

Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes

**General Committee
January 22, 2017**

Background

- Staff presented draft Policy on Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes at December 5, 2017 General Committee meeting.
- Committee requested further discussion of the following :
 - Councillor Newsletters
 - Use of Councillor discretionary budgets
 - May 1st deadline for services provided to Councillors
 - Ability of Councillor Assistants to participate in political campaigns during non-work hours
- Staff requested to return to January 22, 2018 General Committee for further discussion on Policy.

Policy Guiding Principles

- To promote fairness and equity in the election process
- To comply with legislative requirements prohibiting municipalities from contributing to election campaigns
- To promote transparency and accountability in the use of City funds

Councillor Newsletters

- Local Councillors will be limited to one newsletter in a municipal election year. The newsletter must be printed prior to May 1.
- Regional Councillors will be limited to \$3,000 of their annual newsletter budget in a municipal election year. The expense for the newsletters must be submitted prior to May 1.
- Routine communication with residents regarding City business/issues are not considered newsletters for the purpose of this Policy.
- Social media posts relating to City business/issues are not considered newsletters for the purpose of this Policy.

Clarification on Budgets

- 3.2 The budget for Councillors in a Municipal Election year will be restricted to 11/12^{ths} of the approved annual discretionary budget amount.
 - Optional restriction: Councillors could be restricted to 4/12 of their annual discretionary budget from Jan. 1 – April 30 in a Municipal Election year.
 - The remaining 7/12 would be available for use from May 1 until the end of the Council term, subject to the restrictions outlined in this Policy.
- This option would ensure Councillor's do not overspend in the first four months in a municipal election year.
- After May 1st (and until Voting Day) expenses will be restricted in accordance with this Policy.
- Following Voting Day restrictions are no longer applicable.
- Re-elected Councillors will be provided access to the remaining 1/12 of the annual discretionary budget following Voting Day.

Discretionary Budgets in a Municipal Election Year

Time Period	Available Budget	Restrictions
Jan. 1 – April 30	4/12	None
May 1 – Nov. 30	7/12	Restrictions in place from May 1 - Oct. 22
Dec. 1 – Dec. 31	1/12*	None

Examples of Permitted Expenses from May 1 - Oct. 22 in a Municipal Election year:

- Mileage for travel undertaken for City business
- 407 charges for travel undertaken for City business
- Non-election related training seminars/conferences

**Re-elected Councillors will be provided access to the remaining 1/12 of their annual discretionary budget following Voting Day.*

Clarification on Budgets (Cont'd)

- 3.3 The budgets for Mayor and Councillors who are successfully elected to Provincial or Federal government will be prorated based on the month the Election occurs.
 - If a Provincial election occurs in June, and a Councillor is successfully elected, they would be required to reimburse the City for any expenses incurred in excess of 6/12ths of their budget.
 - If a Federal election occurs in September, and a Councillor is successfully elected, they would be required to reimburse the City for any expenses incurred in excess of 9/12ths of their budget.

Discretionary Budgets in a Provincial/Federal Election Year

Scenario 1: June Provincial Election in 2018 (combined with a municipal election)

Time Period	Available Budget	Restrictions
Jan – April	4/12	None
May – June	2/12	Restrictions in place starting May 1 due to municipal election year
July – Nov. 30	5/12	Restrictions in place due to municipal election year until Oct. 22*

** If successfully elected as an MPP Councillors would be required to reimburse the City for any expenses incurred in excess of 6/12ths of their budget.*

Discretionary Budgets in a Provincial/Federal Election Year

Scenario 2: September Federal Election in 2019

Time Period	Available Budget	Restrictions
Jan – Sept.	9/12	None
Oct.- Dec.	3/12	None*

** If successfully elected as an MP Councillors would be required to reimburse the City for any expenses incurred in excess of 9/12ths of their budget.*

May 1 Date for Discontinued Services

- May 1 was used in the Policy to align with the legislative changes made by the Province to the municipal Campaign Period.
 - New campaign period begins May 1 in a Municipal Election year.
 - Previous campaign period began January 1 in a Municipal Election year.
- In the previous policy the dates services discontinued ranged from April 30 – July 30 and this was confusing for the public.
- One date provides clarity for the public, once nominations open Councillors can no longer utilize certain services that provide them with a perceived or real advantage over other Candidates.
- One date provides consistency for the administration of the Policy.
- Restricting services beginning May 1 is consistent with practices amongst GTA municipalities.

Participation in Political Campaigns by Councillor Assistants

- At the December 5, 2017 General Committee meeting, questions were raised regarding the ability of Councillor Assistants to participate in political campaigns.
- Staff were requested to review the matter in light of employment contract wording, etc.
- As a result of the review, it has been determined that Councillor Assistants, like all City staff, are permitted to participate in political campaigns in their non-work hours. The Revised Policy reflects this.

Regulatory Realms

Use of Resources (Regulated)	Private Citizen Realm (Unregulated)	Election Realm (Regulated)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors have access to City resources to fulfill their duties as Councillors. • These resources include technology, newsletters, discretionary budgets etc. and can be used throughout their term to communicate and effectively resolve issues for residents. • The use of City resources is regulated via this Policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If acting as a private citizen this policy does not apply. • As a private citizen you could host an event or sponsor an event at your own personal expense and this policy would not apply. • If contributing personal money to any type of election campaign (whether it is your own or someone else's campaign) you are governed by the spending limits/donation limits outlined in the relevant legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City resources may not be utilized for election purposes. • Expenditures on election related items are regulated by legislation. • Candidates are required to file financial statements to account for campaign contributions and expenditures.

Recommendation

- 1) That the presentation titled, “Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes,” be received;
- 2) That Section 8 of the, “Business Conference and Expense Policy,” be repealed;
- 3) That the Policy titled, “Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes Policy,” be adopted; and further,
- 4) That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.