

To whom it may concern,

I would like to send a note of support for 2 applicants that have applied for the vacant seat in ward 6 that Dominique O'Rourke held. I support both James Gordon and Michelle Bowman. I do recognize there is only one position but still want to express my support for both people as I am confident both would do a great job. These 2 candidates are exemplary citizens. Both have experience in politics, both have integrity, both are caring and bright individuals that have much to offer Guelph.

Michelle Bowman as an environmental scientist would bring a wealth of knowledge to council with a deep respect and understanding of the environment and her expertise in the health of rivers. Her ability to communicate respectfully and truly listen to people would also be beneficial to the role. She also has a solid understanding of social justice issues and the economy and how these things intersect. I am also impressed by Michelle's ability to really listen and connect with people of diverse backgrounds and political affiliations which is very helpful in non partisan municipal politics. I have no doubt that she would make an excellent councillor and represent ward 6 well.

James Gordon is a caring and creative force in Guelph both as an artist and as a politician. He contributes greatly to Guelph and its culture from plays, music, books and more. His involvement in things like Praise the Ward shows his dedication to celebrating Guelph and the unique communities that make us such a wonderful city. He also has a demonstrated record of respectfully listening to and advocating for people's needs across the city that is apparent in the way he interacts with people as well as his previous role as councillor. He contributes so much to the people of this city from his concern and involvement in social justice issues and also his caring about environmental issues and his support of local business. He has already served on council and would make a wonderful and experienced addition to council if he were to be selected to return. From my lived experience, his time on council made me feel like he cared about me and my family as well as every other citizen in Guelph, whether they resided in his ward or not. He always responded to emails or calls. He was caring and professional. I have deep respect for James and the work he has done both on and off council. I have no doubt he would work hard for the people of Ward 6 and Guelph as a whole. He has done so much to contribute to Guelph being a caring community. He really embodies the understanding that we are only as strong as our most vulnerable. With the experience he already has as a well respected and appreciated councillor I have no doubt that he would even be better in the position this time around with the experience and learning he would be returning with.

I don't know how you would decide between these 2 wonderful candidates and understand there are many more candidates that have applied but in my humble opinion these 2 should be top of the list. I was very excited to learn that James Gordon had applied for the position, he is a person who truly walks his talk and he is authentic and caring. I was also very excited to learn Michelle Bowman was interested in the position and was wanting to enter municipal politics. She is thoughtful, intelligent and skilled. I know both of these individuals and am certain the city would be very lucky to have either one of them added to our current council for the vacant seat in ward 6.

Thank you for your consideration of these 2 applicants.

Sincerely,

Maureen Blackwood