



Township of South-West Oxford

Corporate Policy Manual

Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes	
Section: Administration	Number:
Version: 1.0	Review Frequency: as required
Approved by: Township Council	Approval Date: April 7, 2026
Application: This policy applies to all members of Council and its local boards, Township and local board employees, registered election candidates (including acclaimed candidates), registered third parties, and members of the public.	
Notes:	

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to affirm that all municipal election Candidates, Members of Council, and Township Staff are obligated to comply with the provisions of the Municipal Elections Act as they pertain to the use of corporate resources for election-related purposes, including but not limited to the following provisions:

Section 88.18 of the Municipal Elections Act requires municipalities to establish rules and procedures with respect to the use of municipal resources during the election campaign period.

This Policy also ensures that the Township's operations, events, and facilities are not used for election campaign related purposes or activities. This policy provides guidelines necessary for members of Council, other candidates and staff during elections in an accountable and transparent manner.

Nothing in this Policy shall preclude a member of Council from fulfilling their official duties as a Councillor, nor restrict them from duly representing the interests of the constituents by whom they were elected.

2. Definitions

“**Acclaimed**” means a Candidate elected by acclamation pursuant to section 37 of the Act.

“**Act**” means the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, S.O. 1996, c. 32, as amended.

“**Campaigning**” means a municipal election-related activity for the purpose of supporting or opposing the election of a Candidate or a question on the ballot, and includes, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the distribution of materials, advertising, display of signage.

“**Campaign Period**” means the election campaign period for Candidates and Registered Third Parties as prescribed by the Municipal Elections Act.

“**Candidate**” means a person who has filed a nomination for an office pursuant to section 33 of the Act and includes a person who has filed a nomination for election to a school board pursuant to the Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2, as amended.

“**Clerk**” means the Clerk of the Township or his/her designate.

“**Council**” means the Council of the Township.

“**Member**” means a member of the Council of the Township and includes the Mayor of the Township.

“**Nomination Day**” means the deadline to file a nomination for a regular election (the third Friday in August in the year of the election).

“**Policy**” means this Use of Corporate Resources (Municipal Elections) Policy.

“**Staff**” means all full-time and part-time persons hired by the Township, including but not limited to the Chief Administrative Officer, Managers, Supervisors, Coordinators, salaried employees, administrative staff, and contract, temporary, student, and cooperative placement staff.

“**Township**” means The Corporation of the Township of South-West Oxford.

“**Township resources**” means real property, goods and/or services owned, controlled, leased, acquired, or operated by the Township including but not limited to: facilities, parks, materials, equipment, monetary funds, technology, Township IT systems and resources, databases, social media, intellectual property, and supplies.

“**Voting Day**” means, in the case of a regular election, the fourth Monday in October in the year of the election -or- in the case of a by-election, the 45th day after Nomination Day, as noted in section 5 and subsection 65(4) of the Act.

3. Policy Details

3.1 General Provisions:

In accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended:

- 3.1.1 No person shall use any Township resource for campaigning for any election related activity, during a campaign period.
- 3.1.2 No Candidate, Registered Third Party, or person under the direction of either, shall use the services of Township staff for any campaigning, or any election related activities, during hours in which Township staff are at work.
- 3.1.3 Township property and or facilities shall not be used for any campaign related purposes unless the Candidate or Registered Third Party has paid the market value rental rate and any campaigning is limited to the rental space. Under no circumstances will the rental fee be waived for any campaigning.
- 3.1.4 Candidates or Registered Third Parties shall not campaign and/or distribute campaign literature during any function being hosted by the Township whether on Township property or at a Township facility or not.

3.2 Specific Regulations:

The following provisions, if provided by the Township, shall be suspended for all members of Council from May 1st in the year of a municipal election, up to and including Voting Day. In the case of a municipal by-election, the same shall apply for a period beginning 60 days before and including Voting Day for any members running as candidates in that by-election.

- 3.2.1 All forms of advertising, including advertising in municipal publications;
- 3.2.2 All printing, photocopying and distribution, including printing and general distribution and display of newsletters unless so directed and approved by Council;
- 3.2.3 The ordering of any stationery or office supplies or furnishings unless approved by the Clerk;
- 3.2.4 Links to Council member-related websites or social media links;
- 3.2.5 The posting of information relating to the activities of Council or any member of Council on the Township's website, excluding the minutes of Council and committee meetings. Only the photos and contact phone and/or email posted for each member of Council at the commencement of each term shall remain on the Township website.

To avoid any confusion with any website or social media accounts used for Council work, members of Council who choose to create or use their own websites or social media accounts shall throughout the period from May 1st in the year of a municipal election, up to and

including Voting Day; or in the case of a municipal by-election, a period beginning 60 days before and including Voting Day for the by-election:

- 3.2.6 Clearly display on the homepage of each website or social media account a readable statement indicating whether the account is used exclusively for Council business, for both Council business and election campaign purposes, or solely for election campaign activities;
- 3.2.7 Display the statement outlined in clause 3.2.6 for as long as the website or account remains publicly accessible.

Members of Council are not permitted to:

- 3.2.8 Print or distribute any material paid for by municipal funds that illustrates that a member of Council or any other individual is registered in any election or where they will be running for office;
- 3.2.9 Profile (such as a name or photograph) of, or make any reference to, an individual who is a registered candidate in any election, in materials paid for with municipal funds;
- 3.2.10 Print or distribute any material using municipal funds that makes reference to, or contains the names, photographs, or identifies registered candidates for municipal elections;
- 3.2.11 Use the Township website, domain names, other corporate systems, the Township crest or logo for campaigning/advertising or as a substitute to distributing newsletters or flyers throughout the period from May 1st of the municipal election year until Voting Day, or in the case of a municipal by-election, a period beginning 60 days before and including Voting Day for the by-election;
- 3.2.12 Use the municipality's voicemail system to record election-related messages;
- 3.2.13 Use the Township's computer network (including the Township email system) for election-related correspondence;
- 3.2.14 Use any photographs produced for and owned by the Township of South-West Oxford or any photos taken utilizing Township equipment or sent through Township email accounts for any election-related purposes;
- 3.2.15 Use municipal property or staff in any campaign photos or images unless all candidates are afforded the same opportunity. Photos/images of external Township facilities are permitted. Photos/images of internal Township facilities are not permitted;
- 3.2.16 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;
- 3.2.17 Benefit from the use of any corporate pricing established under the Township's purchasing policy;
- 3.2.18 Use any Council or Councillor Budgets for election-related purposes or to advertise, promote or support any candidate, third party or any position related to any questions which may be authorized to be placed on the ballot.
- 3.2.19 Clauses 3.2.11, 3.2.14, 3.2.15, and 3.2.16 above shall also apply to registered candidates, third parties and the members of the public.

3.3 Township Staff

Township staff are strongly discouraged from participating in any municipal election activities, including posting election signs on their property, making phone or email solicitations, signing nomination papers, distributing brochures, or wearing candidate buttons, as such involvement could create a perceived conflict of interest.

Election staff, including full time, part time and contract employees shall:

- 3.3.1 Behave in a manner that is impartial, fair and unbiased toward all registered candidates and registered third parties;
- 3.3.2 Consult with their direct Supervisor prior to agreeing to perform any task requested by a member of Council, registered candidate, or registered third party that exceeds their normal duties or could be construed as contributing to an election campaign;
- 3.3.3 Not rent any corporate facility/property for any municipal election-related purpose to members of Council, candidates, registered third parties, or the public during any day that voting is taking place anywhere on the property, including set-up, hosting, or take-down activities;
- 3.3.4 Ensure a clear separation between personal activities and official duties, and shall not canvass or actively support any municipal candidate or third party during regular working hours unless they are on an approved leave of absence without pay, lieu time, float day, or vacation leave;
- 3.3.5 Request and obtain a leave of absence without pay should they wish to run for federal, provincial or municipal office and abide by the respective legislation governing such elections.

3.4 Policy Management

The Clerk 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.

Nothing in this policy shall preclude a member of Council from performing their duties as a

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Councillor, nor inhibit them from representing their constituents.

The 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 Clerk, the amendments do not change the intent of the policy during an election period.