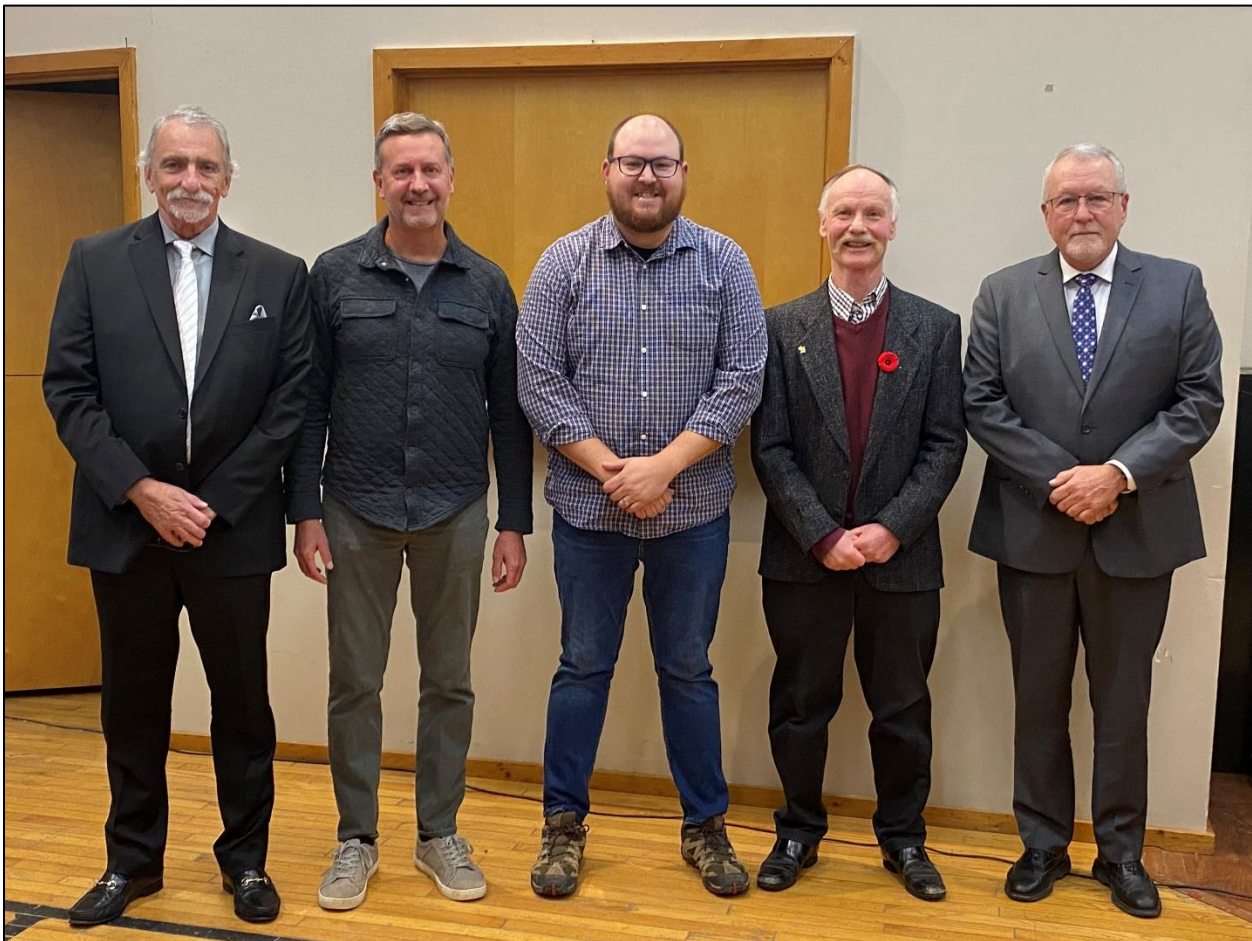


KAGAWONG, ON – The inaugural meeting of Billing’s newly elected Council took place on Tuesday November 15, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. at the Park Centre.

Community members, friends, family and Township staff attended the meeting to watch the Mayor and Members of Council be sworn in for the 2022-2026 term.

The newly elected Council members include: Mayor Bryan Barker, Councillors Jim Cahill, Vince Grogan, Dave Hillyard and Michael Hunt.



From left to right: Councillors Vince Grogan, Jim Cahill, David Hillyard, Michael Hunt and Mayor Bryan Barker.

Mayor Bryan Barker’s Inaugural Address:

I would like to welcome everyone here this evening to help celebrate the inauguration of the 2022-2026 Billings Township Council.



Thank you to all the candidates who put their names forward, this past election and congratulations to those that were elected.

I would like to take a moment to thank the previous mayor, Ian Anderson, and members of Council Sharon Alkenbrack, Sharon Jackson, and Michael Hunt, for their commitment and dedication to our community. I know each member of council worked hard and gave 100%. Just look around town and take in all your accomplishment knowing that you have served the Township well and made it a better place.

I would also like to acknowledge the Township Staff, the other half of the team, for giving council the tools to make informed, accurate, and well researched decisions. I take comfort in knowing that the commitment will continue into this term of council. Our past CAO Kathy McDonald retired after 18 years of service to the community just last week and I would like to acknowledge Kathy publicly for her hard work and dedication to Billings Township. For those that do not know we have a new CAO, Emily Dance and I would like to take this opportunity to officially welcome Emily to Billings Township and look forward to working with her this next term.

I would be remiss if I did not thank my wife Susan for her strength, support, and encouragement. Although my children Ashley, David and Kristen are no longer at home they too have offered encouragement and support from afar. For this I thank them.

The election is over. The voters have spoken, and with that, comes a tremendous sense of responsibility. I am proud yet humbled in my role as mayor and look forward in working with the new council. David Hillyard, Vince Grogan, Jim Cahill and returning Councillor Michael Hunt. Regardless of the size of any municipality, the responsibility of municipal leadership, are exactly the same, albeit on a smaller scale but, the same. This Council will face many challenges over the next four years. For example, enhancing economic development, our commitment to climate change, difficult economic times, a potential funding shortfall, finding ways to engage our youth and an aging infrastructure to mention a few. We as a council have to think outside the box and come up with creative ways to deal with these challenges, while remaining fiscally responsible to the ratepayers and not over burdening our tax base.

Sometimes we may not get it right but, from there we will learn and adapt. It is important that council have a strong working relationship. Will we always agree, probably not, but it is imperative that decisions are informed and made with sound judgement, thorough research, and respectful debate. But most importantly those decisions are based on what best serves the constituents of Billings Township as a whole.

I will continue to lead by example to make myself available and accessible to members of the public. I believe in open communication and transparent governance, with citizens and



stakeholders understanding how and why decisions of council are made. I anticipate council will embrace these values as well. I am committed to remodeling our communication platforms so members of the community receive accurate up to date information through our Township website and social media pages.

Volunteers have always been our strength. Their countless hours, commitment and the economic contribution to our community alone is priceless. I would like to personally thank our current volunteers for their contribution and encourage them to continue their service to the community. I would also like to encourage and welcome any new volunteers and invite them to bring their ideas and expertise to the table to become involved with community committees and boards that help others in our community.

I am honored to serve as your Mayor for the next four years and am truly excited for what the future has to offer. There will be challenges and adversity but, I am confident by working as a team we can push forward and succeed. Billings Township is a wonderful and vibrant community with much to offer and room to grow. I look forward to working with the newly formed council and staff. I truly believe that "together we can make a difference."

Thank you!

The next Council meeting will be held on Tuesday December 6, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. at the Park Centre. Agendas will be posted on the Township of Billings website the Friday before the meeting (<https://billingstwp.ca/council-meetings/2022-council-agendas-and-minutes/>)