



Otonabee – South Monaghan Public Library

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

Policy Number: **OP-03**
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Chair Signature: _____ Date: _____

Purpose

The Otonabee South Monaghan Public Library operates in a non-partisan manner and supports the democratic process, fundamental freedoms, and informed discussion on political issues. This policy applies to municipal, provincial, and federal election campaign periods.

Section 1: Scope and Responsibility

1. This policy applies to members of the Library Board, employees, and volunteers in:
 - a. their interactions with candidates and political parties; and
 - b. the use of Library resources during municipal election campaign periods.
2. The CEO or designate, is responsible for ensuring the Library's compliance with all applicable election-related legislation at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels.

Section 2: Use of Library Resources and Property

1. The Library shall ensure that no candidate, registered third-party advertiser, or political party is given preferential or unfair access to, or use of, Library resources at any time.
2. For municipal elections, the Library will establish rules and procedures regulating the use of its resources by May 1 of the election year, covering the period leading up to the election, in accordance with **Section 88.18 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (S.O. 1996, c. 32, Sched.)***.
3. Rules for use of Library resources and property are as follows:
 - a. All candidates and political parties shall have equal access to publicly available Library resources and services.
 - b. Library equipment, supplies, and staff resources shall not be used to support or assist any campaign activities.

- c. The Library's logo shall not be used in any campaign or promotional materials.
- d. All-candidates meetings may be held at the Library, either as a Library program or sponsored by external organization, provided that all candidates are invited. Candidates shall not be featured or promoted in connection with any other regular Library program or event.
- e. Candidates and political parties may distribute campaign materials on public rights-of-way at the Library, unless prohibited by a municipal by-law.
- f. In accordance with the **Canada Elections Act**, Section 81.1(1), federal election candidates and their representatives may campaign in Library spaces that are freely accessible to the public. The same access is extended to municipal and provincial candidates. All such activities must be coordinated with the CEO or designate to ensure they do not interfere with Library operations.
- g. In accordance with the **Community Information (OP-10) policy**, during an election period the Library will provide designated space for candidates to display up to 25 copies of their campaign materials, support public awareness of the election, and share general election information.
- h. Election signs or posters promoting specific candidates or political parties are not permitted on Library grounds or within Library building.

Section 3: Campaign Contributions

The Library complies with legislation on campaign contributions at all levels.

1. Municipal Elections

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 (4)**.

2. Provincial Elections

The Board may not contribute to the campaign of any candidate of a provincial election, constituency association, nomination contestant, candidates, and leadership contestant of provincial political parties in the form of money, goods or services. This is in accordance with the **Ontario Elections Finances Act, Section 16(1)**.

3. Federal Elections

The Board may not contribute to the campaign of any candidate of a federal election, a registered party, a registered association, nomination contestant, and leadership contestant of federal political parties in the form of money, goods or services. This is in accordance with the **Canada Elections Act, Section 363(1)**.

Section 4: Participation in Election Campaigns

1. A Library employee or volunteer involved in a political campaign must be politically neutral in carrying out their Library duties and must not participate in campaign activities during working hours.
2. A Library employee running as a candidate in a municipal election must comply with the ***Municipal Elections Act, Section 30.***
3. Board members may continue their Library board responsibilities running as a candidate in an election.
4. Acknowledgement of participation as a member of the Library Board is permissible by candidates as a point of description of their experience.

Section 5: Requests for Information about the Library

1. The CEO or designate representative, is responsible for managing and responding to all requests for information about the Library from candidates or political parties.
2. Any information provided to one candidate or political party must be made available to all other candidates and political parties upon request during the election period.
3. Candidates and political parties may request a meeting with the CEO or designate, or arrange a tour of the Library

Related Documents

OSM Public Library ***Intellectual Freedom Policy FN-04 Policy***

OSM Public Library ***Community Information and Information OP-10 Policy***

Canada Elections Act (S.C. 2000, c. 9)

Election Finances Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.7

Municipal Affairs Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.46

Municipal Elections Act, 1996, S.O. 1996, c. 32, Sched.