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September 18, 2024

AMCTO Advocacy Team
2680 Skymark Ave, Suite 610
Mississauga, ON L4W 5L6

Senty by Email to: advocacy@amcto.com

Re: Provincial Updates to the Municipal Elections Act

At its regular meeting of Council held on September 18, 2024, the Township of Amaranth Council passed the following resolution.

Resolution #: 3

Moved by: G. Little

Seconded by: B. Metzger

WHEREAS elections rules need to be clear, supporting candidates and voters in their electoral participation and election administrators in running elections.

WHEREAS legislation needs to strike the right balance between providing clear rules and frameworks to ensure the integrity of the electoral process,

WHEREAS the legislation must also reduce administrative and operational burden for municipal staff ensuring that local election administrators can run elections in a way that responds to the unique circumstances of their local communities.

WHEREAS the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* (MEA) will be 30 years old by the next municipal and school board elections in 2026.

WHEREAS the MEA sets out the rules for local elections, the *Assessment Act, 1990* and the *Education Act, 1990* also contain provisions impacting local elections adding more places for voters, candidates, and administrators to look for the rules that bind the local democratic process in Ontario.

WHEREAS with rules across three pieces of legislation, and the *MEA* containing a patchwork of clauses, there are interpretation challenges, inconsistencies, and gaps to fill.

WHEREAS the Act can pose difficulties for voters, candidates, contributors and third-party advertisers to read, to interpret, to comply with and for election administrators to enforce.

WHEREAS while local elections are run as efficiently and effectively as can be within the current legislative framework, modernization and continuous improvement is needed to ensure the Act is responsive to today's needs and tomorrow's challenges.

WHEREAS to keep public trust and improve safeguards the Act should be reviewed considering the ever-changing landscape which impacts elections administration including privacy, the threats of foreign interference, increased spread of mis/disinformation and the increased use of technologies like artificial intelligence and use of digital identities.

WHEREAS the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks, and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) reviewed the Act and has provided several recommendations including modernizing the legislation, harmonizing rules, and streamlining and simplifying administration.

AND WHEREAS AMCTO put forward recommendations for amendments ahead of the 2026 elections and longer-term recommendations for amendments ahead of the 2030 elections.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT The Township of Amaranth calls for the Province to update the MEA with priority amendments as outlined by AMCTO before Summer 2025 and commence work to review and re-write the MEA with longer-term recommendations ahead of the 2030 elections.

And Be It Further Resolved that this resolution will be forwarded to all municipalities in Ontario for support and that each endorsement be then forwarded to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (minister.mah@ontario.ca), the Minister of Education (minister.edu@ontario.ca), the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery (todd.mccarthy@ontario.ca), Minister of Finance (Minister.fin@ontario.ca) the Premier of Ontario (premier@ontario.ca), Sylvia Jones MPP (sylvia.jones@ontario.ca) and AMCTO (advocacy@amcto.com)

CARRIED

Please do not hesitate to contact the office if you require any further information.

Yours truly,



Nicole Martin, Dipl. M.A.
CAO/Clerk

cc. All Ontario Municipalities

Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (minister.mah@ontario.ca)

Minister of Education (minister.edu@ontario.ca)

Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery (todd.mccarthy@ontario.ca)

Minister of Finance (Minister.fin@ontario.ca)

Premier of Ontario (premier@ontario.ca)

Sylvia Jones MPP (sylvia.jones@ontario.ca)