

Use of Corporate Resources by Candidates during an Election

SUBJECT: Corporate Resources & Municipal Elections	EFFECTIVE DATE: 1-May-2018
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Background:

The Municipal Elections Act (Act) require Municipalities, before May 1 in an election year to establish rules and procedures with respect to the use of municipal resources during the election campaign period.

The Act further states that a municipality cannot make a contribution to a municipal election candidate or a registered third party. A contribution may take the form of money, goods or services and any use of Township of Centre Wellington Resources, including but not limited to funds, facilities, physical or intellectual property, IT and communication systems, supplies and staff for an election campaign would be viewed as a contribution.

It is recognized that current Members of Council hold office till the end of the term and nothing in this policy precludes them from performing their duties or representing the interests of the constituents who elected them.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent approach and direction regarding the use of corporate resources to all candidates, registered third parties and staff during an election year.

Policy:

1. The Township of Centre Wellington cannot make a contribution to any candidate, registered third party or position regarding a question on the ballot.
2. Members of Council/Candidates may not use any Township of Centre Wellington facilities or resources for campaign related activities including the distribution or display of campaign material, excluding public right-of-ways which may be used in accordance with the Township sign by-law, nor may they campaign at events or functions hosted by or held at Township facilities.
3. Members of Council/Candidates may not use equipment, supplies, services, staff or other resources of the municipality for any campaign or campaign related activities.



4. Members of Council/Candidates may not use Township funds to acquire any resources for any campaign or campaign related activity, including supplies and advertisements.
5. The Township logo, crest or any other corporate identifier may not be used on any campaign related material, either printed or electronic by any candidate or third party advertiser. This includes any election logo or slogan.
6. Members of Council /Candidates may not use photographs and videos produced by the Township.
7. Links to the Township website are only permitted for the purpose of providing information regarding the Election or Municipal programs and services.
8. Members of Council shall not use distribution lists or contact lists developed utilizing corporate resources or through contacts in a Member of Council's role shall not be utilized for election purposes.
9. Members of Council shall not print or distribute any material using municipal funds that makes reference to, or contains the names, photographs, or identifies registered candidates for municipal elections;
10. A Member of Council is responsible for ensuring the content of any communication material that is printed, sponsored, hosted, or distributed by the Township at the request of such Member of Council is not for campaigning.
11. A Member of Council shall not print or distribute campaigning material using Township resources and/or paid for by Township funds.
12. Office furnishings, office/desk locations, stationary, and other supplies normally provided for Members of Council will remain status quo from the day Nominations open until the end of the Council term. However, none of these Township resources may be used for campaigning.
13. Members of Council/Candidates who choose to create or use their own websites or social media accounts shall throughout the period from May 1st of the municipal election year until Voting Day, inclusive include a clear statement, easily found and readable on each website or social media account's home page indicating the account is being used either solely for Council work, or solely for election campaign purposes. The statement shall remain for as long as the website or account is accessible.
14. Information provided via the Township's website regarding Members of Council shall remain static from the day nominations open until the end of the Council term.

15. A Member of Council or any registered candidate or 3rd party advertiser shall not use any corporate facility/property for any election-related purpose unless a market value rental fee has been established corporately and the rental of such is available to all candidates and third parties. Notwithstanding the foregoing, no facility/property shall be rented or used for any municipal election-related purpose by members of Council, candidates, third parties, or the public during any day that voting is taking place on the property, including set-up, hosting, or take-down activities.

Staff

16. Staff is advised to be especially mindful of public perception during municipal elections, and to ensure that their activities neither conflict with nor adversely affect their duties as members of Township staff. Moreover, staff has a responsibility to ensure that public resources are not used for campaigning by any person.
17. Township staff may not volunteer or work on any campaign during paid working hours or when receiving any sort of compensation from the Township.
18. Township staff shall neither canvass nor actively work in support of a candidate while wearing Township corporate wear/uniform, badge, crest or other item identifying them as staff, or while using a Township owned or leased vehicle.
19. Staff shall not use their official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with or affecting the result of a municipal election or a question on the ballot, nor use their official title while participating in otherwise permissible political activities.

Policy Management

20. Staff is authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect to this policy.
21. The Integrity Commissioner may at any time be consulted by Members of Council with regard to complying with any part of this policy and will be responsible for enforcement of this policy through Council's Code of Conduct.
22. Nothing in this policy shall preclude a Member of Council from performing their duties as a Councillor, nor inhibit them from representing their constituents.
23. The Municipal Clerk is delegated the authority to make administrative changes to this policy that may be required from time to time due to legislative changes or if, in the opinion of the Township Clerk, the amendments do not change the intent of the policy.