

CLERK: Please be seated.

At the close of nominations for the Office of the Speaker at 4:30 p.m., Monday, August 7, 2017, two candidates put their names forward. The candidates, in alphabetical order, are Ms. Pam Parsons, Mr. Perry Trimper.

Members of the House of Assembly, pursuant to the Lieutenant Governor's direction and the Standing Orders of this Assembly, it is my duty to call upon you to elect a Member to preside over your deliberations as Speaker.

Would the Sergeant-at-Arms and the Pages please place the voting booths and the ballot box in position? Would the Pages please distribute the list of candidates to all Members' desks and place one in each voting booth?

Before beginning the election, I will briefly outline the process to be followed as set out in the Standing Orders of this House. For each round of balloting, Members are asked to proceed starting from the back or third row of desks on their respective sides of the House and file past the Speaker's Chair to the head of the Clerk's Table. At the Table, each Member will be given a ballot and asked to initial a list to verify that they have received it.

In the voting booth, please print or write legibly the surname of the candidate you support on the ballot paper, place it in the ballot box at the end of the Clerk's Table and return to your place. You can only vote for one candidate, so please do not list or rank the candidates. Write the surname of your choice for Speaker on the ballot.

When all Members wishing to vote have done so, the House will recess while the Clerks withdraw to count the vote. A majority of the votes cast is required to elect the Speaker. If candidates receive the same number of votes, there will be another ballot.

Immediately before the start of the second or any subsequent ballot, a Member who wishes to withdraw will be given an opportunity to do so. When the count of each ballot is completed, a five-minute bell will ring to call the Members to the Chamber. In preparation for the vote, the Sergeant-at-Arms will inspect and lock the ballot box.

The list of candidates is on each Member's desk and in each of the two voting booths. We will now proceed with the beginning of the voting procedure. I now ask those Members who wish to cast ballots to proceed starting from the back row from your respective sides of the House to the Clerk's Table, then proceed to the voting booth and then deposit your ballot in the ballot box.

If there are any Members who have not voted and wish to do so, please vote now.

All Members having voted, the House will recess to the call of the bells while the Clerks at the Table count the ballots. The bells will ring for five minutes to recall Members to the Chamber when the results of the first ballot are ready to be announced.

Thank you very much.

Recess

CLERK: Accordingly, further to suborder 4(11) of the Standing Orders, I declare Mr. Perry Trimper, Member for the District of Lake Melville, elected as Speaker for the remainder of the Forty-Eighth General Assembly.

(Applause.)

(The hon. the Premier and the hon. the Leader of the Official Opposition lead Mr. Trimper to the Speaker's Chair.)

MR. SPEAKER (Trimper): Well, this is quite a view.

I have some remarks. First of all, thank you very much, colleagues. I'm not sure I saw this coming, but I'm very glad to be here. I thank you all for your support.

I find myself just marveling somehow: How did I end up in this spot right now?

I showed up in this great province 1987; 30 years ago. Two guys named Dave Lemon and Steve Fudge gave me a three-month job opportunity in Labrador. I always used to tease those guys because they never talked about an extension; I ended up staying and embracing this province. It's been so good to me and I couldn't be more honoured and humbled to be here with you now.

I must say a very sincere thank you to every Member of this House. You've all become colleagues of mine, whether I'm on the government side, where I've been happy to sit, but also getting to know the Opposition. It's been truly rewarding. I actually enjoy every minute in this House. Some people say it can pull on you, it can wear on you. I have embraced it and I've learned a lot here.

It's interesting, as I did some history and prepared for what might happen to me today, I went back to the 14th century, as one needs to do to understand the role of the Speaker. In those days, the Speaker was very much a messenger, a messenger between the news and the monarch, and if that news wasn't so good, it could often mean the end of that Speaker's career, both figuratively and physically. So hence the reason why you might want to try to resist, but with the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier, I didn't have much hope there. I must say, it's fun to see these traditions. I take them very seriously and I will certainly take this job very seriously.

I'd also like to acknowledge and commend the Member for Harbour Grace – Port de Grave for putting her name forward for consideration. I understand her interest and I wish her well in future endeavours and opportunities to serve the people of this province.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: As I alluded to, and as I embarked on this political career just a few short years ago, I stated that my objective was to always do what I could do to make a difference, to try to pay it back, as it were, a debt of gratitude that I owe Newfoundland and Labrador. So to find myself in the Speaker's Chair is very much an esteemed position and I will be dedicated to facilitating productive debate and governance to address the important matters in Newfoundland and Labrador.

These last 20 months have been a great adventure. Having had almost a full career in the private sector, it's allowed me to learn first-hand the commitment required by each Member of the House, to respond to the needs of their constituents and other responsibilities entrusted to us by the people of the province.

I would first of all like to thank my wife, Caroline Hong, who's up in Labrador, I believe, watching via Internet – hopefully it's still working – for her steady guidance and support. This political pursuit has been our team effort.

I also need to express appreciation for all the support from my parents, June and Wendell Trimper, political veterans; they've been at this for all of their lives. I'm sure they're watching and, yeah, I thank them very much. Also my wife's parents – and many people from St. John's will know them – Lan and Yan Quan William Hong of Hong's Takeout fame for their work ethic and dedication have been a great support to myself as well.

I've also got a great team around me in this political arena. I've got a constituency assistant, Bonnie Learning, who's off taking a very much-needed vacation right now and my executive assistant, Ian Murphy, who's up in the stands. For all those of you who have worked with Ian and with Bonnie, you know I'm surrounded by very good people who also enjoy problem solving. Together, our team looks forward to taking on this new role.

Over these last 20 months I've had the honour to serve as the minister responsible for some eight departments, offices and boards of government. I do thank the Premier for entrusting me with this opportunity. I want to express my gratitude for also having worked with so many dedicated and experienced staff within the civil service. Your job is not easy but you do your work well. I continue to be impressed by the calibre of your talent.

I also understand, I'm not sure, but I may be the first Speaker who was also an MHA representing a district in Labrador. I see this as a very proud achievement and one that I want to share with the district association for Lake Melville. I will continue to be appreciative of their support. I want to reassure all constituents and the communities of Sheshatshiu, North West River, Churchill Falls, Happy Valley-Goose Bay and especially Mud Lake, which has had such a difficult year, that they will remain a priority for me.

I also would like to take the minute, if I could while I'm on this stage, to a special acknowledgement for a constituent who just bicycled across Canada raising money for the Children's Wish Foundation. He did this in an amazing little over 55-56 days. Matthew Pike, you are to be congratulated for all you've done. I'd like to have a little round of applause if I could.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The role of Speaker is to preside over the proceedings of the House of Assembly. The key characteristics are authority and impartiality. The Speaker is to serve all Members equally, regardless of party affiliation.

Le président de la Chambre d'assemblée a pour rôle principal de conduire les délibérations. Les principales caractéristiques des fonctions du président de la Chambre d'assemblée sont l'autorité et l'impartialité. Le Président doit traiter tous des députés de manière égale peu importe le parti auquel ils appartiennent.

As I step into this new role, I would like to invite all hon. Members to show their appreciation to the former Speaker, the now hon. Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board and the MHA for Waterford Valley, for the example he has set and the bar of excellence that I will attempt to attain.

Thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: To all those affiliated with the operation of the House of Assembly, may I say that I look forward to working with you and the important traditions of this office. As with my predecessor, my door will be open to all over the remainder of this Forty-Eighth General Assembly.

This is the people's House. I look forward to doing what I can to support the people of our province. Thank you, tshinashkumitin, nakummek, merci beaucoup, shokran.

Thank you.

(...)

PREMIER BALL: May it please Your Honour, the House of Assembly, agreeable to Your Honour's command, have proceeded for the choice of Speaker and have elected Mr. Perry Trimper, the Member for the District of Lake Melville, to that office and by their direction I present him for the approbation for Your Honour.

HIS HONOUR THE ADMINISTRATOR (Chief Justice J. Derek Green): On behalf of Her Majesty, I assure you of my sense of your efficiency and I do most fully approve and confirm you as Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

Your Honour, having approved the choice of this House in constituting me as their Speaker, it now becomes my duty in the name of the representatives of Her Majesty's loyal subjects to ask that I, as Speaker, may have full access to Your Honour's presence at all reasonable times.

HIS HONOUR THE ADMINISTRATOR: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded by His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor, that your words and actions will constantly receive from him the most favorable construction.