

ONLY FAIR TO MAKE ANNOUNCEMENT EARLY: BONNETTE

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Now what makes Bonnette's choice of song so appropriate, especially for a politician, is that the full title of the song is "Good Riddance (Time of Your Life)." And there will certainly be those happy to see him go — no politician is going to make everyone happy.

But election results would indicate those people would be in the "minority" (also a Green Day song, if you're keeping score). Bonnette was elected three times and acclaimed twice when nobody figured they could take a legitimate run at unseating the mayor.

He was elected for the first time as a councillor representing his hometown of Acton when he was just 27.

"It's been 40 years, since 1982," Bonnette said. "I think it's time for somebody with different ideas."

Bonnette said he arrived at the decision about three weeks ago. And though he usually waits until May when candidates can sign up for the election to declare his intentions, he said it is only fair to make that announcement earlier. He said it takes time to assemble campaign teams and build the nec-

"I think it's time for somebody with different ideas."

- Mayor Rick Bonnette

essary relationships and, he said, give them plenty of time to consider the decision.

"I didn't want to wait until the end because I want to give potential candidates (time), to be fair to them so they can start thinking from now to May, because you (have) a knee jerk and say 'OK, I'm running,' and in two weeks start thinking, 'Good god, what did I just do?' This will give people plenty of time to think about it."

Besides, Bonnette said, "it will probably take another 10 months to clean my office."

Bonnette thanked councillors, town staff and his wife, Josey. Councillor Bryan Lewis said Bonnette always kept members of council in the loop and let them be involved in the process.

"He always allowed us to be very hands-on, particularly if it was a Ward 2 issue,"

Lewis said. "There was never a meeting that wasn't open door. He wanted us to have all the information."

Lewis said it will be difficult to tell how much of a change will take place on council without Bonnette until candidates start coming forward.

"You never know," he said. "There might be four or five people come forward. Then you start to look and say, 'I can work with this person or that person.'"

Bonnette said there will be an adjustment for him, no longer having his days filled with meetings, answering emails and reading through council agendas. But he said he wouldn't have it any other way.

"As a 27-year-old from the little town of Acton, I would have never thought I could be mayor," he said. "It's been a privilege and a total honour and a most humbling experience to become mayor of this wonderful town."



Town of Halton Hills photo
Rick Bonnette has served on council for four decades.



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