Ontario appoints Eric Jolliffe as new chair of York Region

By Mark Pavilons Editor Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Eric Jolliffe, former Chief of York Regional Police, will be the next chair of York Region.This provincial appointment is ?over-reach,??according to King Mayor Steve Pellegrini, who took issue with the process.While he has great respect for Jolliffe, and even spoke to him about the appointment, Pellegrini pointed out he doesn't live in York Region and isn't a politician.?How can you represent the people of York Region when you don't live here???the mayor asked.York Region has a specific process to select its chairman and CEO, along with accompanying policies. Typically, the regional chair is voted in by sitting regional councillors. Policies indicate the regional chair must be a ?resident of the Region or the owner or tenant of land in the Region or the spouse of such owner or tenant.?Wayne Emmerson, outgoing chair, left Nov. 29, before finishing the current term.Pellegrini has a fundament problem with the Province usurping the Region's authority. This is ?cronyism,? he said.The mayor has expressed his concerns to King?Vaughan MPP?Stephen Lecce.Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Paul Calandra, in making the announcement Monday, said:?I'm pleased to announce Ontario's plan to appoint Eric Jolliffe as the new Chair of the Regional Municipality of York. His decades of strong executive leadership, strategic management and focus on safety make him well-positioned to be the region's next chair.?Municipalities are critical partners in supporting the growth Ontario is seeing and making our communities the best place to live, work and raise a family. That is why we need strong leadership in place to help deliver critical services that residents and businesses rely on every day.?Born and raised in York Region, Jolliffe is no stranger to serving its residents. He joined York Regional Police in 1981 and because of his steadfast commitment to keeping the region safe, he was appointed Chief of Police in 2010.?Over his long career in public service, Jolliffe has won numerous awards, including Officer of the Order of Merit for Police Forces; both the Queen Elizabeth II Gold and Diamond Jublilee Medals; the Order of the City of Vaughan; the Public Service Award from the Transformation Institute for Leadership and Innovation; and a Character Community of York Region Lifetime Achievement Award.?I look forward to working together as we move forward on our shared priorities, including building homes and safer communities.?I would also like to thank outgoing Regional Chair Wayne Emmerson for his commitment to the Region and its residents. His tremendous work will enable Jolliffe to build an even stronger York Region.?The appointment was supported by Aurora.?Eric's appointment by the Ontario Government is a fantastic decision that I warmly welcome, as Eric is a proven public sector leader with a strong track record of making government services more responsive to the needs of community members,? said Aurora Mayor Tom Mrakas. ?I've known Eric for years through his time at York Regional Police (YRP), including 10 years as Chief, and I have seen firsthand his commitment to consensus building, transparency, accountability, and financial integrity. I've also seen him strongly advocate for innovation in the deployment of government services, including his ongoing efforts to help modernize policing across Canada.?Eric's leadership and wisdom will be of great benefit to Regional Council and all York Region residents, and I look forward to working closely with him.?York Region says it's looking forward to the ?next steps in this appointment process.??Ensuring the effective governance and continued success of York Region is a top priority as we work together to achieve the Region's goals and meet the needs of our residents and stakeholders,? said a release from the Region.?The Region is eager to continue supporting Regional Council as it pursues its work of building a strong, vibrant and inclusive York Region.?