

Mayor's Message

Mayor Carolyn Amyotte

Township of North Kawartha

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Ladies and Gentleman, Honoured Guests and Fellow North Kawarthans. I am so pleased to welcome you here today. It is an honour and privilege to stand before you as the head of Council and your new Mayor, and I am so very humbled by the faith and trust that you have placed in me. Even though I have served North Kawartha for the past 15 years I still feel the same nervous, excitement like I did back in 2003. Having gone through 5 election campaigns I can honestly say that it's a very stressful and crazy ride... For all of us!

However, each election always serves to strengthen the love that I have for my community. It increases my appreciation of the incredible people I share it with and renews my faith in our capacity to achieve great things. Like I said throughout my entire campaign: The greatest asset of North Kawartha, is its people.

When I look at my new (and old) Council colleagues I am pleased to see that it is becoming more diverse. While I am still the only woman on Council I can no longer claim to be the youngest member! It is worth noting that this Council consists of a broad cross-section of our community. This Council has seniors, waterfront residents and small business owners. We have members who are hunters, environmentalists and former educators, members who work in tourism, customer service and health care and much more. We all have unique experiences and ideas about life in North Kawartha and how to improve it, and I am thrilled to be the captain of this team and put those ideas into action. This diversity of experience and ideas is important because it leads to a broader perspective. As long as we are mindful to express our views with respect and listen to other points of view with tolerance, this will lead to more thoughtful debates and ultimately better decision-making and governance. We are living in a world today whose trust in elected representatives and the legitimacy of government is declining because of the growing incivility by some politicians and the amplification of their offensive behavior through the media. Now more than

ever, it is vital that all public servants undertake the duties of their role with integrity and grace. It is my goal to ensure that Council acts fairly and without bias. Our Council must be respectful towards each other, towards all staff members and every single member of our community. A Council that acts with honour and integrity is a Council that will achieve great success for North Kawartha. However, the success of our community does not rest on the shoulders of Council alone. It is the responsibility of every single community member and our outlook towards ourselves and each other. We must be partners. We must communicate and collaborate as we navigate our community's path to success. Ultimately our ability to succeed or fail rests with our attitudes. One of my favourite quotes is: 'believe that you can or believe that you can't; either way you're right'. We cannot stop challenges from arising but we can choose how we respond to them. If we face our challenges with the right attitude and the courage to look for solutions we will find success. This lesson is just one of many valuable lessons that I have learned during my time on Council and I want to share with you the experience that really made it hit home for me. Years ago when we received the grant money to build our community centre, there were some negative reactions in the community. Things like: 'Oh great! You have emptied the gravy boat now and we won't get any other funding ever again. It way too big, it's unnecessary, it will cost too much to maintain, you're building it in the wrong spot, you're building it the wrong way etc., etc. I was so bothered by the nay-sayers and their comments that I wrote an article called: "The Little Township That Could!" I was baffled by the negativity that was being expressed by some because I was overjoyed with our success.

What I eventually realized and continue to remind myself of, is that there will always be people who love to complain and blame and enjoy watching others fail. You know the kind of people that I am talking about. The ones who aren't happy unless they miserable. They are critics and the only purpose they serve is to remind us of what not to be if we want achieve success. While the critics may get me down, I never stay down. A positive 'can-do' attitude can take on any challenge or hardship and turn it into an opportunity for success. I know that a Council and a community that believes in itself cannot be stopped... especially by the critics. I wanted to share this with all of you rather than list a whole bunch of promises and goals that I have for the next four years. That's because, I don't know what

kinds of challenges and opportunities are in our future. But I do know that with the right attitude; with courage, hard work and a willingness to collaborate, we will be unstoppable.

So it is with this positive attitude and faith that I will promise you this: With each and every issue that comes before us this Mayor and this Council will do its 'homework'. We will listen to all community concerns. We will respectfully consider the advice of staff and experts. We will ask for guidance and help when needed. We will weigh and debate the pros and cons and then make the decision based on what we believe to be in the best interests of North Kawartha.

What I know for sure is that Council works for YOU. As your elected representatives it is our duty to use our best judgment in all matters. I and my colleagues are grateful for the confidence that you have placed in us and I can't wait to keep working for North Kawartha. We are still the Little Township that Could!

Thankyou.

Sincerely,

Mayor Carolyn Amyotte