

Municipality of Grey Highlands <b>Corporate Policy</b>	Approved by Council: January 25, 2010 Amended by Council:
Policy No.: A09-C-04	<b>Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes</b>

### **General Policy Statement:**

The purpose of this policy to clarify that all election candidates, including members of Municipal Council are required to follow the provisions of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and that:

- No candidate shall use the facilities, equipment, supplies, services, staff or other resources of the Municipality (including Councillor newsletters and Councillor budgets) for any election campaign or campaign related activities.
- No candidate shall undertake campaign related activities on Municipal property during regular working hours.
- No candidate shall use the services of persons during hours in which those persons receive any compensation from the Municipality.

### **Application:**

This policy is applicable to all candidates, including members of Municipal Council.

### **Specific Policy:**

That, consistent with Grey Highlands Code of Conduct and in accordance with the provisions of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*:

- (a) Corporate resources, assets and funding may not be used for any election-related purposes;
- (b) Staff may not canvass or actively work in support of a municipal candidate or party during normal working hours unless they are on a leave of absence without pay, lieu time, float day, or vacation leave;

- (c) Candidates may not use any municipally-provided facilities for any election-related purposes. Neither campaign related signs nor any other election-related material will be displayed in any municipally-provided facilities;
- (d) The budgets for Members of Council for the period of January 1 to Election Day in a municipal election year be restricted to 11/12ths of the approved annual budget amount with the provision that subsequent to election day:
  - i. New Members of Council be allocated a budget equal to 1/12th of the approved budget amount for the month of December; and
  - ii. Re-elected Members of Council have available to them the balance of funds remaining as of Election Day.
- (e) The following be discontinued for Members of Council from the day prior to Nomination Day in a municipal election year to Election Day:
  - i. All forms of advertising, including in municipal publications;
  - ii. All printing, high speed photocopying and distribution, including printing and general distribution of newsletters unless so directed and approved by Council; and
  - iii. The ordering of stationery.
- (f) Members of Council may not:
  - i. Print or distribute any material paid 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;
  - ii. Profile (name or photograph), or make reference to, in any material paid by municipal funds, any individual who is registered as a candidate in any election; and
  - iii. Print or distribute any material using municipal funds that makes reference to, or contains the names or photographs, or identifies registered candidates for municipal elections; and that the Minutes of municipal Council and Committee meetings be exempt from this policy;
- (g) Members of Council are responsible for ensuring that the content of any communication material, printed, hosted or distributed by the Municipality of Grey Highlands, is not election-related;

- (h) Candidates may not print or distribute any election-related material using municipal funds;
- (i) In any material printed or distributed by the Municipality of Grey Highlands, candidates are not permitted to:
  - i. illustrate that an individual (either a Member of Council or any other individual) is a candidate registered in any election;
  - ii. identify where they or any other individual will be running for office;  
or
  - iii. profile or make reference to candidates in any election.
- (j) Web sites or domain names that are funded by the Municipality of Grey Highlands may not include any election-related campaign material;
- (k) The municipality's voice mail system may not be used to record election related messages or the computer network (including the Municipality's e-mail system) to distribute election related correspondence;
- (l) The municipality's logo, crest, coat of arms, slogan, etc may not be printed or distributed on any election materials or included on any election campaign related website, except in the case of a link to the Municipal web site to obtain information about the municipal election;
- (m) Photographs produced for and owned by the Municipality of Grey Highlands may not be used for any election purposes; and
- (n) The above recommendations also apply to an acclaimed Member or a Member not seeking re-election.

That, in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the Municipal Clerk be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect to this policy.

**Limitation:**

Nothing in this Policy shall preclude a Member of Council from performing their job as a Councillor, nor inhibit them from representing the interests of the constituents who elected them.

**Implementation:**

This policy shall become effective immediately upon approval by Municipal Council.

**Rationale and Legislative Authority:**

It is necessary to establish guidelines on the appropriate use of corporate resources during an election period to protect the interests of both the Members of Council and the Corporation. The *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* prohibits a municipality from making a contribution to a candidate. The Act also prohibits a candidate, or someone acting on the candidate's behalf, from accepting a contribution from a person who is not entitled to make a contribution.

As a contribution may take the form of money, goods or services, any use by a Member of Council of the Corporation's resources for his or her election campaign would be viewed as a contribution by the Municipality to the Member, which is a violation of the Act.