Election Roundup: Weiner, Anti-Qunn Ad, More Mayoral Forums #NYC2013

Posted on Apr 12, Posted by Administrator Category Elections

Starting today and continuing each week during campaign season, we'll post an election roundup on Friday afternoons here on The Eye-Opener. Image of former Rep. Anthony Weiner courtesy of Step It Up 2007, used under Creative Commons license.

The week started with a debate over a scathing attack ad against Democratic mayoral frontrunner Christine Quinn that was paid for by an outside group. By midweek, anyone paying attention to #NYC2013 was talking about whether a certain former Congressman with a career-destroying penchant for social media would jump into the mayor's race.

Anti-Quinn Attack Ad

The first televsion attack ad of the mayor's race was released on Monday, and came from a somewhat surprising source: an independent group not affiliated with any of the declared candidates. The spot targeted City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, accusing her of back-room deals and putting politics before her constituents.

Quinn lashed out at the producers of the ad, a group of left-leaning labor organizations and other activists who have long been opposed to the councilwoman's bid to be the city's next mayor.

She also called on her fellow candidates to condemn outside groups. Her opponents basically told her to stop complaining and that negative ads were simply to be expected.

Quinnipiac released a poll showing Quinn still the forerunner in the race, though her popularity

has dropped slightly.

Anthony Weiner

Anthony Weiner returned to public life in an extensive confessional with The New York Times Magazine , admitting that he was weighing whether to run for mayor.

“I don’t have this burning, overriding desire to go out and run for office,” he told reporter Jonathan Van Meter. “It’s not the single animating force in my life as it was for quite some time. But I do recognize, to some degree, it’s now or maybe never for me, in terms of running for something."

The reaction from the public and pundits ranged from incredulous to wait-and-see.

Most of the other mayoral contenders invited him to join the race . John Liu offered some advice about tweeting
: "just stop."

But it was unclear what effect a Weiner run would mean for them. Some said Weiner's participation would almost certainly lead to a runoff. The Rev. Al Sharpton wondered on his MSNBC show
whether there were "any strong enough candidates in the Democratic primary that would stop him form having a strong showing, if not a victorious showing?"

Meanwhile, the current mayor, Michael Bloomberg, chided journalists for focusing on the sensational details of Weiner rather than whether his positions on the policies make sense.

It may be worth recalling that even though Weiner was known for his arrogance, political chops and underwear, he was also adept at policy. Here's what he said about historic preservation back in 2005 , when he was also running for mayor.

Mayoral Forums

And, of course, there were more mayoral forums: One on the future of the waterfront; another on affordable housing; and one in the Bronx hosted by a coalition of clergy that included discussions of pot smoking and faith.

Superstorm Sandy shaped the discussions at the mayoral forum hosted by the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance at its annual conference on Tuesday. Gotham Gazette city government reporter Chester Soria
filed this story
after joining six of the candidates on a boat moored to a lower Manhattan pier.

"Make no mistake," said Democratic candidate and City Council Speaker Christine Quinn at the forum, "you get to say once, 'It was an unprecedented storm.' You don't get to do that again."

The Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy at New York University hosted a forum Thursday with mayoral candidates Bill de Blasio, Christine Quinn, John Liu, Bill Thompson, Adolfo Carrion, and Sal Albanese. Listen to the forum here:

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