

PURPOSE

The *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, as amended, prohibits municipalities from making campaign contributions to municipal candidates or registered third parties. As a campaign contribution may take the form of money, goods or services, this procedure provides a fair and consistent approach on how municipal corporate resources can and cannot be used during a municipal election. This procedure supports compliance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, as amended, the Council Code of Conduct, Code of Conduct for Members of Local Boards and Advisory Committees, and the Employee Code of Conduct.

SCOPE

This procedure applies to all Members of Council, municipal staff, registered election candidates, registered third parties, and members of the public.

PROCEDURE

Corporate resources, assets or funding may not be used for any election-related purposes, except as identified in this procedure.

1. Election campaigning

- a. Election campaign activities are not permitted at Town Hall (located at 11 Hudson Street).
- b. Election campaign materials may not be displayed at Town of Blind River (town) facilities, unless otherwise outlined in this procedure.
- c. Municipally owned or run assets and facilities, excluding Town Hall, may be rented in accordance with municipal agreements and current rates and fees for election campaign activities providing that the rental is available to all registered candidates and registered third parties. Use of rentals are subject to the following conditions:
 - i. all election campaign materials must only be displayed within the allotted rental period in the allotted rented area designated in the rental agreement;
 - ii. rentals for campaign related activities are not permitted from the first date of advance voting to the day after voting day; and
 - iii. the town reserves the right to refuse or cancel a rental contract at any time, in accordance with the terms of the contract, should it conflict with the town's corporate values or established policies or procedures, or presents a health and safety concern.
- d. The town will not host, organize, or advertise all-candidates meetings or debates. With the exception of Town Hall, use of town facilities for all-candidates meetings or debates is permitted, provided that the rental fee is paid and all candidates for an office are invited to attend and participate.

- e. Registered candidates and registered third parties may attend town organized or funded events during a campaign period, but may not display or distribute any campaign materials, or engage in any election related activities.

2. Use of corporate identifiers and resources

- a. The town's corporate logo, corporate branding, crest, chain of office, coat of arms, slogan or other corporate identifiers or that of its affiliates, shall not be used by any other body or person for any election campaign-related purposes.
- b. Registered candidates and registered third parties may not use photographs, videos, electronic images, or graphics, produced by the town or its affiliates.
- c. Use of photographs or videos not produced by the town or its affiliates, and taken from a publicly accessible place, in campaign advertising containing the corporate logo, corporate branding, crest, chain of office, coat of arms, slogan or other corporate identifiers is not in contravention of paragraph 2(a) of this procedure.
- d. Corporate resources shall not be used for:
 - i. the printing or distribution of any material that illustrates that a member of Council or any other individual is registered or intends to run for office; or
 - ii. the printing or distribution of any campaign material that makes reference to, or contains the names or photographs, or identifies registered candidates.
- e. No town consumable materials, such as toner and paper, associated with computer systems shall be used for election campaign-related purposes.
- f. Lists and files produced using town resources, with the exception of lists produced for election purposes in accordance with the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, may not be used for any election campaign-related purposes.
- g. In accordance with the Online Communications policy, the town will not publish any material used to promote individual political opinions or campaigns.

3. Town staff

- a. In accordance with the Employee Code of Conduct, municipal staff, including any contractor providing services to the town shall not canvass or actively work for any registered candidate or registered third party during hours in which the staff/contractor is receiving compensation from the town.

4. Town services

- a. The following town based services shall be discontinued for Members of Council as of nomination day:
 - i. all forms of advertising, including advertising in town publications; and
 - ii. all printing, photocopying and distribution, including printing and general distribution of newsletters unless so directed and approved by Council.
- b. Corporate resources (such as town issued phones and email addresses) shall be provided to current members of council for council related purposes and to serve their constituents and shall not be used to support an election campaign.

5. Technology related provisions

- a. Websites, domain names, emails, or other corporate systems that are funded by the town shall not include any election-related campaign material or links to sites that

feature election-related campaign material. The exception being the official Town of Blind River election website where links to external election campaign websites will be posted during the election period.

- b. Registered candidates, registered third parties, and Members of Council may not use the town website, domain names, and other corporate systems, for campaigning or display of any election-related materials. Links to the town’s website are permitted from a campaign election website for the purpose of obtaining information about the election or sharing program/service information.

Definitions

Campaign contribution: anything of value given to influence an election, may take the form of money, goods, or services.

Campaign period: in accordance with Section 88.24 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended, and begins on the day in which nomination papers are filed and ends on December 31 in the case of a regular election and 45 days after voting day in the case of a by-election.

Campaign related activities: any activity by or on behalf of a registered candidate, registered third party, or question on a ballot meant to elicit support during the election period.

Campaign materials: any materials, including political advertising, used to solicit votes for a candidate(s) or question in an election or any materials that promote or oppose the candidacy of a person for elected office. Including but not limited to literature, banners, posters, pictures, buttons, clothing, or other paraphernalia. Campaign materials also include, but are not limited to, materials in all media, for example, print, displays, electronic radio or television, online including websites or social media. Campaign materials do not include election signs, which are governed by the town’s Sign By-law.

Corporate resources: may include facilities, infrastructure, assets, equipment, supplies, services, staff or any resource that belongs to or is funded by the town.

Political advertising: advertising that takes a position on an issue that can reasonably be regarded as closely associated with a registered third party or candidate.

Approval Date:		Approved by:	
1.Amendment Date:		Approved by:	
2.Amendment Date:		Approved by:	
3.Amendment Date:		Approved by:	