

Updated Oct. 9, 2018

Tay Valley Township Candidates

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The OLA did not receive responses from these candidates:

- Doug Barr, Councillor, Burgess Ward
- Greg Hallam, Councillor, Burgess Ward
- Mick Wicklum, Councillor, Burgess Ward

Barrie Crampton, Deputy Reeve

Q1. The Conservation Authority is a trusted partner of our Lake Associations. Please provide your perspective on the future role of the Conservation Authority in your townships planning and approval process for waterfront and wetland properties?

The CAs are indispensable partners for our township’s planning and approval process in the protection of these water resources – which play a major role in our township’s economy, and, in the case of wetlands, in the care of our groundwater supply and even in flood control.

Q2. What would you do to protect the health of our lakes, rivers, creeks and wetlands?

First, I would place a priority on the maintenance of the guidelines established in our municipal planning and zoning bylaws, the purpose of which is to ensure consistent, reasonable care of these waterbodies. Second, I would ensure that our partners in this have input and a voice – the waterfront residents, lake associations, technical agencies and government departments.

Q3. If elected would you support a new by-law that would improve control over site alterations prior to building or minor variance approvals?

Yes, there is little value in having programs in place for the protection of our water if everyone is not living by the same rules.

Q4. Summarize your position on maintaining a balance between environmental sustainability and economic development.

The sustainability of a community is determined by the steady growth in the assessment base which is the direct result of new building construction. The new Council together with staff must ensure that prospective owners and their builders receive timely service and support.

The health of the lakes and rivers has to be maintained so as to sustain lake property values ensuring their contribution to our assessment base.

I initiated a request for the Township provide a report on how much lake shore properties contribute to the assessment base and yearly taxation revenue. I want to see that these figures are routinely calculated and made available to the public to raise the awareness.

Overall Total Taxable Assessment \$1,218,589,227

(includes all property types – Residential, Farm, Managed Forest, Commercial, Industrial etc.)

Waterfront Assessment \$ 461,949,935

(includes Residential Vacant; Managed Forest Vacant/Seasonal/Residential; Seasonal Recreational Dwelling – Tier 1 & 2)

Therefore, waterfront assessment represents approximately 38% of Tay Valley’s Overall Taxable Assessment.

Tay Valley’s 2018 Municipal Levy is \$5,406,203. (not including County or Education)

This includes the Municipal taxes generated by the waterfront properties of \$1,972,109 or approximately 36% of the total Municipal Levy.

There are 5,879 properties in Tay Valley as of December 31, 2017 and this includes 1,808 properties that are waterfront or approximately 31%.

Q5. If you could change one thing in our zoning by-laws, what would it be and why?

I have noted that Tay Valley requirement for area of shoreline disturbance differs from adjoining municipalities. To bring this in line the current 15 meter buffer could be changed to 9 meters.

Q6. Much of our township’s taxes come from seasonal and residential property owners; relatively little from businesses. What would you do to ensure the township has a sustainable tax base for the future.

My experience over many years in the economic development sector is that you always build first from your sectors of strength. This means, on the one hand, pursuing growth in sustainable, low impact sectors relating to tourism, recreation and nature. Second, facilitating the growth of community-sensitive, home-based businesses, including secondary businesses such as small-scale agriculture and food products. Finally, tie into the County economic development programs to promote and encourage larger-scale enterprises that fit the foregoing model.

Q7. Do you support the mandatory septic re-inspection program on Otty Lake?

Yes.

Keith Kerr, Reeve

Q1. The Conservation Authority is a trusted partner of our Lake Associations. Please provide your perspective on the future role of the Conservation Authority in your townships planning and approval process for waterfront and wetland properties?

The RVCA has worked with a lot of lake associations in Tay valley to create water shed management and Tay Vally includes them in our zoning bylaw as attachments and I would like to see it continue They are a commenting agent on all waterfront development and this also should continue.

Q2 What would you do to protect the health of our lakes, rivers, creeks and wetlands?

We do a septic reinspection program that is mandatory on some lakes in Tay Valley. I would like to see that done on all T V T lakes.

Q3. If elected would you support a new by-law that would improve control over site alterations prior to building or minor variance approvals?

I would support that site alteration is detrimental to water quality and we must protect the lakes and rivers from that.

Q4. Summarize your position on maintaining a balance between environmental sustainability and economic development.

We need economic development but not at a cost to environment there are some development that are not comparable and I would not support that type of economic growth.

Q5. If you could change one thing in our zoning by-laws, what would it be and why?

I would like to tighten up the bylaw so there is less grey area and more black and white.

Q6. Much of our township's taxes come from seasonal and residential property owners; relatively little from businesses. What would you do to ensure the township has a sustainable tax base for the future.

The province has to upload more services so we must rally them and get them to anti up this would be done by the municipalities and the eastern Ontario wardens caucus.

Q7. Do you support the mandatory septic re-inspection program on Otty Lake?

Yes I support septic reinspections and it should be mandatory on all water bodies.

Rob Rainer, Councillor, Sherbrooke Ward

Q1. The Conservation Authority is a trusted partner of our Lake Associations. Please provide your perspective on the future role of the Conservation Authority in your townships planning and approval process for waterfront and wetland properties?

I fully value Ontario's conservation authorities and, if elected as a Councillor to TVT Council, would wish to help ensure that their mandate remains and that the authorities are properly resourced to fulfill it. Conservation authorities have developed and retain specialized knowledge and expertise regarding freshwater and other environmental assets, including on best practices for safeguarding these assets. The Township is fortunate to be able to tap into this capacity to help guide development that is appropriate and sustainable in relation to environmental fragility.

Q2. What would you do to protect the health of our lakes, rivers, creeks and wetlands?

I first mention that, since early adulthood when I began to become aware of environmental issues, I've had an enduring and strong commitment to conservation and environmental protection, and a belief that we ought to treat land, water, and biodiversity as the sacred elements that they are. We must use "natural resources" but our ethos should always be to try, to the extent feasible, to leave what was given to us in as good if not better condition for the generations following us. I am a member of the Friends of the Tay Watershed group and support its efforts to raise awareness of the watershed, threats to water and environmental quality, and opportunities for conservation. Much of my working life has been focused on environmental matters, including a five-year period in the 1990s when, while living in New Brunswick, I led the development of an award-winning comprehensive, community-based environmental management plan for the international St. Croix River Estuary and the watershed that feeds into it. If elected as a Councillor to Tay Valley Township Council, I would view every land use planning and development application or consideration through the lens of how, if at all, development could negatively impact freshwater and other environmental assets. I would draw on the information and advice of professionals (e.g., the Township planner), and on my own critical thinking, as to whether a given project would conform with legislation, regulations, and policies meant to help safeguard environmental assets. I would also wish to see what TVT can and should do to further raise awareness of environmental assets and their condition. For example, the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority has published an excellent state of the watershed report for the Tay River watershed. A simple flyer about this report, summarizing key findings and explaining how to access the full report, could be distributed to residences in TVT along with a property tax mailing.

Q3. If elected would you support a new by-law that would improve control over site alterations prior to building or minor variance approvals?

If the premise of this question is that such a by-law is needed and if that premise is valid, then yes, I would support that. I am, however, still too new to TVT and the workings of the municipality and the specifics of water/environmental protection to otherwise state conclusively that I would support such a by-law. In other words, I have a learning curve to climb to become more familiar with how well TVT is doing re: control over site alterations – and in what ways the Township may be falling short.

Q4. Summarize your position on maintaining a balance between environmental sustainability and economic development.

Globally, thus far the balance has tilted heavily in favour of development over the environment – witness the fact that we are living in what’s being called “The Sixth Extinction,” that is, the sixth time in history when a massive die-off of species (90%+ of all life) has occurred, and the first time in history that such die-off has been triggered by human activity. In a blink of an eye in geological time, humanity has grown from a few million people to now over seven billion and climbing toward 10 billion by mid-century. Along with that trajectory has been explosive growth in technological capacity, so much so that we also now live in what’s being called “The Anthropocene,” a geological era characterized by humanity’s ability to literally alter the Earth’s crust and all of its spheres (e.g., atmospheric, hydrological, biological) including through massive chemical and other inputs and imbalances (e.g., carbon dioxide, methane, nitrogen, plastics). Climate change, in particular (and along with nuclear weapons), poses an existential threat to humanity and all life on Earth; that is, it has the potential to annihilate such life (as is further evident from some of the past mass extinctions). To the extent that “climate catastrophe” becomes a reality, it is arguable that “sustainability” is even possible anymore, whereas some 30 years ago (at the dawn of growing public awareness of climate change) sustainability seemed within reach, as did the prospect of limiting global warming to under 2oC (whereas, now, it seems more likely we are heading to a super-heated Earth some 4-8oC warmer by the end of the century). Such knowledge colours my specific response to question #4. In our local context, I am in favour of development that is planned and executed with strong sensitivity to environmental fragility, and that helps to demonstrate and further eco-friendly building and transportation practices. For example, encouraging the building of tiny (e.g., 300-600 square foot) and otherwise comparatively small (e.g., 700-1200 square foot) and smartly functional homes, and also the clustering of such homes, would be compatible with this objective, and such homes may also be more affordable for younger families who would most definitely be good to attract. The Township, and economic development bodies serving the region, ought to encourage (including with fiscal incentives) new enterprises and more home-based businesses that can tie into and bolster a local and regional conservation economy. More generally, the matter is not whether TVT should be for or against development, but rather what forms of development are most consistent with the values and goals of our community (including environmental ones), and how can such development be encouraged and supported.

Q5. If you could change one thing in our zoning by-laws, what would it be and why?

Once again, I am still too new to Tay Valley Township and the workings of the municipality including concerning zoning by-laws to be able to offer a fully informed response to this question. The best I could do as an incoming Councillor would be to be briefed by various people (e.g., fellow or former councillors, the township’s planner, knowledgeable people at the Rideau Valley and Mississippi conservation authorities) as to what they consider to be the outstanding needs in this regard, undertake related background reading, and then form my views accordingly and seek to support what most needs to be changed.

Q6. Much of our township's taxes come from seasonal and residential property owners; relatively little from businesses. What would you do to ensure the township has a sustainable tax base for the future.

While campaigning for municipal office, I've heard a number of people say that we need more people to move to TVT and contribute to the tax base so as to help improve the Township's fiscal position. I am not sure that reasoning is sound. After all, every new resident who contributes taxes also requires various services in return, and thus it seems something of a zero-sum scenario is at work. That said, given TVT's relative proximity to Ottawa (in particular) and given the hunger of more and more people to "escape the city" for retirement or other reasons, I anticipate that there will be ever-growing interest and pursuit of people to live here, some of whom may also seek to establish new businesses. I see growth coming and I believe TVT must be proactively ready to welcome and accommodate it while, again, adhering to strong measures for safeguarding our environmental assets. Assuming such growth occurs, that in itself will add more revenue to the tax base but, once again, such revenue will be largely offset by increasing service delivery costs. My understanding, from reviewing TVT financial data, is that the Township has managed to significantly reduce its net long-term debt and debt per household, and to increase its municipal equity. This seems to reflect prudent financial management which, of course, should be maintained. If elected to Council, I would wish to become deeply informed about the state of TVT's finances, the pressure points on fiscal sustainability, and the options to deal with those pressure points. My guidepost would not be "lower taxes" at all costs but, rather, what levels of taxation are fairest and most appropriate to help ensure proper delivery of the valued services.

Q7. Do you support the mandatory septic re-inspection program on Otty Lake?

Inadequate or failing septic systems pose a significant threat to freshwater quality. I believe that mandatory septic re-inspections are in the public interest and so, yes, I support such a program.

Susan Freeman, Reeve

Q1. The Conservation Authority is a trusted partner of our Lake Associations. Please provide your perspective on the future role of the Conservation Authority in your townships planning and approval process for waterfront and wetland properties?

With the current provincial government municipalities are unsure as to the provincial strategy regarding them. With the provincial deficit one must consider that there will be more downloading of responsibilities onto the conservation authorities. While I was on Council I very much valued their input and perspective and as Reeve I will continue to do so.

Q2. What would you do to protect the health of our lakes, rivers, creeks and wetlands?

As our environment becomes more and more threatened, we all have to take responsibility to protect our watershed and land through municipal policies, partnerships and volunteerism. Within the municipality I support siteplan controls, set-back policies, not allowing toxic weed spraying along our roads, working to bring more wide spread septic re-inspections across the township.

Q3. If elected would you support a new by-law that would improve control over site alterations prior to building or minor variance approvals?

Yes, this is done in other municipalities and is especially helpful on waterfront areas and heavily treed sites. In the past I have found that the public has been very angered when a site is sold, denuded transformed before construction.

Q4. Summarize your position on maintaining a balance between environmental sustainability and economic development.

I don't see a conflict, Those who see conflict are not planning effectively to their and the other taxpayers benefit. A healthy environment is prized and valued.

Q5. If you could change one thing in our zoning by-laws, what would it be and why?

I think that the home based business provisions are too strict, I would prefer to see them relaxed somewhat. Many residents want to start or expand their home based businesses and this would benefit our township.

Q6. Much of our township's taxes come from seasonal and residential property owners; relatively little from businesses. What would you do to ensure the township has a sustainable tax base for the future.

This is a series problem not only for Tay Valley but for all rural municipalities. We are lucky that we lucky that we have a large industrial company that pays a significant portion of taxes and we are seeing an increase in commercial development. We need to work with other municipalities to assess whether we can reduce costs via shared services and purchasing and work with our economic development partners to increase business development that is compatible with our environment.

Q7. Do you support the mandatory septic re-inspection program on Otty Lake?

This is something I would want the new Council to explore. It has been very successful in other communities eg. Rideau Lakes, where they found 25% fail rate the first year, but it is a deeply controversial policy.

Brian Campbell, Reeve

Q1. The Conservation Authority is a trusted partner of our Lake Associations. Please provide your perspective on the future role of the Conservation Authority in your townships planning and approval process for waterfront and wetland properties?

The conservation authority plays an important role in Tay Valley Township and provides comments and recommendations to the municipality for our planning approval process. As a board member of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, I certainly agree they have a significant role to play but ultimately the final decision for planning approvals is the responsibility of the elected officials in Tay Valley Township.

Q2. What would you do to protect the health of our lakes, rivers, creeks and wetlands?

Having lived on Otty Lake for 40 years, I know the importance of protecting our lakes and rivers for our future generations. We need to continue the good working relationship we have with the many lake Associations in Tay Valley. They are the environmental stewards of our very important assets. I would ensure that any development on our lakes and rivers meets the highest environmental standards.

Q3. If elected would you support a new by-law that would improve control over site alterations prior to building or minor variance approvals?

Some of the biggest challenges facing residents who wish to develop on waterfront property is the size of the lot, the topography of the land and other restrictions that impose development. I would ensure that we work with the property owners to come up with solutions that optimizes the best environmental gain.

Q4. Summarize your position on maintaining a balance between environmental sustainability and economic development.

I believe that environmental sustainability and economic development is very important to the future of Tay Valley Township and maintaining that balance is a challenge. It is important to develop Tay Valley for business opportunities. We have a natural paradise here in Tay Valley with an Abundance of Lakes and Rivers. I will ensure that the lakes and rivers are preserved and protected for all today, tomorrow and always.

Q5. If you could change one thing in our zoning by-laws, what would it be and why?

We have recently just completed a five-year review of our comprehensive zoning By-Laws and at this time I would not recommend one particular change; but, if there is a zoning By-Law that the community would like to see addressed I would certainly be open to discussing it.

Q6. Much of our township's taxes come from seasonal and residential property owners; relatively little from businesses. What would you do to ensure the township has a sustainable tax base for the future.

I would promote and encourage sensible development in Tay Valley which will definitely increase our tax base. I would also continue our present reserve fund program to deal with ongoing financial challenges. For example, infrastructure replacement and capital equipment replacement.

Q7. Do you support the mandatory septic re-inspection program on Otty Lake?

YES! As a resident of Otty Lake for 40 years I know the importance of a properly functioning septic system for the protection of our precious Otty Lake.

Judy Farrell, Deputy Reeve

Q1. The Conservation Authority is a trusted partner of our Lake Associations. Please provide your perspective on the future role of the Conservation Authority in your townships planning and approval process for waterfront and wetland properties?

Conservation Authorities are recognized experts in the field of watershed management. As a commenting agency on planning proposals in our Township, the Conservation Authority is an important proponent for Natural Heritage features such as our lakes, rivers and wetlands. Their regulatory authority over Natural Hazards such as floodplains and unstable soils provides a important resources to the Township's responsibility to uphold protection of people and property. It is currently, and will continue to be, important for the Township to work with the experts at our partner Conservation Authorities to ensure long-term responsible development for waterfront and wetland properties, while being consistent with good planning policies.

Q2. What would you do to protect the health of our lakes, rivers, creeks and wetlands?

I grew up on Bennett Lake in Bathurst Township and still have a cottage there. It is very important to me that EVERY property owner protects our natural resources by making sure they are aware of responsible property management such as keeping the shoreline natural and keeping contaminates from entering the water. This includes responsible septic (or outhouse) maintenance to make sure there is no nutrient leaching into the water. It is also very important to protect our wetlands to provide flood attenuation and improved water quality.

Q3. If elected would you support a new by-law that would improve control over site alterations prior to building or minor variance approvals?

The Township has a responsibility to ensure development is implemented in a responsible, safe manner. We should work with property owners to customize their projects to 1) ensure development is conducted safely, for the protection of people and their investments, 2) to provide a benefit to the community and property values, and 3) to provide environmentally friendly design. I feel that Tay Valley Township does not need more rules, more laws. I feel that as a Township we need to be more open to new and innovative ideas. If we work with the people we can achieve a much greater outcome.

Q4. Summarize your position on maintaining a balance between environmental sustainability and economic development.

Tay Valley needs economic development to sustain our tax base & keep all of our taxes at a sustainable rate. However, not at the expense of the environment. There is no reason why we cannot have both. We just have to be open and work together.

Economic development is extremely important for the growth and prosperity of all that call this township home.

We need to understand and respect the appropriate developmental setbacks from environmentally sensitive areas.

We need to work with our Conservation Authorities, Lake Associations and Citizens Groups to ensure that we can grow, while also being environmentally responsible.

Q5. If you could change one thing in our zoning by-laws, what would it be and why?

In general, our zoning by-law needs to promote development in our Township in a responsible manner. I would like to give the taxpayers in Tay Valley Twp more options when it comes to their own property. We need to stop making things so difficult and restrictive and let taxpayers decide what is best for them, as long as it does not adversely affect the environment or their neighbours properties.

Q6. Much of our township's taxes come from seasonal and residential property owners; relatively little from businesses. What would you do to ensure the township has a sustainable tax base for the future.

We have had several prospective industries as well as a retirement condo that wanted to develop in our township in my term on council. There are so many hoops and roadblocks for them to get past that it turned them off. We need to work WITH our prospective investors, not against them and make it a welcoming experience.

We are currently have some of the highest taxes in all of Lanark County, with the lowest growth. Data from the 2006 and 2016 Census shows a population increase of only 0.25% in Tay Valley Township, whereas Lanark County is 7.7 %. Drummond/North Elmsley, for comparison, has seen a growth of 9.2%. Similarly, Total Private Dwelling numbers show Tay Valley up a minimal 5.07%, whereas Lanark County has seen 11.4% increase, which is about par with Drummond/North Elmsley.

We need to act like a responsible government by reducing our spending and increasing our tax base. We need to work with our local Builders Association and businesses to try and attract new development. We need to create a bureaucratic environment where builders and investors are welcome and not scared away.

Q7. Do you support the mandatory septic re-inspection program on Otty Lake?

Failing septic systems have significant negative environmental impacts, especially on lakes. Nutrient loading in our surface waters promote growth of algae, which can be toxic, and leads to lower dissolved oxygen levels in the water. Septic systems of older cottages/homes should be regularly inspected to ensure they are being maintained and functioning properly. If a septic system is failing, it should be replaced. While I do understand that septic systems are very expensive to replace, the negative environmental impacts of a failing septic system far outweigh the cost. New structures and cottages are required to meet modern standards that do not need to be inspected for many years.

Beverley Phillips, Councillor, Burgess Ward

Q1. The Conservation Authority is a trusted partner of our Lake Associations. Please provide your perspective on the future role of the Conservation Authority in your townships planning and approval process for waterfront and wetland properties?

Conservation Authorities play an integral part in balancing both the needs of the community and the needs of the natural environment. They are crucial in assessing the environmental impact of any proposed development. Regulations under the Planning Act require Conservation Authorities be advised of planning applications. Continuing this partnership to regulate construction in environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, shorelines, fish habitats & waterways is essential. My perspective is in line with their mandate. A representative from TVT (either elected or appointed) should continue to sit on BofD of Conservation Authority.

Q2. What would you do to protect the health of our lakes, rivers, creeks and wetlands?

The lakes, rivers, creeks and wetlands are crucial to Tay Valley and their health must be protected. I agree with the mandate of the Conservation Authorities and believe it is imperative to work jointly with them. There is no need to re-invent the process. I support the Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program and the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program.

Q3. If elected would you support a new by-law that would improve control over site alterations prior to building or minor variance approvals?

If there is such a by-law in the works, I may be able to support the concept. I would need to see it to analyze and determine whether it would be beneficial.

Q4. Summarize your position on maintaining a balance between environmental sustainability and economic development.

Tay Valley needs economic development to not only survive but to be an affordable place to live. The goal to attain a sustainable tax base should be done with this in mind. Tay Valley needs to market itself, perhaps offer incentives to developers and corporations. Be selective, blend in with community, clean industry only. All development must strictly adhere to environmental standards. Particular concern should address impacts associated with flooding, unstable slopes or soils, natural heritage features (wetlands, fish habitat, valley lands & woodlands) water quality and quantity. There is a perception that it is difficult to build in Tay Valley Township. Is this accurate? We need to find out. Perhaps time for independent third person to examine.

Q5. If you could change one thing in our zoning by-laws, what would it be and why?

A zoning bylaw amendment to remove derelict buildings. Failing this, introduce a property standards by-law to have buildings repaired or demolished. Consider a grace period to waive cost of demolition permit. Derelict buildings are unsightly and reduce the value of surrounding properties.

Q6. Much of our township's taxes come from seasonal and residential property owners; relatively little from businesses. What would you do to ensure the township has a sustainable tax base for the future.

TVT needs to market itself to attract development that meets high environmental standards. One only has to look at our neighbours in Smiths Falls. Attracting clean development is not a short term project. Perhaps organizing small key groups - stakeholders in community - who would find out what the community will support and will not support. TVT must remain an affordable place to live. This is a balancing act as the charm of TVT is its rural atmosphere.

Q7. Do you support the mandatory septic re-inspection program on Otty Lake?

A properly functioning septic system is an integral part of a healthy shoreline environment. Improperly maintained septic systems can be a major pollutant. I support expanding re-inspection to encompass more lakes & rivers. The 2012 Council decision on re-inspection should be revisited.

RoxAnne Darling, Councillor, Sherbrooke Ward

Commented RoxAnne: Even though Sherbrooke ward is not within the Otty lake area, I thought I would briefly answer your questions.

Q1. The Conservation Authority is a trusted partner of our Lake Associations. Please provide your perspective on the future role of the Conservation Authority in your townships planning and approval process for waterfront and wetland properties?

I believe it will remain much the same as it is now, a valuable trusted partner and commenting agency for all waterfront and wetlands development.

Q2. What would you do to protect the health of our lakes, rivers, creeks and wetlands?

More education focusing on the protection and enhancement of the ecosystems of our lakes and contiguous waterways to ensure high quality environments for fish, wildlife, vegetation and people now and for the future.

Q3. If elected would you support a new by-law that would improve control over site alterations prior to building or minor variance approvals?

I currently do not know? I would require more details prior to deciding.

Q4. Summarize your position on maintaining a balance between environmental sustainability and economic development.

Protection of the environment and economic growth are often seen as competing goals, but they do not have to be. We must find a way to balance the two and allow them to coexist. We have in place governing policies and by-laws to protect the environment. Through site specific planning reviews and the encouragement of environmentally friendly development we can balance the two. We must be open to new forms of sustainable development and business ventures that lend themselves to maintaining the natural rural heritage of the Township.

Q5. If you could change one thing in our zoning by-laws, what would it be and why

No answer at this time.

Q6. Much of our township's taxes come from seasonal and residential property owners; relatively little from businesses. What would you do to ensure the township has a sustainable tax base for the future.

Please see combined answers above.

Q7. Do you support the mandatory septic re-inspection program on Otty Lake?

Yes.