Whitby Public Library

# Library and Political Elections Policy

| | |
|---|---|
| **Policy Type:** | **Public** |
| **Authority/Created:** | **Library Board** |
| **Date Created:** | **May 16, 2018** |
| **Date Reviewed:** | **March 16, 2022** |

## Scope and Legal Framework

The Library must act and appear to act in a non-partisan way at all times, but 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. The **Municipal Elections Act,** Section 88.18 "Use of municipal, board resources" states:

> Before May 1 in the year of a regular election, municipalities and local boards shall establish rules and procedures with respect to the use of municipal or board resources, as the case may be, during the election campaign period.

This policy applies to Board members, employees and volunteers of the Library in their dealings with candidates and political parties and the use of library resources during the campaign periods for municipal elections. These rules and procedures will also be used for provincial and federal elections.

## 1. Campaign Contributions

**1.1.** In accordance with the **Municipal Elections Act**, Section, 88.8(4)5 the **Elections Finances Act**, Section 16(1), and **Canada Elections Act**, Section, 363(1) the Board may not make a contribution to the campaign of any candidate or political party in the form of money, goods or services.

## 2. Use of Library Resources and Property

**2.1.** All candidates and political parties have equal access to publicly available resources and services of the Library.

**2.2.** Meeting rooms may be rented in accordance with the Whitby Public Library's **Room Rental Policy**.

**2.3.** Candidates cannot use equipment, supplies, staff or other operational resources of the Library nor may they use the Library's logo in any campaign material.

**2.4.** 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.

**2.5.** In accordance with the Town of Whitby's **Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes Policy**, campaigning or campaign materials are not permitted in any Whitby Public Library facilities or properties. Campaigning on public sidewalks and highways is permitted, provided that such campaigning is in compliance with Town by-laws.

**2.6.** Notwithstanding Section 2.5 above, in accordance with the **Canada Elections Act (CEA)** subsection 81.1(1) federal election candidates or their representatives are allowed to campaign in facilities that are available for free to the public. However, further to subsection 81.1(2) of the CEA, campaigning within the Library is incompatible with its function and purpose as a neutral, non-partisan space. Therefore, federal election candidates may campaign on library property, but not within library facilities.

**2.7.** No election sign or poster specific to a candidate or political party can be posted on the grounds of the Library or in the library building, save and except as permitted by the Library's CEO during all-candidates' meetings in accordance with Section 2.4 above.

## 3. Employee and Volunteer Participation in Election Campaigns

**3.1.** Any library employee running as a candidate in the municipal election will comply with Section 30 of the **Municipal Elections Act**. A leave without pay shall be granted.

**3.2.** A library board member, employee or volunteer shall not:

- engage in Political Activity in the workplace;
- engage in Political Activity while wearing a library uniform, clothing or other identifier

- associate his or her position with campaign activities.

Political Activity shall mean:

a) Anything in support or opposition of a federal or provincial political party;

b) Anything in support or opposition of a candidate in a federal, provincial, or municipal election; or,

c) Being or seeking to become a candidate in a federal, provincial or municipal election.

# 4. Library Board Members as Candidates

**4.1** Board members may continue their library board responsibilities when they are running for office.

# 5. Requests for information about the Library

**5.1.** The CEO will coordinate requests for information about the Library received from candidates or political parties.

**5.2.** 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.

**5.3.** Any candidate or political party may request a meeting with the CEO or tour of the Library.