



Rules and Procedures on the use of Municipal or Board Resources for Election Purposes

Purpose:

These rules and procedures provide guidance on the appropriate use of corporate resources during municipal and school board elections, during the election campaign period.

Legislative Authority:

The following legislative provisions are highlighted as they relate to these rules and procedures:

The *Municipal Elections Act*, 1996 s. 88.8 (4) states that municipalities shall not make a contribution to a candidate.

The *Municipal Elections Act*, 1996 s. 88.8 (1) also prohibits a candidate, or someone acting on the candidate's behalf, from accepting a contribution from a person who is not entitled to make a contribution. As a contribution may take the form of money, goods and services, any use of the Corporation's resources for an election campaign could be viewed as a contribution by the Municipality, which is a violation of the *Municipal Elections Act*, 1996.

Principles

These rules and procedures clarify that all candidates, including members of Council, are required to follow the provisions of the *Municipal Elections Act*, 1996. These rules and procedures also to ensure that all candidates are treated fairly and consistently.

In compliance with the *Municipal Elections Act*, 1996, public funds are not to be used for election campaigns, including the promotion of or opposition to the candidacy of a person for an elected office, or in support of or opposition to a question on a ballot.

Corporation resources including facilities, infrastructure, equipment, supplies, services, staff or any resource that belongs to or is funded by the municipality may not be used for the purposes of an election campaign or for any campaign-related activities.

There can be no campaign-related activities by candidates in any Municipal workplace or in any municipally owned or operated buildings.

These rules and procedures recognizes that the business of the municipality must continue to be carried out throughout the term of Council and that Members of Council are holders of their office until the end of their term, and supports Members of Council in continuing to fulfill their responsibilities as Members of Council. These rules and procedures does not preclude Members of Council from representing the interests of the constituents who elected them.

The following guidelines apply to all members of Council, municipal and school board candidates and acclaimed members.

Guidelines

1. A candidate may not use municipal facilities for election campaign purposes or for any campaign related activities. Campaign signs and materials that identify a candidate may not be displayed in/at any municipal facilities. Election campaign materials means those materials that promote or oppose the candidacy of a person for elected office, or that support or oppose a question on a ballot.
2. A candidate may not campaign or distribute election campaign materials at any event/function being hosted by the municipality, whether on municipal property or not.
3. A candidate may not use any municipal infrastructure and equipment for election campaign purposes or for any campaign related activities. This includes but is not limited to any physical or technology systems that support the operation of the municipal programs and services including but not limited to computer and telephone networks and applications, photocopiers, fax machines, email system, voicemail, wireless equipment, internet, smart phones, tablets and municipally provided electronic devices.

4. A candidate may not use the services of staff during those hours in which staff receive any compensation from the municipality.

5. A candidate may not use municipal supplies for election campaign purposes.

6. A candidate may not print or distribute election campaign materials using municipal funds.

7. Website, domain names and social media sites that are funded by the municipality should not include any campaign material, make reference to and/or identify an individual as a candidate or profile any slogan or symbol associated with a candidate.

8. The municipal communication materials, whether for internal or public distribution, cannot:

- (i) Profile (name or photograph), make reference to and/or identify any individual as a candidate;

- (ii) Advocate for or against a particular candidate;

(Communication materials include but are not limited to: news releases, media advisories, invitations for special events, flyers, posters, banners, brochures, newsletters, e-newsletter and social media accounts.)

9. Photographs and videos produced for and owned by the municipality cannot be used for election campaign purposes.

10. Municipal corporate identifiers (i.e. the municipal logo, coat-of-arms, chain of office and its slogans) may not be printed or distributed in election campaign material or included on an election campaign website.

(Links to the municipal website are permitted from a candidate's election website for the purpose of obtaining information about the municipal election or sharing municipal program/service information.)

11. Candidates are prohibited from verifying whether an elector appears on the voters list or not, to the elector or any other person. Questions should be directed to Election Staff.

12. The municipal email addresses, telephone numbers and facility addresses are not to be used by a candidate as his/her election campaign contact information.

Exemptions to these rules and procedures:

- Municipal election information prepared, posted and maintained by municipal Administration;
- Media releases and municipal materials that describe inter-governmental activities of the Mayor in the capacity as Head of Council;
- Names and photographs of Members of Council, their contact information, and a list of their current representation on committees that is prepared, posted and maintained by municipal administration.
- Agendas and minutes of Committee and Council meetings.

Administration:

In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act*, 1996 the Clerk and authorized designate(s) are responsible for the administration of these rules and procedures.