

Do you want to run for council?

It's not a decision to be made lightly; there are many things to consider.

Do you have the extra time? Many councillors work full time hours on part time compensation. Consider if you will be easily accessible to your future constituents ? to hear their concerns, attend events and research the ins and outs of issues.

Are you good under pressure, ready to be in the public eye and unintimidated by confrontation? A councillor keeps his or her citizens in the know. Direct contact numbers often get shared, family members become unofficial liaisons and everyone has an opinion ? which is always right, in their opinion.

Are you well versed in the issues facing your municipality? I'm not going to say that if you've never been to a council meeting you probably shouldn't be running for council, but if common sense were common. Ask yourself what the top issues are for you and what you want to change, but also about the top issues affecting the general population. They aren't always one and the same.

May 1 is quickly approaching, and with it will come the date municipalities start accepting nominations for their respective councils. Municipalities, such as Bancroft and Hastings Highlands, have posted what I like to call how-to-run documents with all the need-to-knows that come with the upcoming Oct. 22 election.

It's safe to say that every informed citizen who's picked up the paper now and again has read a local politics story and thought, ?I wouldn't have done that.? Or something to the effect of, ?If I was on council?? and proceeded to end that sentence with any number of things.

But to actually go through with it? I don't know about you but I figure I'm better suited for a monarchy ? preferably one where I'm wearing a very expensive metal hat and some sort of fur-lined cape. And, you know, sitting on a large shiny chair ? so I'll leave the council running to you and the council reporting to me.

If leading one of North Hastings' municipalities is something you see yourself excelling at, however, there are some things you'll need to know.

Firstly, there is a So You Think You Want To Run For Council? Candidate Information Workshop at the Dungannon Recreation Centre from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. April 24. According to the event's details on Hastings Highlands' website, topics will include municipal powers, roles and responsibilities, the public's role in local government, the difference between governance and administration and the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.

?This workshop will help you decide whether to put your name forward. It will give you clear understanding of council's roles and responsibilities. It will give you information on the impact that the duties and responsibilities of public office will have on your life. This is not a debate forum nor is it dealing with the technical aspects of running a campaign,? the details read.

Secondly, you'll want to have your dates in order. The nomination period runs from the beginning of May to the end of July. The current's council's term ends Nov. 30 and the new council's term will begin Dec. 1 and run to Nov. 14, 2022.

In order to run, your nomination must be supported by 25 signatures (also known as people). That's for municipalities with more than 4,000 electors.

It will cost you \$200 to run for mayor or \$100 to run for councillor. Those fees are set by the province.

In order to be eligible you must be a Canadian citizen, at least 18 years of age, a resident of the municipality, an owner or tenant of land, or the spouse of the owner or tenant, not legally prohibited from voting, not disqualified by any legislation from holding municipal office and entitled to be an elector in the municipality.

That's the basics, see you at the candidate information workshop!