

The Corporation of the Township of North Huron

By-law No. 24-2026

Being a by-law to adopt a Use of Corporate Resources During an Election Policy for the Corporation of the Township of North Huron

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By-law No. 24-2026

**Being a by-law to adopt a Use of Corporate Resources During an Election Policy
for the Corporation of the Township of North Huron**

WHEREAS Section 5(3) of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25, as amended, provides that municipal power shall be exercised by by-law;

AND WHEREAS Section 88.18 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended, states that 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;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Township of North Huron is desirous of adopting a Use of Corporate Resources During an Election Policy for the Corporation of the Township of North Huron;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the Township of North Huron ENACTS as follows:

1. That the "Use of Corporate Resources During an Election Policy" attached hereto as Schedule "A" is hereby adopted and shall form part of this by-law.
2. That By-law No. 28-2022 be hereby repealed.
3. That this by-law shall come into force and takes effect on the day of the final passing thereof.

Read a first and second time this 7th day of April, 2026.

Read a third time and passed this 7th day of April, 2026.

Paul Heffer, Reeve

CORPORATE SEAL

Carson Lamb, Clerk



The Corporation of the Township of
North Huron

Use of Corporate Resources During an Election
Policy

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1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. The Township of North Huron acknowledges that it is responsible for providing good government for the community in an accountable, transparent and public manner.
- 1.2. Accountability and transparency are standards of good government that enhance public trust. They are achieved by adopting measures that ensure the Township of North Huron's processes and services are open and accessible to the public.

2. Purpose and Scope

- 2.1. The objective of this policy is to establish standards on the appropriate use of corporate resources during election periods, to protect the interests of Council Members, the Township and the public. This Policy is applicable to all Council Members whether or not the Member is seeking re-election.
- 2.2. Nothing in this Policy shall preclude Council Members from performing their job as elected officials of the Township, nor inhibit them from representing the interests of the constituents who elected them.
- 2.3. Section 88.18 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* states that "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." Therefore, the purpose of this policy is to clarify that Candidates, Third-Party Advertisers, and sitting Members of Council are required to follow the provisions of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, 1990*, the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Privacy Act, 1990*, the *Criminal Code*, the Council Code of Conduct and all applicable corporate policies regarding the use of corporate resources by Candidates, Third-Party Advertisers and sitting Members of Council and that:
 - a. No Candidate or Third-Party Advertiser shall use the facilities, equipment, supplies, services, Township Staff or other resources of the Township (including Council newsletters and Council budgets) for any election campaign purpose or campaign related activities;
 - b. No Candidate or Third-Party Advertiser shall undertake any election campaign or campaign related activities on Township property during regular working hours or during Council, Committee or Local Board meetings;
 - c. No sitting Member of Council shall use any equipment provided by the Township for any election campaign purpose or campaign related activities; and

- d. No Candidate, Third-Party Advertiser or sitting Member of Council shall use the services of Township Staff during hours in which those Staff receive any compensation from the Township, for any election campaign purpose or campaign related activities.

3. Review

- 3.1. This policy shall be reviewed every four (4) years and before May 1st in the year of a regular election. This policy will apply to each Municipal Election moving forward and may need to be amended from time to time depending on legislation changes.

4. Definitions

- 4.1. **“Campaign Related Activities”** means any activity conducted by or on behalf of a registered candidate, registered third-party advertiser, or question on a ballot meant to elicit support during an election period.
- 4.2. **“Campaigning”** means any activity by or on behalf of a candidate, political party or related to a question on a ballot meant to solicit support during the campaign period. Campaigning does not include the appearance of elected officials, other candidates, their supporters or registered third party advertisers at an event in a personal capacity without the display of any signage or graphic which identifies them as such and without the solicitation of votes.
- 4.3. **“Candidate”** means any person who has filed the prescribed nomination form to run in a Municipal, Regional, School Board, Provincial or Federal Election or By-Election or for a position in a political party, including anyone acclaimed to a position.
- 4.4. **“Election Period”** or **“Campaign Period”** means the specific duration during which an election campaign takes place, and includes the timeframe leading up to the actual voting date when political candidates or parties actively engage in campaigning to garner support from voters.
- 4.5. **“Member”** means a member of the Township of North Huron Council, including the Reeve, Deputy Reeve and Ward Councillors.
- 4.6. **“Nomination Day”** as defined in the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended*.
- 4.7. **“Political Advertising”** means advertising that takes a position on an issue that can reasonably be regarded as closely associated with a registered third-party or candidate.

- 4.8. **“Registered Third-Party Advertiser”** or **“Third Party-Advertiser”** means an individual, corporation or trade union, that has formally filed with the clerk of the municipality responsible for conducting the election a notice of registration to be a registered third party for the election in the prescribed form. The meaning of “third party” in this context means a person or entity who is not a candidate.
- 4.9. **“Social Media”** means websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. For the purpose of this policy, Social Media pertains to elections related activities.
- 4.10. **“Third-Party Advertising”** means advertisements or other materials that support, promote or oppose a candidate, or support, promote or oppose a “yes” or “no” answer to a question on the ballot. The meaning of “third party” in this context means a person or entity who is not a candidate.
- 4.11. **“Township Facilities”** means any buildings, properties, parks, rooms, or other parts therein, owned or operated by the Township of North Huron.
- 4.12. **“Township Staff”** means any individual working for, or receiving compensation from the Township of North Huron, including those in part-time, seasonal or contract positions; and volunteers while they are acting in an official capacity for the Township.

5. Policy Standards

- 5.1. In accordance with the provisions of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the following are standards established by the Township:
- a. Corporate resources and assets, including equipment, facilities, supplies, Township staff and funding, shall not be used by candidates or third-party advertisers for any election-related purpose, political advertising or campaign related activities;
 - b. Township Staff shall not canvass or actively work in support of a candidate, third-party advertiser, or political party during normal working hours, unless they are on a leave of absence without pay, lieu-time or vacation leave;
 - c. Candidates and Third-Party Advertisers shall not use the services of Township staff during hours in which those staff receive any compensation from the Township, for any election-related purpose, political advertising or campaign-related activities;
 - d. Candidates and Third-Party Advertisers shall not use any municipal facilities, or municipally-provided facilities for any election campaign purpose, political advertising, or campaign related activities, including but

not limited to the display of any campaign or election related materials or signs in the window or on the premises. All Candidates and Third-Party Advertisers shall adhere to any current or future by-laws relating to election signage;

- The Municipal Elections Act, 1996 states in Section 88.1 that “no person who is in control of an apartment building, condominium building, non-profit housing cooperative or gated community may prevent a candidate from campaigning between 9am and 9pm at the doors to the apartments, units or houses, as the case may be”;
- Section 88.2 (1) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 states that “no landlord or person acting on a landlord’s behalf may prohibit a tenant from displaying signs in relation to an election on the premises to which the lease relates”;
- Municipally-owned buildings which are used as rental properties would fall under this exception to section 5.1.(d) of this Use of Corporate Resources During an Election Policy.

5.2. Candidates and Third-Party Advertisers shall not:

- a. Print or distribute material paid by municipal funds that illustrate that an individual is registered in any election or where the candidate be running for office;
- b. Profile (name, photograph or image) or make reference to, in material paid by municipal funds, any individual who is registered as a candidate in any election; and
- c. Print or distribute material using municipal funds that makes reference to, or contains the names or photographs or images or identifies registered candidates for municipal elections.

5.3. Websites, domain names, and any/all social media platforms that are funded or operated by the Township shall not include any political advertising, third-party advertising, or election-related campaign material.

- a. Effective Nomination Day, individual Council Member biographical information and links to personal websites and/or social media sites shall be removed from the Township’s website or any communication channel.
- b. The online Candidate Election List is the only area of the Township’s website where a single link to an election campaign website, or social media site, will be posted during an election period.

- c. If a Member of Council, registered candidate or third-party advertiser uses any social media account for campaigning or third-party advertising, such account must not be created or supported by Township resources. Social media accounts used for campaign purposes must utilize personal cell phones, tablets and/or computers.
 - d. Members of Council, who choose to create or use social media accounts for campaigning must include, for the duration of the election period, a clear statement on each campaign website and/or social media account's home page (or profile) indicating that the account is being used for election campaign purposes and is not related to their duties as a current Member of Council.
- 5.4. Candidates are responsible for ensuring that the content of any communication material funded or resourced by the Township does not contain or allude to any election-related material including the name, photograph or identity of a registered candidate.
- 5.5. Council Members shall not use corporate information technology assets, infrastructure or data (i.e. computers, wireless devices, corporate email addresses, webpages, social media pages or telephones) to communicate election-related messages.
- a. It is recommended that Council Members include an auto-reply email message and voicemail message such as *“As a sitting Council Member, I must ensure that my actions as a candidate are kept separate from any actions related to the upcoming municipal election. As such, I will not be reading or responding to any campaign-related communications from you to this email address. Election campaign inquiries should be directed to my personal/campaign email and voicemail.”*
- 5.6. No photographic or video material created or funded by the Township shall be used in political advertising, third-party advertising, or election-related campaign material.
- 5.7. Candidates and Third-Party Advertisers are prohibited from using the Township's crest, logo, Coat of Arms, brand or slogan for any election related purpose in campaign-related material (either printed, social media or on a campaign website/social media site).
- 5.8. Permitting the use of Township Facilities for all-candidates meetings or debates is permissible, provided that the rental fee is paid (and in no way paid, or subsidized by the Township of North Huron) and all candidates for an office are invited to attend and participate.

- 5.9. Township Organized or Hosted Events: where a current Member of Council or an elected official is invited to an event, whether a Township event or a community event, in the capacity of their elected position, they are not to speak of their candidacy, their intention to run, or any campaign-related matters.
- 5.10. Candidates and registered third party advertisers, and their representatives may attend Township events in their capacity as private citizens, but shall not campaign while in attendance or distribute campaign related materials and they shall not promote or oppose candidacy of a person for elected office or political party.

6. Contact Information

- 6.1. For information regarding the application of this policy, please contact the Township of North Huron, Clerk's Department by phone 519-357-3550 or email at vote@northhuron.ca.

7. Reference Material

- 7.1. The Municipal Act, 2001
- 7.2. The Municipal Elections Act, 1996
- 7.3. The Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, 1990
- 7.4. The Municipal Freedom of Information and Privacy Act, 1990
- 7.5. The Council Code of Conduct
- 7.6. Criminal Code
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