

THE CORPORATION OF THE
MUNICIPALITY OF GREENSTONE

POLICY MANUAL

SECTION: Corporate Services

SUBJECT: Use of Corporate
Resources for Election
Purposes

DATE: February 26, 2018

AUTHORIZATION: By-Law 18-11

POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to notify all registered candidates, including members of Municipal Council of the requirement to follow the provisions of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, (the *Act*) as amended, and that:

- No member/candidate shall use the facilities, equipment, supplies, services, staff or other resources of the municipality (including Municipal letterhead, Municipal business cards, Municipal e-mail accounts, Municipal computers, ipads, cell phones and any Councillor budgets) for any election campaign or campaign-related activities;
- No member/candidate shall undertake campaign-related activities on municipal property during regular working hours; and
- No member/candidate shall use the services of persons during hours in which those persons receive any compensation from the municipality.

PURPOSE

To ensure that members of Municipal Council, registered candidates, and staff adhere to the provisions of the *Act*, as amended.

SCOPE

This policy is applicable to all registered candidates, including sitting members of Municipal Council.

This policy is applicable to municipal elections, including bi-elections.

DEFINITIONS

"The Act" means the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, as amended from time to time, and includes any regulation made there under;

"Candidate" means a person who has filed a nomination to run in a municipal, provincial or federal election, and shall be deemed to include a person seeking to influence other persons to vote for or against any candidate or any question or by-law submitted to the electors under section 8 of the *Act*;

"Campaign Period" begins on the date a candidate files their nomination through to and including Voting Day.

"Municipality of Greenstone" means The Corporation of the Municipal of Greenstone.

"Corporate Resources" includes but is not limited to the Municipality of Greenstone Staff, events, funds, information and assets;

"Election Period" means May 1 through to and including Voting Day;

"Municipal Facilities" means any real property owned or under the control of the Municipal of Greenstone;

"Nomination Day" for a regular municipal election is the fourth Friday of July in the year of the election;

"Staff" includes full-time, part-time, and contract employees, paid by the Municipal of Greenstone;

"Voting Day" is the day on which the final vote is to be taken in an election.

POLICY

- 1) That in accordance with the provisions of the *Act*:
 - (a) Corporate Resources may not be used for election-related purposes;
 - (b) Staff shall not canvass or actively work in support of a municipal candidate during normal working hours unless they are on a leave of absence without pay, lieu time, float day, or vacation leave;
 - (c) Members of Council, including the Mayor and Candidates shall not use any municipal facilities for any election-related purposes. Campaign-related signs or any other election-related material shall not be displayed in any municipal facility (ie: arenas / parks) and must not use election-related materials advertising or within any municipal publication such as a Municipal Newsletter.
 - (d) Members of Council shall not:

- Print or distribute any material using municipal funds that make reference to, contain the names or photographs of, or identifies registered Candidates for Municipal Elections;
- (e) Members of Council are responsible to ensure that the content of any communications material, including printed material such as newsletters, advertising, etc. funded by the municipality for the operation of each Councillor's Office, is not directly election-related.
- (f) Web sites or domain names that are funded by the municipality may not include any election-related campaign material
- Candidates are permitted to link to any Municipal document available to the public or on a public Municipal webpage from their campaign website.
 - Candidates are not permitted to incorporate a video or other material (i.e. photos) for which the Municipality has proprietary rights on their own web page.
 - Sitting members of Council shall not use the Municipal's IT resources, including individual websites linked through the Municipal's website and social media accounts used for any election campaign and/or campaign-related activities.
 - If a Member of Council uses any social media account for campaigning, such accounts must not be created or supported by Corporate Resources. Social media accounts used for campaign purposes must utilize personal cell phones, tablets and/or computers;
 - Sitting members of Council who choose to create or use social media accounts for campaigning must include, for the duration of the Election Period, a clear statement on each campaign website or social media account's home page indicating that the account is being used for Election Campaign purposes and is not related to their duties as a Member of Council; and
- (g) Candidates must not, under any circumstances, use a Municipal logo or any variation of it on any campaign material, election signs, social media or campaign websites.
- (h) Members of Council may not use the municipality's voicemail system and/or cell phones to record election related messages; and
- (i) The above recommendations also apply to an acclaimed member or a member not seeking re-election; and

- 2) That the Municipal Clerk be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect to this policy.

Limitation: This policy does not preclude a member of Municipal Council from performing their duties as a Councillor, nor inhibit them from representing the interests of the constituents who elected them.

Implementation: This policy shall become effective immediately upon approval by the Municipal Council.

Rationale and Legislative Authority: It is necessary to establish on the appropriate use of corporate resources during an election period to protect the interests of both members of Council and the Municipality of Greenstone. The *Act* prohibits a municipality from making a contribution to a candidate. The *Act*, 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 or services, any use by a Member of Council of the Corporation's resources for his or her election campaign would be viewed as a contribution by the municipality to the member, which is a violation of the *Act*, 1996.