

Local councillors want to lead Shelburne out of 'political suffering', signal intent to run for mayor, deputy mayor

Written By **PETER RICHARDSON**

Tuesday morning bright and early, Shelburne received two new nominations, one for Mayor and one for Deputy Mayor, at the hands of Councillors Wade Mills and Steve Anderson.

Both men seek to bring Shelburne strongly, into the future and rapidly out of its current 'political suffering'. While both gave a nod to Shelburne's WASP past and the actions of previous municipal councils, they were adamant as to the need for cultural diversity, acceptance and inclusion within this rapidly expanding community.

Both were equally insistent that the atmosphere and lifestyle in town was what drew people here and what was most important to maintain, while adapting to the increased population growth and diversity. Neither candidate wanted to see Shelburne become another Brampton or Mississauga, however, they acknowledged that change was inevitable and careful planning and development would be key to retaining the look and flavour of the town core.

It is their belief that a strong, united community is a prerequisite to a healthy and vibrant one and that the role of the municipal government is to face the hard decisions, listen to the residents and build on the strengths of the Town. To this end, they plan to solicit opinion and input from Shelburnites during and following the election, with both door to door and social media campaigning, and at least one 'Town Hall' gathering in which to engage the electorate.

Although they may not form a ticket, illegal under current laws, they plan to work and campaign together due to their mutual sharing of goals and visions. Steve added that they have no assumption of victory, however they strongly believe in their responsibility to listen to and engage the people of Shelburne.

Both candidates plan to work hard on reaching the populace via social media, which has become the new reality of politics, as anyone following the American political scene can clearly see. Both have and maintain websites, Facebook pages, Twitter feeds and Instagram accounts and will use all to reach out to and answer to the electorate.

In their minds, both individually and collectively, Shelburne is in good hands. Change is good and not to be feared, it does bring some unease, but these are exciting times, filled with hopeful opportunities and dramatic improvements. It is a time of 'put up or shut up' said Anderson and they intend to do a lot of putting up.

Wade Mills said that too frequently, politics in Shelburne has been a 'they to us' discussion, where Council has waited for the residents to come to them, when the reality, in his mind, should be the complete opposite. Council should be reaching out to the public with ideas and proposals for the residents to comment on and discuss. Steve Anderson added that it was important to think outside the box. He wants to see new things happen within Shelburne, such as a community garden, perhaps somewhere within Fiddle Park and that these things could be supported by the community. He would like to see local businesses become involved in helping such projects come to fruition.

One strong point that Wade brought up, was the development of a strong arts and culture community within the town, to showcase the many local talents that exist here. This is something that Steve has an equally strong commitment to as well and has shown with his initiatives this past year to have the Town signs and social media welcome and celebrate different cultural days and events.

Both men hope that their racial differences will help to promote the diversity that is Shelburne today.