

Fewer voters headed out to the polls this time out

By Mark Pavilons

Fewer King voters cast ballots in the 2014 municipal election, one that saw a new councillor voted into office.

Of King's 16,674 eligible voters, only 5,496 marked a ballot, representing a 32.96% voter turnout.

By comparison, in 2010, 49% made it out; roughly 7,300 of the 14,881 eligible voters.

So, King has picked up 1,793 voters (through increased population) but saw fewer exercise their democratic privilege.

Ward 2 saw a four-way race for the seat. Newcomer David Boyd took the seat, earning 942 votes, more than the others combined -- incumbent Peter Grandilli (317), Jim Streb (275) and Joe Buscema (207),

In 2010, Grandilli earned 693, edging out Jim Streb (635) by roughly 60 votes. Rene Bindi placed third in the race that year (187).

Despite Nobleton's growth over the years, only 226 more residents voted this time out.

Ward 3 Councillor Linda Pabst, King's longest-serving politician, defeated challenger John Workman 341 to 172. Pabst earned 66.47% of the vote.

Pabst successfully fought off challenges by Jeff Jackson (227) and Judith Link (126) in 2010, earning more votes than the other two combined.

Four years ago, she pulled in 554 votes.

Ward 5 Councillor Debbie Schaefer defeated Anna Roberts and Chris Gafoor for the council seat. Schaefer earned 58.32% of the vote, and 550 votes. Gafoor garnered 291 votes (30.86%) and Roberts received 102 (10.82%).

In 2010, Schaefer defeated Paul Greco by almost 400 votes. She received 833 votes that year.

In Ward 4, incumbent Bill Cober once again locked horns with Greg Locke. He won with a margin of 1,032 to 477.

In 2010, Cober bested Locke 1,256 votes to 535.

So this year, despite some residential growth, 282 fewer people went to the polls.

Ward 6 incumbent Avia Eek face competition in Simon Lloyd this year. She won handily, taking in 322 votes (80.9%) compared to Lloyd's 76 (19.1%).

In 2010, Eek upset long-time councillor Jack Rupke, winning 350 to 209. So in Ward 6, that has meant a 161-voter drop this time out.

Peter Adams-Luchowski, who took over as trustee at the York Region District School Board, was elected, earning 1,292 votes. Alex Noudelman brought in 853, while Liliana Usvat earned 808.

Elizabeth Crowe, trustee and chair of the York Region Catholic District School Board, will be heading back to the board table, winning her seat 860 to 530 over Mark Sullivan.

By the numbers, it was disappointing that more people didn't take advantage of the democratic system. The mayor's race in the past may have generated more interest, and encouraged more to come out and vote, so Steve Pellegrini's acclamation may have kept some voters away.

But judging from the number of eligible voters who did not show up, the numbers could have made a big difference in almost every ward.