



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Whitchurch-Stouffville mayoral candidates await their turn on stage during the all-candidates meeting at Stouffville District Secondary School last Thursday.

# Cheers, boos for election candidates

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One mayoral candidate promised to not give himself a raise, if elected, while a ward councillor pledged to not accept the car allowance and spend it, instead, on municipal amenities, including arts and culture.

Both statements were received with great applause from the roughly 300 people who attended the only all-candidates meeting before the Oct. 27 municipal election.

Individual ward meetings are instead scheduled.

Among those in the Stouffville District Secondary School cafeteria last Thursday night were Mayor Wayne Emmerson, former mayor Sue Sherban and Oak Ridges-Markham federal Liberal candi-

date Jane Philpott.

Making his second consecutive bid for mayor, Justin Altmann was emphatic his age, 31, and lack of experience should not be counted against him.

He pointed to Oak Ridges-Markham MPP Helena Jaczek and MP Paul Calandra – who had staffers in the crowd – as examples of politicians with no previous experience and U.S President Barack Obama who was 44 when first elected.

He also pointed out “I have no price tag and will not be bought”.

Altmann said, if elected, he would not increase his salary, which was received with thunderous applause. Ward 6 council candidate Bryan Stott noted he would not take the car allowance.

One of Altmann’s opponents – Phil Bannon – had the honour of

being the only candidate booed.

That came after he stated if all current councillors, him included, and the mayor were running for re-election, they would all win, as was the case in 2010.

The three-term Ward 2 councillor noted, if elected as mayor, he would champion a new seniors’ centre, art gallery and multicultural centre.

Mayoral candidate Willie Reodica may have gained some fans when he said he would not allow snowplough drivers to “deliberately” fill driveways with snow.

He also wants a hospital and Catholic high school constructed in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Arnold Neufeldt-Fast wants to keep the “greenbelt buckled” and make Main Street more pedestrian and bicycle friendly from Ninth Line to Hwy. 48. The mayoral can-

didate would use the \$800,000 lawn bowling budget to help do it.

Richard Bartley, who is running for mayor after serving eight years as councillor in Ward 5, advocated for new businesses in town and an additional food bank location.

When Ward 4 candidates were asked to give their opinion on the former Southwire plant being transformed into a wholesale trade centre, the resounding response was they lacked information.

“I’m curious about it because I’m not sure how it would benefit our local economy,” said Holly Fullager.

Oliver Belo concurred with “I’m not sure the economic benefits are there for us”. The crowd appeared to agree.

Rick Upton didn’t dislike the idea, but would prefer it be further out of Stouffville, while Mark

Whitte noted we can’t say we want businesses in town then cherry pick which ones and where they go.

Main Street in downtown Stouffville has long been a hot button topic in Ward 5.

Iain Lovatt, one of three candidates trying to replace Bartley on council in the northeast Stouffville ward, believes better marketing is needed. He claimed residents living south of Main Street do not know it exists.

“It’s about us. We have to use it. We have to shop there,” said Tom Winters.

The third candidate, Michael Humphreys, said downtown merchants don’t have standard operating hours, noting some close on Mondays.

See ‘DONT’, page 24.



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