

Joy, Chuck, Bingbong tussle for QC mayor

By Rio N. Araja

FOLLOWING months of soft campaigning, Joy Belmonte has finally filed her certificate of candidacy for the mayoralty of Quezon City in the 2019 elections, with at least one rival challenging her for the post.

The incumbent vice mayor and her running mate, District 3 Councilor Gian Carlo Sotto, on Thursday filed their candidacies at the Commission on Elections, accompanied by their influential fathers—former House Speaker and QC Mayor Sonny Belmonte and Senate President Tito Sotto.

Joy Belmonte is out to take over from incumbent Mayor Herbert Bautista, unless her somewhat unexpected challenger—former congressman and councilor Chuck Mathay III—pulls off an upset next May.

The son of former QC mayor Mel Mathay is running alongside three-term councilor Roderick Paulate, whose staff previously told **Manila Standard** he would be running for vice mayor “come what may.”

Another rumored mayoralty bidder, District 1 Rep. Vincent “Bingbong” Crisologo, has yet to file his candidacy, and will likely do so without a running mate.

This after District 2 Rep. Winston “Winnie” Castelo, who has been angling for the vice mayoralty supposedly under Crisologo as early as 2017, has reportedly backed out, city hall sources

told the Standard.

“[Castelo] will no longer run after some negotiations,” one source told **Manila Standard**.

Crisologo, the city chairman of the ruling PDP-Laban party, was taken aback by Castelo’s sudden decision, the source also said.

Castelo’s wife, three-term District 2 Councilor Precious Hipolito, will no longer run under the PDP-Laban slate of Crisologo either.

Joy Belmonte is running under the local party-list Serbisong Bayan that is allied with Davao City Mayor Sara Duterte’s Hugpong ng Pagbabago—and not with the PDP-Laban despite shifting her allegiance away from the Liberal Party last May.

The current vice mayor said she is running “under a banner of good governance and social services for the city’s poorest.”