

York chair Wayne Emmerson a bonus for King

By Mark Pavilons

Former Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Mayor Wayne Emmerson elected York Region Chairman and CEO and that will bring some benefits to King Township.

Emmerson was elected York Region



Chairman and CEO at the Dec. 11 inaugural meeting of York Regional Council, for the 2014 to 2018 term of office. In a public vote of 16 to 4, regional councillors gave Emmerson their stamp of approval.

Newmarket regional councillor John Taylor ran for the position, but quickly threw his support behind Emmerson.

King Mayor Steve Pellegrini had come out publicly in support of Emmerson, who has a lot of experience with rural issues.

Pellegrini stated that Emmerson had approached him, asking him what King needed from the Region. This how-can-I-help attitude sealed it for Pellegrini. The mayor noted he already has a lengthy wish list for the Region, which includes traffic lights and intersection improvements.

Chairman Emmerson's relationship with Pellegrini will be definitely good news for King Township in the coming term.

Pellegrini's seat at the regional council table has moved more towards front and centre, making him part of Emmerson's 'core team'.

Chairman Emmerson's nomination was brought forward by Town of Richmond Hill Mayor David Barrow and seconded by Town of Georgina Regional Councillor Danny Wheeler.

'Following in the footsteps of some great York Region chairs, including Bill Fisch and Eldred King, it is an honour to be here tonight,' said Chairman and CEO Wayne Emmerson. 'I pledge my commitment and dedication to you and all York Region residents for the next four years.'

In a standing room only council chambers, Chairman Emmerson specifically acknowledged the members of the 2014 to 2018 term.

'This is a very prestigious position and one that I will not take for granted,' he said. 'I am committed to working with each and every one of you to continue advancing the great foundation of work that makes York Region the amazing place it is.'

Newly elected Chairman Emmerson replaces Bill Fisch, who stepped down as York Region Chairman at the end of the 2010 to 2014 term after 17 years.

Dec. 11 marked the first time since 1997 an election for the position of York Region Chairman and CEO has taken place, following four successful acclamations for Chairman Fisch.

Chairman Wayne Emmerson is a fifth generation resident York and Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Chairman Emmerson has more than two decades of political experience, most recently as Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville mayor for 17 years.

Focused on getting results, his experience and leadership is well respected across York Region and all levels of government. During his 17 years on York regional council, he served on various standing committees including Finance and Administration, Housing and Children and Family Services, as well as numerous task forces such as Fire Services and Solid Waste.

Chairman Emmerson has also served on various transit-related committees and was the Chair of York Region's Transportation Services for eight years between 2006 and 2014. He is committed to advancing the foundation of work being done across York Region to efficiently move people from their key destinations of choice.

He helped get the GO bus service running in King.

In his capacity as Chairman and CEO, he is also an ex-officio member of all Regional Committees.

Chairman Emmerson has also served as a board member for a number of organizations including Markham- Stouffville Hospital, GTA Mayors' Committee, Greater Toronto Services Board and the Greater Airport Authority Association.

Working alongside York Regional Police, the Toronto Region Conservation Authority, various celebrities and other community agencies and organizations, he was instrumental in the development of York Region's Community Safety Village, a nationally recognized 10,000-square-foot interactive, educational facility where children learn about fire, traffic and personal safety.

Prior to becoming Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Mayor in 1994, he was a Town Councillor from 1988 to 1994. Chairman Emmerson is the sixth regional chairman in the 44-year history of The Regional Municipality of York and the second Regional Chairman to come from the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Eldred King, York Region's fourth chairperson (1984 to 1997), was also a resident of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The Regional Municipality of York is an upper tier municipality that consists of nine municipalities. With a population of more than 1.1 million people the Region remains one of the fastest growing municipalities in Canada. In 2014, the Region's budget was \$3 billion, the fourth largest municipal budget in the Province of Ontario.

In York Region, members of York Regional Council are elected in what is known as a 'double direct' form of election. In this type of system, those elected as mayor or regional council for an area municipality earn a seat on both local and regional council for four years.

For more information on York Regional Council, please visit York.ca.