

Norfolk Federation of Agriculture Questions for Norfolk Mayor Candidates

Introduction

I would like to thank the Norfolk Federation of Agriculture for providing the candidates an opportunity to respond to your questions.

It is the Mayors duty to incorporate municipal concerns and services in light of all our community needs and limited tax dollars. We must also recognize the fact that decisions are made in a democratic manner with all 9 municipal representatives having one vote, including the Mayor.

Peter Black Norfolk County Councillor & Candidate for Mayor
Charlotteville Road 11, Norfolk County
Age 55



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Biography

Peter Black's family has lived in Norfolk County since the early 1900's. Peter was born at Norfolk General Hospital in 1951. He is married to Mary and has a beautiful young daughter. They reside south of Lynedoch in a Timber Frame home Peter built with his own hands. Volunteering in the community has been a family tradition, and Peter has been a member of many community groups such as the Humane Society, Port Dover Festival Theatre, Waterford Heritage Trail, The Legion, Panorama, The Norfolk Field Naturalists and The Eva Brook Donly Museum to mention but a few. He is a member of the Norfolk Sports Hall of Recognition. He enjoys outdoor recreational activities with his family and doing wood working projects for the home.

He attended Simcoe Composite School receiving an Honour "S" athletic award and has enjoyed sports since. Later Peter received a BA in Psychology, a BEd in Education, a Teaching Certificate, Law Diploma, Real Estate License, Pilots License as well as his Association of Municipal Clerks and Treasurers (AMCT) Certification and The Municipal Councillors Program. He has completed University courses in Planning

and most recently passed the Downtown Revitalization Course from Fanshawe College. Since 1979, he has owned a residential/commercial building on Robinson Street in Simcoe and successfully operated a number of businesses from there.

He was first elected to Simcoe Council in 1991 and served as Deputy Mayor. During the amalgamation he served as the Planning Transition Chairman. He was elected to Norfolk County Council in 2000 and served as Deputy Mayor. **Peter's municipal training, education and experience with the Corporation of Norfolk County and membership on 40 Committees over the past 15 years has allowed him to see how all the municipal pieces of the puzzle fit together.**

As your next Norfolk County Mayor I will make a difference by:

- **Balancing decisions** in light of economic, environmental and social concerns.
- Being a **Leader** with vision and determination.
- Being a **Team Builder**, ensuring people are given the respect they deserve.
- Using my **15 years of municipal experience** to benefit all of Norfolk County.

➤ **What, in your view, are the major issues affecting the community?**

- A. Port Rowan & Simcoe Sewage Treatment Plants Upgraded
- B. Increased Economic & Agricultural diversity & viability while protecting our Environment
- C. A council that works as a Team for the benefit of all Norfolk Residents

➤ **What are the key economic, social, environmental concerns, in the municipality?**

Vision

- Address taxpayers concerns of lost local community identity.
- Industrial Growth that includes both manufacturing and tourism to keep the 20 to 30 age group in Norfolk.
- Agricultural Diversity and Viability.
- Development of a Lakeshore Secondary Plan.
- Better transportation routes to the 400 series high ways.
- Better Recreational Facilities including a trail system connecting the Norfolk communities and to the Trans Canada Trail.
- Maintaining and enhancing our environmental diversity.
- Maintaining our infrastructure through good financial management.
- Revitalizing all our Downtown Cores.
- Address the need for heritage, culture, recreational, environmental, health & youth programs.
- Develop Mayor Lead Action Teams where needed.

➤ **Where will you look for advice on agricultural issues or any issue that could affect agriculture?**

Agricultural organizations such as The NFA, OMAFRA, Land Stewardship Council, ALUS Program, Councillors with an Agricultural background, The Long Point Region

Conservation Authority & the Board members with an AG background, Norfolk County Drainage Superintendent, private sector Irrigation experts, Norfolk Wood Lot Owners Association, Fertilizer Specialists, Crop Insurance Specialists, Agronomists, Soil Association, Weathermen, MOE for water taking permits, & The Farmer.

➤ **What plans do you have for building the local farm and business base?**

As a Norfolk County Councillor & decision maker, I have supported or would support in the future the following;

- Norfolk County's new Official Plan contains statements that allow flexibility to increase business opportunities for the agricultural sector.

-Work with partners such as OMAFRA, Guelph University and farm organizations.

-As proposed in the Tobacco Community Action Plan, the Agriculture Food Innovation Centre proposal aims to "enhance the capacity of local industry to capture new and expanded markets for horticultural products". Norfolk County has established a committee of volunteers, which is working with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs on the development of this proposal.

-Work with the Norfolk Business Development Corporation.

-Work with the County's Economic Development Department to market agricultural business ventures. Develop a Wine Route for bus tours. Norfolk County has been working closely with food growers and processors in 2006 to expand their profile and increase their business.

-Work with the Norfolk County Fair Board for example Flavour Fest.

-Work with Downtowns to partner with their events for example The Fruit Growers and The Drive Thru Art Gallery, Delhi Harvest Fest, Waterford Pumpkin Fest. Explore the opportunity to develop more.

-Norfolk County spearheaded the first meeting of Mayors (Ontario Mayors for the future of Agriculture) and other municipal representatives from across Ontario in June 2005.

- Norfolk supports the objective of "EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ETHANOL IN SOUTHERN ONTARIO". This study was to provide technical information concerning the production of Ethanol from biomass sources in Ontario, and to determine the feasibility using corn and sweet potatoes to produce Ethanol.

-Tobacco Community Action Plan: Between June 2003 and March 2004, Norfolk County and the Government of Canada through Human Resources Development Canada explored solutions to address the impact of the decline in the tobacco industry on the Norfolk community. The Team Advising on the Crisis in Tobacco issued two reports before completing its task. A follow-up report, monitoring progress, was issued in the fall of 2004.

-Recently Council approved the Premier Ranked Tourist Destination Framework report and will be working with Haldimand County, Elgin County, the Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Service Canada to complete this tourism growth blueprint and audit for the area. This will include the Agricultural sector.

-Continue to work with the County's Tourism and Economic Development Advisory Committee to explore future business opportunities for the agricultural sector.

➤ **What are the implications of non-farm rural development in productive agricultural areas?**

Many Urban Dwellers moving to the rural area expect the same lifestyle, as they were used to in town. They are not accustomed to farm activities that may create noise, dust and odours. Some do not like rural activities such as hunting, snowmobiles and ATVs. Perhaps a disclaimer could be registered on the title of their home outlining what living conditions they should expect. This places pressure on the Farmer even with The Right To Farm Legislation that defends normal farming activities.

➤ **How would you propose to consult with the farm community in the development or review of the Official Plan or zoning by-laws?**

Public meetings will be set in various locations throughout the County for all residents to participate. Stakeholders showing a special interest would be invited to make a written submission.

➤ **Do you recognize that a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) or Nutrient Management Strategy (NMS) necessary for a Building Permit application refers to an NMP and NMS as defined by the NMA Regulations, not the municipality?**

Norfolk County has rescinded its Nutrient Management By-Law since we have recognized that the Provincial Legislation would supersede any local By-Law.

➤ **What role do you think a municipality should play within the current regulatory regime on pesticide safety?**

The Hudson Quebec Court Decision allowed Municipality's to establish By-Laws to regulate pesticide use on residential lawns. This should be the limit to which a Municipality could be involved in pesticide regulation.

➤ **Are you willing to support a by-law to provide a reduction or refund of taxes that are unduly burdensome to a taxpayer?**

This would have to be a decision made by Council. Any type of reduction or refund would need to be reviewed by the Treasurer in order to assess the impact to the rest of the taxpayers. Some people have voiced concerns regarding their ability to pay taxes. Council would have to adopt a tax relief program to address this.

➤ **How would you ensure inclusion of value-added farm enterprises in their economic development plan?**

The new County adopted Official Plan (Province reviewing for final approval) does provide for uses that add value to farm produce in the Agricultural designation (sec.4.2.1 c). These uses would include processing, preserving, storing and packaging. It is intended that we explore zoning in the new comprehensive zoning by-law to permit as many of these uses "as of right" to avoid the need for individual by-law amendments where possible and appropriate. It is important to note that we have to work within the Provincial Policy Statement with this approach.

- **Do you know if development charges apply to agricultural structures in this municipality? If development charges do apply, describe how you would support standardizing the application of development charges to prevent inequitable treatment.**

Norfolk County By-Law 2004-184 exempts agricultural structures from development charges.

- **What priority do you assign water resource protection for the municipality?**

Walkerton and The Clean Water Act have established the priorities for water source protection. The County has completed a Hydro-geological study for that purpose. I believe it is important to protect all Norfolk Residents drinking water supply.

- **What level of financial support should be available to farmers who are required through a Risk Management Plan to incur capital costs, and/or management costs, and/or ongoing maintenance costs to protect a municipal drinking water supply?**

The Farmer should not be expected to shoulder this municipal responsibility. The County should compensate the farmer for any financial burden this type of situation may create.

- **How will you site future municipal water supplies? The future level of protection may make it undesirable to offer land to sell for this purpose, how will this be overcome?**

The County has undertaken a Water Source Study to determine where we can get more water. It may include more wells, a pipeline to the lake or shared services with Haldimand County. Costs for all options would be outlined, which may include Farmer compensation.

- **How would you allocate water at times of shortages? What priority will farm practices such as watering livestock and irrigating crops be given in the allocation of water, at times of shortages?**

As a 13-year member of The Long Point Region Conservation Authority I am aware of the Irrigation Advisory Committee. Water advisory levels have been established and when each level is initiated a specific criteria for water allocation occurs. It may be specific to one area whereby farmers take turns irrigating their crops. According to our Hydro-geological Study there is no shortage of ground water in Norfolk County. Irrigating from a stream may be a different matter and new Irrigation Ponds were encouraged with an incentive program to get farmers off the stream and into the pond. You can't let livestock go without an adequate supply of water therefore they must be accommodated. Crops cannot be left to die so water should be used accordingly.

Thank you once again for this opportunity to express my thoughts. I look forward to working with your organization in the future.