

FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE: Charity, Bill and Tom ? Three Candidates vying for the local PC Nomination

By Stephen Somerville

After the last provincial electoral debacle in which the provincial Tories snatched victory ? or at least a good opportunity at victory ? from the proverbial jaws of defeat, it is time for the Party to get off the mat and move forward.

The local Newmarket-Aurora Progressive Conservative association is all set to choose a new standard bearer to take on Liberal member and current Minister of Housing, the Honourable Chris Ballard in the next provincial election, slated for June 7, 2018. As you may know the former Newmarket ?Aurora electoral district association was split into two ridings. The area north of Wellington Street through Newmarket is called the Newmarket-Aurora riding.

There are three candidates vying for the nomination in Newmarket-Aurora: Tom Vegh, a Newmarket resident who is a current Newmarket Town Councillor. Charity McGrath, a Richmond Hill resident who is a businesswoman and chair of the York Region Food Bank, and Bill Hogg, resident of Aurora and ex-Aurora Town Councillor, businessman and community volunteer.

If you want to learn more about the candidates please visit their respective websites.

While nominations are still open at this point, it doesn't look like anyone else will throw their hat into the ring. The last day to sign up members or to be a member is March 20, which is fifteen business days before the nomination convention.

The nomination convention itself will take place on Saturday, April 8, in either Aurora or Newmarket at a location yet to be determined.

So, you still have time to participate in the process if you so choose and it is easy to do so. You can simply go on the provincial Progressive Conservative website or onto the website of the three candidates. Signing up only costs \$10 per person.

You need to come out on nomination date and cast a ballot for a person of your choosing.

This next election should be very hard fought.

According to a November 2016 poll, conducted by Nanos Research on behalf of the Globe & Mail, 20.5 per cent of the 500 people polled felt hydro rates are residents' largest concern, healthcare at 15.1 per cent, jobs and the economy at 9.6 per cent, high taxes at 7.6 per cent, and education at 6.5 per cent.

Premier Wynne's popularity remains at very low levels, meaning Patrick Brown and the Tories should have a good opportunity of forming a new government next spring. However, we have seen this movie before.

In 2007 then Tory Leader John Tory snatched defeat from the jaws of victory with his vow during the campaign to extend public funding to all denominational schools across the province of Ontario.

And in 2014 then Tory leader Tim Hudak did the same thing with his ?Million Jobs Act? which pledged big cuts in the civil service. There's lots of water to go under the bridge before election-day and anything can, and will, happen.

If you are a Tory, then go out and support one of these three candidates. If you support the NDP or the Liberals or any other political parties, please continue to do so. Your active participation makes our democracy work.

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