



Corporate Policy

Use of Corporate Resources During an Election

Department: Corporate Services

Approved by Council on January 24, 2022
Resolution No. 2022-026

1. Policy Statement

The Municipal Elections Act (the Act), 1996, as amended, establishes regulations governing campaign finance for candidates running in a municipal election. Section 88.18 of the Act provides for the establishment of rules and procedures with respect to the use of municipal or board resources during the election campaign period.

The Election Finances Act, 1990, as amended, and the Canada Elections Act, 2000, as amended, establish regulations for candidates and parties running in provincial and federal elections. Section 29 (1) of the Election Finances Act and Section 363 (1) of the Canada Elections Act prohibit a corporation from making campaign contributions to any candidate, political party, nomination or leadership contestant, or constituency association in a provincial or federal election.

As a campaign contribution may take the form of money, goods or services, any use of corporate resources for campaign related purposes is not permitted, unless otherwise stated in this policy.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework regarding the use of the Town's corporate resources in an election campaign by members of Council, members of committees, members of boards, candidates, registered third parties and Town employees.

This policy ensures compliance with the Municipal Elections Act, the Election Finances Act and the Canada Elections Act and supports and maintains accountable and transparent election practices.

3. Definitions

“the Act” means the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended.

“Campaign Materials” means any materials that promote or oppose a **Candidate** including but not limited to literature, banners, posters, pictures, buttons, clothing, or other paraphernalia and may be in any media format, including but not limited to, print, displays, radio or television, or online including websites and social media.

“Campaign related activities” means any activity that is meant to elicit support or opposition of a **candidate**.

“Candidate” means a **person** who is running or has expressed an intention to run in a municipal, provincial or federal election including a **person** seeking to influence other **person(s)** to vote for or against a candidate or any question or by-law submitted to the electors.

“Corporate resources” means **Town property**, assets, equipment, technology, hardware, software, software licenses, vehicles, supplies, services, **employees**, or any resource that belongs to or is funded by the town and includes, but is not limited to the Town logo, crest, coat of arms, flag, slogan, uniform, badge or other similarly branded corporate resources or property.

“Election” means any municipal, provincial or federal election including by-elections.

“Employee” means any individual working for or receiving compensation from the Town, including those in full-time, part-time, seasonal or contract positions and volunteers while they are acting in an official capacity with the Town.

“Person” means an individual, sole proprietorship, partnership, limited partnership, trust, corporation, and an individual in his or her capacity as a trustee, executor, administrator, or other legal representative.

“Registered Third Party” means an individual, corporation or trade union that is registered under section 88.6 of the Act.

“Town Property” includes lot, land, building, facility or structure owned by the Town but does not include property owned by a corporation of which the Town is the sole shareholder or that is owned by the Town and leased to another **person** or entity for a period of twenty-one (21) years or longer.

4. Scope

This Policy applies to the use of corporate resources.

5. Policy

This policy does not prevent members of Council from conducting their regular duties as political representatives for their constituents. Members are responsible for ensuring any activities funded by the Town are not related to **campaign related activities**. Committee and Board members who are involved in **campaign related activities** are to ensure that they are not doing so within their official capacity as a member.

6. Town Property

- 6.1 No **person** shall conduct **campaign related activities** on **Town Property** that contains a Town building, this includes inside and outside of the building, except as follows:

- All-candidate meetings, if rented in accordance with the Town's rental procedures, provided that all **candidates** for an office are invited to attend the event by the event organizers. **Campaign materials** may only be distributed in the designated rented meeting space.

6.2 No **campaign related activities** are permitted to take place at any function hosted by the Town whether held on **Town property** or not.

7. Communications and Technology

7.1 No **person** shall use **corporate resources** for any communications related to any **campaign related activities**, including the town website, social media, domain names, and other corporate systems, or any material produced, printed, displayed or distributed by the Town, except as follows:

- Links to the Town's website are permitted by a **candidate** or **registered third party** election website solely for the purpose of providing the public information about the election or for sharing Town program/service information.

7.2 Websites and domains that are operated or funded by the Town shall not include any **campaign materials** or links to any websites which include **campaign materials**.

7.3 From the first day of the nomination period in a municipal election, all links to social media accounts and personal external websites of current members of Council will be removed from Town run or funded websites and domains.

8. Employees

8.1 With respect to elections, **employees** are expected to promote the principles of transparency, impartiality, respect, and accountability.

8.2 Further to the Employee Code of Conduct, the following applies to all **employees**:

- **Employees** may not engage in any **campaign related activities** during their working hours or for time they are receiving remuneration from the Town. This includes, but is not limited to, providing any **election** related administrative support to **candidates**.
- **Employees** may engage in **campaign related activities** as long as those personal activities are kept separate from their official positions and duties. **Employees** must ensure that their political activities do not create a perceived or actual conflict of interest in their day-to-day work.
- While engaging in **campaign related activities**, **employees** shall not utilize **corporate resources**.

8.3 No **person** shall use the services of Town **employees** for any campaign related activities during hours in which **employees** receive any remuneration from the Town.

9. General

- 9.1 Candidates** shall not submit a complaint to the Town on behalf of other people during an election campaign.
- 9.2** Election signs may only be displayed in accordance with the Town's Election Sign By-law.