



City of Belleville

Subject: Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes

Dated: April 2018

Revised:

POLICY STATEMENT

The Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended, in addition to general rules related to the administration of municipal elections, establishes rules and regulations governing the financing of municipal election campaigns in Ontario. Section 88.8(4) prohibits a municipality from making a contribution to a candidates' election campaign and Section 88.12(4) prohibits a municipality from making a contribution in relation to third party advertisements. Further to the above, the Act further stipulates that a contribution may be accepted only from a person or an entity that is entitled to make a contribution. In accordance with Section 88.15(1), a contribution may take the form of money, goods and services. Section 88.18 conveys that before May 1 in the year of a regular election, municipalities shall establish rules and procedures with respect to the use of municipal resources during the election campaign period.

The purpose of the Corporate Resource Use Policy For Election Purposes is to meet the City's responsibilities under the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended, by establishing rules and procedures with respect to the use of municipal resources during the election campaign period. This policy is established to protect the interests of Election Candidates, Members of City Council, and Third Party Advertisers as well as the City.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to clarify for election Candidates, including all members of City Council, that they are required to follow the campaign finance provisions as set forth in the Municipal Elections Act. It is also to reinforce to all employees of the City, the provisions under Employee Participation in the Municipal Provincial or Federal Election Campaign Policy, which outlines the City of Belleville's expectations of employees during an election.

GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

The intent of this policy is to clarify that all Election Candidates, Members of City Council and Third Party Advertisers are required to follow the provisions of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended, and that the following shall be prohibited:

- Use of facilities, equipment, supplies, services or other resources of the City for any election campaign or campaign-related activities.
- Undertaking campaign-related activities on City property, with the exception of complying with the City's Sign By-law as it relates to election signs.
- Use of the services of City Staff personnel for the purpose of any election campaign or campaign-related activities during working hours.

As a campaign contribution may take the form of money, goods and services, any use of a corporate resource for an election-related purpose, by a Candidate, Member of City Council, Third Party Advertiser or staff, could be viewed as a contribution by the City which is a violation of the Act, and is therefore prohibited.

APPLICATION

This policy shall be applicable to all Election Candidates, Members of City Council, Third Party Advertisers and City employees.

POLICY GUIDELINES

That all Election Candidates, Members of City Council and Third Party Advertisers shall adhere to the following:

- That City corporate resources, assets and funds shall not be used for any election campaign-related purposes;
- That City property or facilities shall not be used for any election campaign-related purposes. Election campaign-related material and signage shall be prohibited from municipal owned property and facilities, with the exception of complying with the City's Sign By-law as it relates to Election signs;
- That the City's corporate identity (eg. logos, crest, coat of arms, slogan, etc.) shall not be printed or distributed on any election campaign-related materials or included on any election campaign-related website, with the exception of a link to the City's website to obtain information about the municipal election;
- That the use of City Letterhead shall be prohibited for any election campaign-related purposes;
- That campaigning and/or distribution of campaign literature during any function being hosted by the City whether on municipal property or not shall be prohibited;
- That printing, photocopying or distributing any election-related material using municipal funds or resources shall be prohibited;
- That corporate technology shall not be used for election campaign purposes;

- That websites, e-mail or domain names that are funded by the City shall not include any election campaign-related material;
- That once a member of City Council registers to be a candidate, links to Twitter, Facebook, and other social media accounts, as well as links to personal external website(s) will be removed from all City of Belleville webpages;
- That the City's voicemail system shall not be used to record election campaign-related messages nor shall the computer network (including the City's e-mail system) be used to distribute election campaign-related correspondence;
- That photographs produced for and owned by the City of Belleville shall not be used for election campaign-related purposes;
- That in an Election Year, Mayor and City Council biographies will remain static, and no changes to these pages will be allowed;
- That use of the Corporate vehicle with City logos shall not be used by the Mayor, members of City Council, or any individual to which this policy shall apply, commencing May 1st (beginning of nomination period) in the year of a regular election for the duration until the new City Council takes Office with the exception of such use to attend conferences, seminars and out-of-City meetings;
- That the following items shall be prohibited:
 - Printing or distributing any material paid by municipal funds that illustrates that a City Council member or any other individual is registered in any election or where they will be running for office;
 - Profiling (name or photograph), or making reference to, in any material paid by municipal funds, any individual who is registered as a candidate in any election;
 - Printing or distributing any material using municipal funds that makes reference to, or contains the names or photographs, or identifies candidates for municipal elections; and
 - Current City Council members are responsible for ensuring the content of any communication material, printed or distributed by the City of Belleville, is not election-related;
- The above guidelines shall also apply to an acclaimed City Council member as well as a member of City Council not seeking re-election.

EMPLOYEE PROVISIONS

- Employees have the right to engage in political activities, including Campaign Activities; however, Employees shall be mindful of their responsibilities under the Employee Code of Conduct. Employees must be aware of public perception while engaging in Campaign Activities and ensure that their involvement does not create a perceived or actual conflict of interest with their official positions. Before participating in Campaign Activities, Employees are strongly encouraged to discuss their proposed participation with their supervisor or manager to identify perceived or actual conflicts of interest that may arise;
- Employees 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, flex day, or vacation leave;
- Employees shall not canvass or actively work in support of a municipal Candidate while wearing a uniform, badge, logo, or any other item identifying them as an employee of the Corporation, or using a vehicle owned or leased by the Corporation.

ADMINISTRATION

In accordance with the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended, the City Clerk is authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect to this policy.

LIMITATION

Nothing in this policy shall preclude a City Council member from performing their role, nor inhibit them from representing the interest of the constituents who elected them.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy shall come into effect immediately upon approval of City Council