

Hill to retire from politics at end of term

Having run the gamut of just about every phase of local politics over almost three decades, Dufferin County Warden Bill Hill has announced he'll be hanging up his political hat at the end of this term, and not seeking re-election as mayor of Melancthon.

He made his formal announcement at township council last Thursday, Jan. 9, the first meeting following the start of the 2014 election campaign. The early announcement opens the doors for filing by mayoral aspirants who might not have wished to campaign against the popular incumbent mayor.

In a phone interview Monday, Warden Hill confirmed that he and his wife, Alma, would retire to their new home on Lake Couchiching, near Orillia.

Mr. Hill is well known not only for his political history in Dufferin but also his and Alma's support of community activities such as Shelburne Figure Skating Club, in addition to his successful life and disability insurance career.

But his political career goes back more than 30 years, beginning with his election to the Dufferin County Board of Education, which had the reputation of being among the most financially responsible boards in Ontario prior to its amalgamation with the Wellington board to form Upper Grand District School Board.

He served nine years with the board and was chairman in 1992. He is also a former councillor in Shelburne, prior to his residential move to Melancthon, and a longtime member of the town's Economic Development Committee, including several years after his move to the township, before his election to Shelburne Town Council.

His municipal political life in Melancthon began when he was appointed to the council in 1998 following the death of longtime reeve Gordon Oldfield.

He was elected to the council for the following and subsequent terms, rising to deputy mayor upon the passing of D.C. Broderick in 2008. He was elected as mayor in 2010.

At the county, Mayor Hill served on every committee before being elected as warden in December to finish out the present term.

After the long run, he said it was with very mixed emotions that I formally announce that I will not be seeking re-election in October 2014. I thought it important to make my intentions known sooner than later.

By Wes Keller