

Election Alert



ELECTION DAY NOVEMBER 15

ADVANCED POLLS:

NOV 1, 3, 4, 5, 6

Advanced polls at **Fleetwood Community Centre**, 15996 – 84 Avenue; and **South Surrey Recreation Centre**, 14601 – 20 Avenue

ALL CANDIDATES MEETINGS

MAYOR & COUNCIL NOVEMBER 4, 7:00PM

Earl Marriott Secondary School
15751 - 16 Avenue

MAYOR & COUNCIL NOVEMBER 5, 6:30PM

Kwantlen Polytechnic University
Surrey Campus
12666 - 72nd Avenue

SCHOOL TRUSTEES NOVEMBER 5, 6:30PM

Enver Creek Secondary
14505 - 84 Avenue

MAYOR & COUNCIL AND SCHOOL TRUSTEES NOVEMBER 6, 3:30PM

Lena Shaw Elementary School
14250 - 100A Avenue

MAYOR & COUNCIL NOVEMBER 10, 7:00PM

Guildford Recreation Centre
15105 - 105 Avenue

November 15, 2008

Municipal Elections are Approaching

For this election alert, we had hoped to publish the results of survey questions posed to all the candidates running in the election. There are 36 different people running in the three races (one individual, Paul Hillsdon, is running both for Council and School Board). Given the length of the survey, the amount of time remaining in the campaign and the number of people running it's simply didn't seem possible to complete in time.

This alert will help prepare you for making your mark on election Day.

Voting in Local Elections

Why is it Important?

Of the three major elections that Canadians face (provincial, municipal and federal) the municipal elections yield the lowest voter turnout. This is ironic given that the local authorities in general have more of an affect on our day-to-day lives than either provincial or federal authorities. Local development, taxes and much of infrastructure all runs through the local council and mayoral offices.

Last year, City staff in Brampton, Ontario, studied the feasibility of levying property taxes against churches, synagogues, mosques and temples, severely limiting the number of religious buildings allowed within the city, limits to the number of people who can gather in a private home for religious purposes, restrict the ability of churches to run homeless shelters and soup kitchens and other such measures. Every municipality in Canada was watching Brampton to see what would happen (thankfully, the Lord did not allow these measures to come to pass). If we don't see that appropriate men and women are elected to our municipal offices, these measures (and worse) may happen here.

As Christians we can have an influence in local elections due to apathy by much of the populace. There are opportunities for Christians to be involved in local politics and run successfully. Equally we can get behind

local Christian candidates and successfully have them elected.

Choosing local school trustees is likely the most important choice that Christian voters can make on Election Day. Though most of us do not send our children to the local public school it is non the less important that God-fearing men and women are elected to oversee the education of all children. Some years ago in Surrey a slate of school trustees made up of a majority of Christians refused to allow a group of gay friendly books into the classroom at local public schools. Though they were derided as "book banners" by local and national media most were re-elected the next time around.

ARPA has been informing the local churches about the "Corren agreement" in BC which allows a gay couple to have unprecedented influence on the BC schools curriculum in order to make it more "gay-friendly". It is important to do as much as possible to prevent children in public schools to be indoctrinated by this very dangerous agenda. Our independent schools, still free of this interference, may in the future face these same curriculum demands.

The Abbotsford school board has courageously stood against the "Corren agreement" and refused to allow one of the recommended courses to be taught in public schools. It is important that we pray that they will continue this fight in the face of Human Rights tribunal cases brought against them. Additionally we must support Christian candidates here in Surrey and get out and vote in this next election.

Slates & Independents

Who can I vote for?

Municipal Elections are technically non-partisan, that is, there are no political parties in municipal elections. Instead, some candidates will band together to form a slate. A slate is a group of candidates that run on a common platform.

In Surrey, we have two slates, representing half of the candidates. The other half are independent. ARPA sent each slate a copy of our survey but neither responded.

Surrey First is the slate headed by Dianne Watts, the current mayor. In broad terms, this is a conservative slate of candidates running for mayor and council. That does not mean you should vote for them *en masse*. In particular, Barinder Rasode, a new candidate, seems to lack experience. Their website (surreyfirst.ca) contains information on their policies.

The Surrey Civic Coalition, which includes long time councillor Bob Bose. The SCC is a liberal slate of candidates with many ties to the NDP and the Liberal Party of Canada. One candidate in particular could be described as anti-Christian, Jim McMurtry (who has run federally for the Liberals in the past) has written many anti-Christian letters to the editor of various news papers and has said that home schooling is child abuse. Bob Bose has proposed adding scheduled bus service over the Port Mann; buses were removed when traffic made keeping a schedule impossible. *ARPA does not recommend supporting any candidate on the SCC slate.*

Among the independent candidates for council, Marvin Hunt is well known to our community. In the past, he has spoken at our Annual General Meeting and was recently at the fund raising dinner for the ECP Centre. A pastor for a local church, Marvin seeks to uphold Christian values in his service to the community. He consistently votes against permits for bars, clubs and casinos. His wife Ruth is on the executive with Real Women BC.

ARPA recommends supporting Marvin Hunt.

On the School Trustee side of the election, things are a little different. We note, with sadness that Heather Stillwell had chosen not to run in this election in order to fight her cancer. A powerful voice for Christian values on the School Board, Heather will be sorely missed in the years to come, especially as the affects of the Corren Agreement make themselves felt in Surrey.

ARPA thanks Heather for her service and prays that she will receive the strength to face the trials the Lord has blessed her with.

ARPA asked Heather for her comments on some of the candidates. Heather recommended Kate Taschereau a wife of 13 years and a mother of 5, two of whom are in the autistic spectrum.

Two candidates, both of whom are running under the SCC slate, are especially worrisome. Terry Allen and Laurie Larsen are both presidents of CUPE Local 379 and 402 respectively (the former represents

support staff for the Burnaby School District and the later represents Surrey City Workers). ARPA feels that in both cases, this represents a significant Conflict of Interest.

For mayor, the only candidate running against Dianne Watts is Murray Weisenberger (a member of the provincial and federal Green parties) and is seeking to (among other things) hold up development in the Deaks Pit area for an environmental enquiry; that development is supposed to help fund other projects in the Whalley area.

All Candidates Meetings

How can I learn more?

All candidates meetings are the best way to learn something about each candidate. Since there are so many candidates, these meetings can be very long. However, it is one of the most important ways to get all the information you need to make an informed choice. The first page of this alert lists all the meetings planned until election day. These events can be very informative, giving you a sense of each person's character in addition to their position on specific topics.

An all Candidate's meeting is only as helpful as the questions that are asked. Here are some questions you might ask:

For Mayoral and Council Candidates

- What does sustainability mean in a real and tangible way for Surrey? How is that connected to the rapid growth we have seen in some parts of Surrey?
- What role should Surrey play regionally with TransLink and Metro Vancouver?
- Public transit and bicycles are the two feasible alternatives to automobiles for daily commuting. What needs to be done to make these more viable options?
- What role play Christian churches in the civic Surrey? Would pre-marital and parenting classes offered to Surrey families by churches benefit our citizens?

For School Trustees

- What do you believe are the responsibilities of parents, teachers and government in the education of children?
- Occasionally the curriculum includes topics that are antithetical to a student's world view and belief. Should schools force students to attend classes that run contrary to their beliefs? Do schools have an obligation to inform parents of what is being taught to their children and alternatives provided?
- Education is one area of Government spending where there seems to never be enough money. In what ways can you improve schools without increased funding?

RESPONSIBILITIES (EXCERPTS)

Mayor:

- to provide leadership to the council
- communicate information to the council
- preside at council meetings
- provide, on behalf of the council, general direction to municipal officers
- reflect the will of council and to carry out other duties on behalf of the council

Council Members:

- to consider the well-being and interests of the municipality and its community
- to contribute to the development and evaluation of the policies and programs of the municipality
- to participate in council meetings, committee meetings and meetings of other bodies to which the member is appointed
- to carry out other duties assigned by the council

Trustees:

- To determine educational goals and priorities.
- To set district budgets according to those goals and priorities.
- To establish policies.
- To plan for the future of the district.
- To communicate with the people of Surrey and White Rock about educational matters.

To find out more about individual candidates, all candidates meetings or to find your polling station, go to [www.Surrey.ca/Inside City Hall/Election/2008 Election](http://www.Surrey.ca/Inside%20City%20Hall/Election/2008%20Election)