choices need to be made.

That will require a willingness to step out of old ways of doing business. It will be a challenge, but it is one that I know we can meet with intelligence, integrity, resolve and the commitment to community building that motivates us all.

Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

2. Moved by Councillor Guthrie
Seconded by Councillor Van Hellemond
THAT the Guelph City Council Inaugural meeting of
December 6, 2010 be adjourned.

Carried

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 o'clock p.m.

Minutes read and confirmed December 20, 2010.

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Mayor

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Clerk