

'I'M KEEPING IT REAL': MAYOR BONNETTE DISCUSSES FUTURE PLANS AT INAUGURAL COUNCIL MEETING

THE NEW HALTON HILLS TOWN COUNCIL WAS SWORN IN AT THE INAUGURAL MEETING ON DEC. 3.

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Family members, friends and supporters filled the John Elliott Theatre in Georgetown on Dec. 3, to witness the new Halton Hills town council being sworn in.

Following the singing of O Canada by local artist Vivian Hicks and the invocation by Pastor Ray Vander Kooij, local historian Mark Rowe kicked off the evening, providing visitors with an overview of the history of Halton Hills' town halls, stemming back to the 1800s.

Members of council were then sworn in, starting with local councillors Mike Albano, Jon Hurst, Ted Brown Bryan Lewis, Moya Johnson, Bob Inglis, Ann Lawlor and newest council member Wendy Farrow-Reed. This was followed by regional councillors Clark Somerville and Jane Fogal, then finally ending with Mayor Rick Bonnette.

"We are here to mark the start of the next four years and in planning the way forward, it is important to recognize the challenges and successes of years past," Bonnette said in his inaugural speech. "Please know that we will continue to build on the

incredible work that was performed by staff and council during the last term and we will continue to advocate for the health and well-being of this community."

Bonnette went on to outline some of the plans council has in store for the next four years, with a primary focus on Halton Hills' growth, as the town population is expected to rise by 20,000 people.

The mayor cited the town's Vision Georgetown Plan as a main component in their commitment to accommodate growth.

"I am committed to seeing that growth should not place a financial burden on the town and growth should not place extraordinary demands on existing facilities," he said. "As members of council, it is our job to oversee where investments are made and I can tell you, that we have been consistent in making capital investments to support the safety, cultural and sports vibrancy of our community."

Also on the topic of growth, Bonnette says council continues to be committed to seeking affordable housing opportunities for seniors and finding a made-in-Halton Hills transit solution.

He says the town will contin-



Veronica Appia/Metroland

Mayor Rick Bonnette and councillors get sworn in at the Halton Hills inaugural council meeting on Dec. 3.

ue its work on climate change, both locally and internationally, and keep building relationships overseas through the town's partnership with Wenjiang, China.

While looking toward the future, Bonnette took a moment to thank former councillor Dave Kentner for his 12 years of service and to formally welcome Halton Hills' newest councillor, Wendy Farrow-Reed, before ending his address with some honest intentions.

"I am not going to change my style. I will work with all levels of government in a positive way but I will continue to battle, along with members of this council -

wherever we deem necessary - to other levels of government or agencies that develop policies that negatively impact our town," he said.

"Returning members of council have demonstrated that they are not afraid to take issues head on. And if we make mistakes, we'll admit them - no government is perfect ... I'm Mayor Rick Bonnette and I'm keeping it real."

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