

Week ENDER



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Get ready to tune in for Elections 10

I've had the pleasure of the company of most of Whangarei's mayoral candidates in the past week or so.

All 10 mayoral candidates have been invited to take part in a joint venture between Channel North — your regional television station — and the *Northern Advocate*.

That joint venture is *Elections 10* — six episodes screening on Channel North from September 9, complemented by coverage in the *Northern Advocate*.

Elections 10 will cover the key issues in the district, ask people on the street what they think, and tell people about the wards they live — and vote — in.

All of the mayoral candidates have been invited to sit in the Elections 10 Hot Seat, and answer six questions.

This is where the *Advocate* comes in.

I've been lucky enough to get a sneak preview of what viewers will see starting on September 9, as I've been asking the questions.

The mayoral candidates were given 60 seconds to respond to questions about council debt, the local economy, the future of Whangarei, roading and harbour pollution.

There's a sixth question I won't reveal, because it's a secret and we've got two candidates still to interview.

But the candidates who have sat in the Hot Seat so far are (in alphabetical order) Vince Cacurullo, Morris Cutforth, Don Hedges, Paul Jeeves, Isopo Samu, Warren Slater, Stan Semenovoff and Simon Vallings.

Mita Kayal Ruri and Terry Burkhhardt are being interviewed next week.

What can I tell you?

Well, there's no way I'm giving the game away, but it's been fascinating.

I can tell you I've been surprised, disappointed, impressed and made to laugh, in no particular order.

And that they were all very punctual.

The questions we've asked were deliberately generic, to enable all candidates to answer.

All of this also means that right now, one or two Channel North staff and I are the best informed voters in Whangarei.

Our job now is to share this information with as many people in Whangarei as possible, so you too can make your mind up.

Tune in to Channel North and the *Advocate* for *Elections 10*, starting on September 9.