



## Otonabee – South Monaghan Public Library

Policy Type: **Operations**

Policy Title: **The Library and Political Elections**

Policy Number:

**OP-3**

Initial Policy Approval Date: 2018

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Chair Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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The library must act and, in a nonpartisan, especially during elections, while supporting the democratic process, freedom of expression, and informed discussion on political issues. The library must comply with legislation related to elections.

### Section 1: Legislation

*The Municipal Elections Act, 1996* requires local boards to establish rules and procedures for the use of contribution resources during the period (Clause 88.18) by May 1<sup>st</sup>, in the election year. It also prohibits local boards from contributing (including money, goods, and services) to any candidate, registered third-party advertiser or political party during an election (Clause 88.8(4) and 88.12(4)). The Election Finances Act, 1990 and the Canada Elections Act, S.C. 2000 impose contribution restrictions for provincial and federal election campaigns, respectively.

### Section 2: Responsibility and Application

1. This policy applies to library board trustees, library employees, and volunteers in interaction with candidates and political parties during the campaign periods for municipal, provincial, and federal elections.
2. It is the responsibility of the Library CEO to ensure that the library complies with legislation related to elections at all levels – municipal, provincial, and federal.

### Section 3: Use of Library Resources and Property

- 1) All candidates and political parties and third-party advertisers have equal access to publicly available resources and services of the library.
- 2) Rules for use of library resources and property as follows:
  - All candidates and political parties have equal access to publicly available resources and services of the library.

### **OP-3 The Library and Political Elections policy (continued)**

- Candidates cannot use equipment, supplies, employees, or other operational resources of the library nor may they use the library's logo in any campaign material.
- 'All-candidates' meetings can be held at the library, either as a library program or sponsored by another group, provided that all candidates are invited to attend such meetings. A candidate cannot be featured or promoted in association with any other regular library program or event.
- Candidates and political parties are permitted to distribute campaign materials on public right-of-ways at the library, unless prohibited by a municipal by-law.

### **OP-3 The Library and Political Elections policy (continued)**

- In accordance with the *Canada Elections Act* section 81.1(1) federal election candidates or their representatives are allowed to campaign in facilities that are available for free to the public. During municipal and provincial elections candidates will be granted the same right to campaign in the library.
- No election sign or poster specific to a candidate or political party can be posted on the grounds of the library.

## **Section 4: Campaign Contributions**

The library will comply with legislation on campaign contributions at all levels.

The Board may not contribute to the campaign of any candidate or political party in the form of money, goods, or services. This is in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, Section 88.8*.

## **Section 5: Employee and Volunteer Participation in Election Campaigns**

1. With respect to a municipal election, any library employee running as a candidate in the municipal election will comply with the entirety of Section 30 of the *Municipal Elections Act* which reads, in part  
"30 (1) An employee of a municipality or local board is eligible to be a candidate for and to be elected as a member of the council or local board that is the employer if he or she takes an unpaid leave of absence beginning as of the day the employee is nominated and ending on voting day. 1996, c. 32, Sched., s. 30 (1); 2002, c. 17, Sched. D, s. 9 (1)."
2. A library employee or volunteer involved in a political campaign must be politically neutral in carrying out his or her library duties during and must not participate in campaign activities during his or her working hours.
3. Library board trustees may continue their library board responsibilities when they are running for office.

## **OP-3 The Library and Political Elections policy (continued)**

### **Section 6: Requests for information about the library**

1. The CEO will coordinate requests for information about the library received from candidates or political parties.
2. Information that is provided by the library to one candidate or political party will be provided to all other candidates and political parties upon request during an election.
3. Any candidate or political party may request a meeting with the CEO or tour of the library.