

NOTEWORTHY

IN NORWICH

A COMMUNITY NEWS PUBLICATION

Meet The Candidates

A good turnout at the October 5, 26 meet the candidates event at Norwich Community Centre. Two mayoral candidates, incumbent Jim Palmer and his challenger Adrian Couwenberg, ward one candidates included, Roy King and Marius Kerkhoff, Lynne DePlancke, the incumbent vs Tim Thompson for ward two, Lacey Hird and Karl Toews are vying for ward four. Acclaimed Councillor Shawn Gear from ward three also sat on the panel thanking the voters for their trust in him by way of acclamation.

The meeting ran on schedule, despite long winded questions and every potential councillor giving their two cents worth. The microphone was passed from one panel member to the other for their take on most of the questions asked. The first two or three panel members answered the actual question. By the time the microphone got to the fifth person on the panel, the question got lost in the word salad being tossed by the candidates at the table.

I observed a couple of situations as out of character attitudes came through. In his opening remarks, Mayor Palmer put forth some cheep shots at his opponent that could only be described as mud slinging. This was repeated in Jim's close as well. Although not on mic, at one point Councillor Deplancke seemed displeased with Councillor Gear.

If the size of the crowd is any indication, voter turnout should be high. This is an important election, vote for your desired candidates like your vote counts, because it does.

No real controversy arose from any question and there was no burning queries to elicit answers that stirred up the crowd.

One question was the standout question of the evening, it was about housing for the elderly. The audience member suggested Norwich Township purchase the former Trillium Home for the aged. She then asked if anyone on the panel would get behind such a proposal. Her suggestion was met with a lukewarm response at best.

First timer Lacey Hird presented well among the first time candidates. Roy King and Marius Kerkhoff, also had a good presence on the panel, although Marius being soft spoke made it hard to hear him at times.

Norwich Chamber of Commerce hosted the two hour event, with Ian Heikoop and Doug Buck moderating. Ground rules were clearly laid out, then for the most part disregarded. No one asked where the member of the audience was from before allowing them to ask a question. Questions were only to be asked by township residents. Perhaps it would have been better if each person asking a question stated their name and ward before questioning the candidates.

I saw no clear winner at the event. If the crowd's reaction and comments after the evening concluded is an indicator, Mayor Palmer came up short due to his uncharacteristic remarks regarding his opponent. I witnessed Shawn Gear at his best when it came to Police Services Board and his comments on that subject. So much so that as the audience applauded I shouted out "That's my councillor".



An estimated 200 people attended the meeting.



Adrian speaking with voters.



Couwenberg looks perplexed by Palmer's comments.



Above, potential new councillors meeting with voters.

Non Scientific Poll

Judging from an informal sign count throughout the township, it appears that the vote is well balanced with an equal number of lawn signs in each ward for each candidate.

Having said this, signs can lie.

Each sign can only represent votes from the household where the sign is placed. Size does not matter! Regardless of size the sign really cannot predict more than just one vote.

As I said this poll is nothing more than an observation, very simply a fun look at who may come up victorious when the actual votes are counted.

Based on meeting the candidates and hearing what they had to say, I can assure you each candidate would be an asset representing the township at 285767 Airport Road.

To The Editor

Hi Vic,

We have had to reschedule the event Festival of Flavours. We are meeting as a committee on Oct 14th to discuss a new date. Thinking Jan or Feb 2027. The prices you have listed in the attachment is the amount for vendors not admission.

Peace,
Victoria Body

Hello, just wanted to let you know that the information regarding the Festival of Flavours is a little misleading.

Vendors pay \$125 or \$100.

Those that attend the event pay \$20 for tickets to attend. Food vouchers are purchased separately.

We will likely be changing the date to Feb 5th.

New information will be posted soon on the Chamber fb page.

(Just wanted to let you know before you post this again)

Thank you,
Esther

My apologies for any inconvenience this may have caused.
Vic Whitcroft

Municipal Voter Turnout Editorial by Vic Whitcroft

Typically voter turnout in Ontario is always rather low. Why, complacency, doom, what could it be?

It is possible that your municipal vote is the one that will do you the most good. This is especially true in a rural environment. When it comes to approachability, it's unlikely you can speak with Mark Carney or Doug Ford. It is however, a sure bet that most of the candidates in this 2026 municipal election in Norwich Township will be open to hearing what your concerns are.

Over the years many Norwich residents have gone to Lynne DePlancke with concerns, looking back even further, former Mayor John Heleniak was the go to guy.

So why is it that the average voter turnout was 32.9% (based on 385 municipalities that conducted direct elections and provided voter turnout information)? In 2018 38.30%, of eligible residents cast a ballot?

With the numbers presented, I think it has been established your vote is important.

Every vote counts! I want to appeal to women voters now. Keep in mind we have two female candidates in the race, research their information then give serious consideration to what they have to say.

I advice you to do the same for the male candidates.

I'm not telling you how to vote, I am suggesting however, it is easy to overlook the ladies when they are out numbered on the ballot.

As in the past there is plenty riding on this election, the Oxford safe and well plan, the possibility of a new medical centre, four budgets, renewal of the OPP policing contract and dealing with the county and whatever tax hikes they decide to throw at the township. Vote!

Honeywell Invasion

If you have driven past the community centre/legion parking lots in the past couple of weeks at between 7 & 8 AM, you will have noticed several Honeywell service trucks. These white and red trucks are on a mission that includes changing out every electrical meter in the province. A larger rental truck arrives with the meters to be installed each day. The local project is expected to continue for another couple of weeks.

Electricity meter replacement source Hydro One

Access to reliable electricity is essential to everyday life, and meters play a crucial role in ensuring a consistent, dependable supply.

As our needs evolve and the demand for electricity grows, Hydro One is making upgrades to electricity meters as a first step to prepare for growing electricity needs within your community.

To support this important upgrade, Hydro One or our contractor Honeywell, will work alongside us to ensure a seamless transition.

On the day your meter is changed A technician will attempt to alert you before starting the replacement. If required, please make sure a representative 18+ is available to grant access to the meter.

Depending on your meter configuration, some customers may experience a brief power outage. You can speak with the technician to understand if you will experience a power interruption.

Arts Culture & Service Clubs In Norwich Township

Norwich Musical Society Band

53 Stover Street S, Upper level in the band room

Norwich District Historical Society

norwichdhs@execulink.com 89 Stover Street N

Oxford County Library

Norwich, 10 Tidey St, Norwich

Otterville, 207 Main Street West, Otterville

Burgessville, 604 Main Street South, Burgessville

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 190

55 Stover St S, Norwich,

Optimist Club of Norwich & District

norwichoptimistclub@gmail.com

Norwich Business Improvement Area

285767 Airport Road

Norwich Chamber of Commerce

Norwich District Curling Club

17 Phebe St, Norwich

Norwich Lawn Bowling Club

20 Stover St S, Norwich

The Friends of Otterville Park

280 Main Street East