
Township of Sables-Spanish Rivers

Use of Corporate Resources Policy



Schedule A to Bylaw 2022-23

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 policy applies to:

- Any acclaimed member of Council
- Any member of Council not seeking re-election
- Any member of Council seeking re-election
- Any other election candidate
- Any employee of the Corporation of the Township of Sables-Spanish Rivers
- Any member of the public

Definitions

- a) Campaign contribution:** anything of value given to influence an election, may take the form of money, goods, or services.
- b) 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.
- c) 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.
- d) 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.

- e) **Corporate resources:** may include facilities, infrastructure, assets, equipment, supplies, services, staff or any resource that belongs to or is funded by the township.
- f) **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.

Procedure

Campaigning

- a. Campaigning is permitted no earlier than the filing of Nomination Papers by the candidate. Information contained in/on all campaign material is the responsibility of the candidate and any questions or concerns should be directed to the candidate.
- b. Election campaign activities are not permitted at the Township Office (located at 11 Birch Lake Road, Massey).
- c. Election campaign materials may not be displayed at Township of Sables-Spanish Rivers facilities, with the exception of road allowances, unless otherwise outlined in this procedure.
- d. Municipally owned or run assets and facilities, excluding the municipal office, 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 township 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 township's corporate values or established policies or procedures, or presents a health and safety concern.
- e. The township will not host, organize, or advertise all-candidates meetings or debates. With the exception of the municipal office, use of township 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.
- f. Registered candidates and registered third parties may attend township organized or funded events during a campaign period, but may not display or distribute any campaign materials, or engage in any election related activities.

Use of Corporate Resources During an Election Year

- a. The township 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 purpose.

- b. Registered candidates and registered third parties may not use photographs, videos, electronic images, or graphics, produced by the township or its affiliates.
- c. Use of photographs or videos not produced by the township 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 township 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 township 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 Social Media policy, the township will not publish any material used to promote individual political opinions or campaigns.

Access to Staff

In accordance with the Employee Code of Conduct, municipal staff, including any contractor providing services to the township 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 township.

Use of Municipal Technology & Services

- a) Websites, domain names, emails, or other corporate systems that are funded by the township shall not include any election-related campaign material or links to sites that feature election-related campaign material.
- b) Registered candidates, registered third parties, and Members of Council may not use the township website, domain names, and other corporate systems, for campaigning or display of any election-related materials. Links to the township's website are permitted from a campaign election website for the purpose of obtaining information about the election or sharing program/service information.

Non-Compliance with Policy

Candidates, Registered Third Parties and/or members of the public who are found to have contravened this policy may be guilty of an offence under the *Municipal Elections Act* and could be subject to the penalties contained therein or other related sanctions.