

Liberals set to name Peterson as Newmarket-Aurora candidate



By Brock Weir

Newmarket lawyer Kyle Peterson will once again carry the Liberal banner in the next Federal election.

Mr. Peterson is set to be officially nominated and acclaimed to the position at a special meeting, which will be held Monday, September 8, at the Ray Twinney Complex, representing the party in Newmarket-Aurora.

This will be the second consecutive Federal election where Mr. Peterson has served as Liberal candidate for Newmarket-Aurora. This time, however, will be slightly different given the recently reconfigured Federal electoral boundaries which will split Aurora in two at Wellington Street in time for the next election, which is expected in the Fall of 2015.

While Aurora residents south of Wellington will vote in the newly-created riding of Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill, those living on the north side of Wellington will stick with Newmarket-Aurora.

“The riding is now physically smaller, so in that sense it will be easier because it will be less ground to cover, but whether Aurorans north or south of Wellington are markedly different remains to be seen,” says Mr. Peterson. “I think most Aurorans, like most people in Newmarket, want the same things – they want a strong economy, they want to make sure there are jobs for the future, they want to make sure their kids have better opportunities than we had, they want to make sure they get good value for their tax dollars, and they want their government to be responsive to their needs. I want to be the person to represent those views in Ottawa.”

The party got started early for Mr. Peterson last weekend, with a barbecue for Liberal faithful held at Newmarket's Fairy Lake and also attended by the likes of Newmarket-Aurora MPP Chris Ballard, and Markham MP John McCallum.

Although ideas were exchanged throughout the Sunday afternoon event, it got off to a thought-provoking start by Dianna Big Canoe of Georgina Island, who spoke about the missing and murdered Aboriginal women. The response of Prime Minister Stephen Harper to the crisis is one which Mr. Peterson says shows a marked difference between what the Liberals and Conservatives represent.

“One thing I have learned [between the last and upcoming elections] is residents might want a new attitude towards government, openness and transparency, honesty, and maybe a healthier attitude towards politics,” he says. “Politics does not have to be a negative affair, it doesn't have to be something where you try to hide what you are doing, or doing things by stealth. People across Canada, not just Newmarket-Aurora, are coming to the conclusion – it can actually be something positive.”

“You look at [Mr. Harper's] response to the issue about Native Women where he says it is a criminal issue and not a socio-economic

issue. Well, I don't buy that and I don't think most Canadians buy that. The façade he likes to hold up as being a master of the economy ? our economy has never been in worse shape than it has under his guidance and leadership. He just thinks if he repeats the lie enough times people are going to believe it and it will become the truth, but I think Canadians are coming to realise maybe that is not the way it is, and that is certainly not the way I think it should be.?

If the election were held today, Mr. Peterson says he believes the top issues will be the ?economy, openness and transparency, and healthcare.? But, the election is not going to be held today, nor will it be in the near future. Once his nomination is signed, sealed and delivered next month, Mr. Peterson will likely have over a year before Canadians head to the polls. In that time, he says he will be embarking on a ?listening? rather than speaking tour to hear what the residents of Newmarket-Aurora and work with the party to make sure these are addressed in the party platform.

Leading the party is Justin Trudeau, who Mr. Peterson says has shown a ?remarkable ability? to connect with Canadians.

?We have had eight years of aloof leadership where if it can't be focus-grouped he doesn't care about your issue,? said Mr. Peterson of Mr. Harper. ?If it doesn't poll well with his base, he doesn't even want to talk about it. Mr. Trudeau is the exact opposite. He will, of course, speak off the cuff at times. He is happy to walk into a crowd, and it is an approach that we are all in this together instead of the Father Knows Best approach, and that is the approach I hope to bring to the people of Newmarket-Aurora as well.?