

## New Tecumseth Votes 2018: Meet your Ward 8 candidates

By Wendy Gabrek

Ward 8 Tottenham is the final stop in our Meet the Candidates series. With four candidates on the ballot, and incumbent Chris Ross not running this term, all eyes will be on this southern ward on Election Day, October 22.

The four candidates are: Alan Lacey, Charlene Ryan, Stuart A. Starbuck and Oliver Stone.

The Times of New Tecumseth and Adjala?Tosorontio posed 14 specific questions to our candidates, and here are their answers, printed verbatim.



**Alan Lacey**



**Charlene Ryan**



**Stuart Starbuck**



**Oliver Stone**

Alan Lacey

Full Name: Alan Lacey

Town of Residence: Tottenham

Length of time in New Tecumseth: 20 years

Primary reason you're running: I have been a resident of New Tecumseth for 20 years, with more than 13 of those years in Tottenham. My wife Christa and I chose this wonderful community to raise our two children, both of which attend community schools. I care deeply about the community and want to continue to make a positive impact by elevating my level of involvement in the municipality by representing my friends and neighbours, and all of Tottenham, on council. Thus far, my commitment to the

community has been demonstrated through the contributions I have made as a volunteer and on various local committees including the Community Recreation Improvement Committee (CRIC), Light it Up! (C1 Lights at Coventry Park), Tottenham Public School Parent Council, Tottenham Old Timers Slo-Pitch, Help the Kids Play, Tottenham Bluegrass Festival, JAK fund, TottenHUG. In addition to my community involvement, my job requires me to interact with clients in understanding their needs, wants, processes and requirements in order to provide effective solutions that meet functional, time and financial constraints. I am meticulous in my research of the issues to ensure I understand, and devise and/or facilitate a solutions and future implications to that solution. Applying this same methodology to Council would benefit the constituents of Tottenham as well as all of New Tecumseth. I am running because I believe in the Values of our community and want to be its Voice ? a person that will be responsive and accessible to all of the constituents in Tottenham. And more importantly, get results!

Campaign slogan: Tottenham's Values ? Tottenham's Voice

What are our most important challenges facing the community?

**WATER:** The water pipeline extension to Tottenham. The pipeline is currently in its planning stage; however, we need to ensure that it progresses as expediently as possible and that the design meets the needs of the community to provide clean water to all. We also need to ensure that the design and the implementation of the pipeline not only meets the needs of current residents and businesses, but more significantly, has the capacity to ensure abundant clean water capacity as the community continues to grow ? all and without compromising quality and sustainability. If elected, I would put forward a motion to ensure regular quarterly reports on the progress of the pipeline expansion be made available to both council and the community.

Also, in a broader scope, we CANNOT allow control of our water and wastewater services to be taken over by Simcoe County. A number of the current Council members support this idea, but I am firmly and resolutely against it. If we allow this to happen, it will be the beginning of a slippery slope that could see us lose all independent control our services and or destiny as a community. It puts at risk the current plan for the pipeline extension and our ability to determine, when we grow, how we grow and If we grow. Once again, I am absolutely NOT in favour of giving control to of our Water and Wastewater services to Simcoe County.

**Roads and Infrastructure:** Infrastructure and road maintenance is also an ongoing issue within the community. Throughout the municipality, there are many streets that are in great need of repair, most of which have been previously identified in the Road Needs Study of 2014 ? that was four years ago, and undoubtedly the conditions have only worsened, we are nearing the end of the 5-year capital road improvement program. Council needs to make these important repairs a priority, as our infrastructure needs to be suitable for current residents but also in anticipation of new residents, new businesses and new industries yet to come. Where it makes fiscal sense, I would encourage staff to combine projects to receive optimal results in as efficient and effective a manner as possible.

**Community groups:** Volunteer community groups and organizations are the heart, soul and backbone of a healthy community such as New Tecumseth and make it a wonderful place to live, work and raise a family. I believe it is integral for Council to take a collaborative and co-operative approach in working alongside these valuable organizations and help them continue to enhance and enrich our community through their activities and events. Council needs to make it easier for them to continue their great work, not harder. The activities and services that they provide make our town as amazing as it is; without them we would not be what we are as a town, we cannot lose sight of that.

What do you cherish most about this community? I cherish the sense of community spirit that exists, and that small town feeling. It is truly inspiring to witness the way we band together through various community groups, and events to make our town such a

wonderful place to live. These events bring us together and make us all feel a part of the community ? almost like one big family. It is wonderful to see neighbour helping neighbour helping in times of need, as well as just the overall good-natured friendliness and welcoming attitude of all residents of the community. It is this sense of togetherness and that small town feeling that needs to be supported and encouraged, regardless of how much we grow.

What type of leader you will be? Community oriented, Committed, Persistent, Passionate, Reliable, Respectful, Dependable

What are your priorities for change in our municipality, in the short term. What about in the long term? In the short term, Council needs to be more informative with greater transparency regarding top issues and concerns within the community. Providing regular and on time information on the status of projects, and items of concern. Residents want to know the status of projects such as the Pipeline extension, the Tottenham Library, TAC, Beeton Facility Replacement. What are the current concerns or issues? Are the projects on schedule? On Budget? What are the next steps or phase of each? Keeping the community informed, and up to date.

In the long term, we need to promote more affordable housing options. Controlled development is needed within the area; however, our council needs to review the long-term implications of the changes requested by developers. Development is needed within the community, however the people, through their representatives on council, need to be the ones controlling the speed, scope, and direction of growth in the municipality ? not developers. We need to have a balanced mixture in our developments that encompasses greater diversity in our residential mix, and commercial offerings. Affordable housing and a greater balance overall needs to be a priority to ensure the health of our community now and in the future.

What are the biggest fiscal challenges in our municipality, and what do you envision as the best way(s) to address them?: One of the most significant fiscal challenges facing the municipality is the New Town Centre. Council needs to re-evaluate the decision to convert the former Alliston Union Public School into a new administration centre. With a \$15 million price tag, I believe this decision was undertaken with too much haste and not enough in-depth analysis or consideration of the long-term implications to the municipal budget. Nearly half of the current \$15 million project (or approx. \$7 million) will need to come from municipal reserves, which are already dangerously low. The rest will have to come from tax revenues through long term debentures. This is not fiscally responsible as council and the municipality would be taking on debt we cannot afford.

We need to lower, or at the bare minimum maintain our debt level where it is ? not increase it ? while simultaneously strengthening our reserves. In an uncertain global and national economy, this kind of fiscal common sense is needed to ensure the Town has the resources it needs to continue to support the services, infrastructure and lifestyle residents have worked hard to attain.

What innovative projects would enhance life in this area? Transportation: Although we have the County LINX system coming to Alliston in 2020/2021, we still do not have any inter-community transportation. Our students need public transit to get home from after school activities and to and from part time jobs. Our seniors and those that do not drive also need a better way to travel within our entire community. Let's not continue to leave hundreds of thousands of dollars in gas tax transit revenues on the table. We need to capitalize on these funds and provide inter-community transportation between the three communities that make up New Tecumseth.

What is your perspective on the best way to collaborate with other levels of government to ensure a sustainable and prosperous

future for our area? We live in a connected world, and many programs and projects that enhance and support a community involve multiple levels of government collaborating at both the funding and implementation stages. Council needs to work with all levels of the government with a spirit of co-operation ? but with the focus being on what is best for the residents and taxpayers of New Tecumseth. We need to be pro-active and seek out ways to share in the efforts and work instead of keeping the status quo and allowing ourselves to be dictated to and reactive. One example is a simple solution to what seems to be a logical disconnect. When Simcoe County plows the county roads in the winter, they currently stop when they reach town, and start again at the other end of town. Why not plow that road in its entirety? If Simcoe County or province is planning on resurfacing a road, continue the project at least partially if not all the way through the town. By combining our efforts, we can get a better service, as well as reduce overall costs. After all, it is the same taxpayer paying for all these different levels of government. We need to be proactive on new and innovative ways to better the community without putting the stress on the taxpayer.

In addition to collaborating with other levels of government, we need to also collaborate with our immediate neighbours. We should be working with our neighboring municipalities to find service efficiencies that will better both communities.

How do you envision communicating with constituents? Communication has changed significantly over the years and continues to do so. The advent of social media and web-based communications makes it easier than ever to remain informed and connected with elected officials. I am a proponent of using all forms of digital and online communications, but also the 'old-fashioned' ways ? a one-on-one discussion over coffee, a phone call, an ad or article in local media. If elected I would encourage all of council and municipal staff to use all methods of communication ? particularly the more modern app and social media-based platforms, to provide regular updates to constituents, and allow feedback from the constituents. Speaking for myself, I will ensure that I am approachable, and available via all avenues of communication.

What will you do to continue to be involved with the community should you not win? I will continue to be involved with the various organizations in the community, as I believe it is important to give back to the Town that has given my family such a wonderful quality of life. Whether I am elected to Council or not, my affection for this community, its people and its spirit will never waver, nor will my enthusiasm for playing an active role in various groups and organizations, which are the lifeblood of our community and make it a great part of what we all enjoy about living in New Tecumseth.

Charlene Ryan

Full Name: Charlene Ryan

Town of Residence: New Tecumseth

Length of time in New Tecumseth: 5 years in New Tecumseth 16 in the community

Primary reason you're running: I have been witnessing the town prosper over the past few years and want to help the town transition to be as prosperous as it can be. Also, voicing the concerns of community members.

Campaign slogan: A voice for our community

What are our most important challenges facing the community? The rapid growth of the town and the town's infrastructure, safety of

the community, our water issues as well as community programs.

What do you cherish most about this community? I cherish the small town charm of Tottenham and would like to keep that a priority as the development continues.

What type of leader you will be? I will be the type of leader that is honest, dependable and resourceful. I will address each constituents concerns in a prompt fashion and follow through with any tasks I start. Keeping open lines of communication with constituents is of great importance to me.

What are your priorities for change in our municipality, in the short term. What about in the long term? I will ask my constituents, what they feel is on our list of priorities and what they would like to see both short and long term. Ward 8 (Tottenham) has a great deal of issues presently, traffic, community safe zones, programs, etc., which all need attention, it is just a matter of focusing on one at a time and handling them thoroughly and diligently.

What are the biggest fiscal challenges in our municipality, and what do you envision as the best way(s) to address them? The fiscal challenges in our community are currently many. As mentioned the rapid growth and infrastructure issues it is greatly important to know that the dollars are being properly budgeted and delegated to where our town requires it most.

What is your perspective on the best way to collaborate with other levels of government to ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for our area? The best ways to create open lines of communication is by exactly that, communicating, voicing our concerns with other levels of government by proposing what is needed and how we plan to work at it.

How do you envision communicating with constituents? I plan to make myself completely available to the constituents, by phone or email and visits as well.

What will you do to continue to be involved with the community should you not win? If I do not win I will continue to be an active member of the community. I have been volunteering at the St. James Parish for over 6 years now and continue to do so. Tottenham is a great place to live, whether I win or lose I am happy to be a member of this great community.

Stuart Starbuck

Full Name: Stuart Alexander Starbuck

Settlement of Residence: Tottenham

Length of Time in New Tecumseth: All of it and 8 years in the Former Village of Tottenham

Primary reason you're running: I feel that my education and life work experience can be of benefit to the whole town. We are going to be facing a whole range of issues that have been left by the wayside by our previous Councils. Housing transportation where and how we grow in a world where intensification is the buzz word. After an education in the field of economics and years of work in property management retail manufacturing and construction I will bring innovative solutions to town wide issues, including developing our downtowns, finding sites for specific groups I.e. veterans housing, expanding parks and recreation facilities.

Campaign slogan: For a Greener New Tecumseth.

What are our most important challenges facing the community? The biggest challenge Ward 8 faces is growing its business base and hence its intensification base in a world where single use is the norm. In order to achieve the base of residents needed to support many franchise type businesses, be it a Shoppers Drug or a Harvey's, we need to grow some more. This will give the new residents' children jobs and volunteer hours without leaving the community. The questions are where and how. We only have a few sites left in the Settlement. The implications for less than intensive change are ominous. Getting a little bit of an increase to the area of the Settlement in a new County Plan is very important for having the services and range of housing complete communities have and need. We will be competing with many Settlements for that provincially allocated growth. We can't growth south and west because of the Oak Ridges Moraine. West is slowed by the sewage lagoons, Coventry Park and industrial lands.

What do you cherish most about the community? It's home. What more can I say?

What type of leader will you be? There will be two parts to me. The Communicator who will give the community updates on what is happening by social media. And there will be the fighter that will not stop standing up for what is right.

What are your priorities for change in our municipality, in the short term. What about in the long term? My priorities for change: Recognition of Tottenham's needs, fears, aspirations at the Council table. That investment in Tottenham by the Council is imperative. That we deserve a Settlement Hall in Tottenham. That an all Alliston based government is not in New Tecumseth's best interest. Also, one of the long term challenges will be getting proposed growth to agree with the new Official Plan that says that all new development must have a mix of housing. Not be solely condominium Townhouses.

What are the biggest fiscal challenges in our municipality, and what do you envision as the best way(s) to address them? The biggest fiscal challenge is to change growth into a positive for the existing residents. That means changing the design of development. That means growing up instead of out. That means mixed use buildings instead of single use. We must maximize our take when zoning changes are applied for.

What innovative projects would enhance life in this area? Growth of the Tottenham Conservation Area to attract more tourists. Walkway on the east side of the pond to allow a second way uptown. Use of the space in front of restaurants and bars to make the

downtown more people oriented less car oriented. A major mixed use residential and institutional Town of New Tecumseth presence in The Commercial areas of Tottenham.

What is your perspective on the best way to collaborate with other levels of government to ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for our area? I have known our MPP for almost 30 years. I am on a first name basis with the likely next MP and I believe in let's call them State of the Riding meetings and organizations such as Association of Municipalities of Ontario as conduits through which intergovernmental cooperation can take place. We all serve on master in the end. The People.

How do you envision communicating with constituents? I suspect mostly people elected in the age of social media will use that platform as their communication tool. It's the nature of life these days. I would like to have committees come back to Council scene and hold State of the Settlement meetings if possible.

What will you do to continue to be involved with the community should you not win? I have been a long time political junkie for lack of a better term. That includes politics on all levels. I will continue to show up at Public Meetings under the Planning Act and give my opinion of the matters under discussion. I am Santa Claus on the South Simcoe Steam Train. I intend to spend a few nights over the winter at the Alliston Out of Cold.

Oliver Stone

Full Name: Oliver Stone

Town of Residence: Tottenham

Length of time in New Tecumseth: Ten years professionally serving the community and three years as a resident.

Primary reason you're running: The primary reason for running is I want to create definitive goals that will provide clean water to all residents in Tottenham. I want to find ways to help businesses who are suffering from a lack of investment in infrastructure, mainly road and truck traffic congestion. Eliminate the broken promises from council and replace it with a positive mindset that will simply get the job done.

Campaign slogan: Lets Grow Together

What are our most important challenges facing the community? One of the challenges directly in Tottenham (Ward 8) is our Water, Truck Traffic congestion and Road Infrastructure. In regards to New Tecumseth as a whole; I believe there is a strong disconnect between town and industry, as well as town and county. I would like to see positive change and collaboration as we can accomplish so much more in our region if we work together and form positive relationships.

What do you cherish most about this community?: I truly love Tottenham, having lived in other towns; I have a deep appreciation

for the town's history with the South Simcoe Railway, the beauty of our Conservation area and the charm of the annual Santa Claus Parade. I enjoy attending the local events as I meet such friendly people, especially those who volunteer their time because they understand the value of showcasing the amount of wonderful activities that can be enjoyed in Tottenham.

What type of leader you will be? A leader who will inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more.

What are your priorities for change in our municipality, in the short term. What about in the long term? In the short term, I want to make sure we provide clean Water to all residents in Tottenham. In the long term, I want to preserve our small town atmosphere and protect our history. Make efforts to promote our towns businesses, ensure that the growing and aging population is accommodated with functional spaces and educating programs are available for our children to grow and prosper.

What are the biggest fiscal challenges in our municipality, and what do you envision as the best way(s) to address them? Our municipality has grown significantly in the past few years and with this growth it is presenting challenges as it is not meeting the needs of the community. Instead of burdening our residents with higher taxes, we need to make logical and well informed decisions that set a foundation for long-term, sustainable economic growth and prosperity.

What innovative projects would enhance life in this area? Clean Drinking Water!

What is your perspective on the best way to collaborate with other levels of government to ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for our area? I believe our region has been under represented for numerous years. This stops on October 22 because if elected, I will do everything I can to provide proper representation and build a wonderful working relationship with all levels of government to ensure that our residents and businesses are aware of the funds and programs available to them.

How do you envision communicating with constituents? I'm a phone call away, I respond to calls and return messages on a promptly basis. I can be reached on several social media platforms as well as email. Keeping the lines of communication opened is the best policy and I will make sure to accommodate to our residents and businesses needs as a high priority.

What will you do to continue to be involved with the community should you not win? I am always ready to lend a helping hand to either sponsor an event or volunteer for the betterment of our community. Be it through our local Food Bank or other community services and events, I will continue to offer my support in any way.