

Section	Services	Section # :	4
Sub-Section:	Public Spaces	Sub-Section #: :	4.4
Topic	Library and Political Elections, Including Use of Library Resources during an Election	Policy #:	4.4.3

Purpose

While supporting the democratic process, freedom of expression and informed discussion on political issues, the Selwyn Public Library must act and appear to act in a non-partisan way at all times, but especially with regard to the election process. This policy is intended to clarify both the role of the Selwyn Public Library in political elections, and the appropriate use of Library resources during an election.

Policy

The Selwyn Public Library must comply with legislation related to elections. These regulations are included in the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 as amended by Bill 181, the Municipal Elections Modernization Act, 2016. Specifically, Clause 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, but these rules and procedures will also be used for provincial and federal elections.

Selwyn Public Library supports the principle of intellectual freedom, which is the free exchange of information and ideas in a democratic society. The Library provides welcoming, neutral, safe, and accessible environments inviting people to meet and interact with others and participate in public discourse.

During election campaigns, the Selwyn Public Library will maintain a neutral environment in which the Library will not make a contribution (including money, goods and services) or use Library resources to promote a political party, platform or one candidate over another.

A candidate could book a Township facility/property for a campaign event that they are hosting and could have campaign materials displayed in the room for the duration of the rental. They must book it, pay the fee and sign the agreement just like any other renter.

A candidate could not display materials at any other time – brochures in the Library, posters on windows or doors, standing in the park and giving out information etc...

Procedure

A. Campaign Contributions:

In accordance with the Municipal Elections Act, Section 70(4), the Elections Finances Act, Section 16(1), and Canada Elections Act, Section 404(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.

B. Use of Library Resources

1. Acceptable Use of Library Resources

The Right to vote is one of the greatest rights of a free society. This right is at the core of our democracy. Thus, the Library will support the democratic process by:

- Posting a list of candidates running for office in each branch, along with registration and voting information
- Providing equal access to publicly available resources and services of the Library
- In accordance with the Selwyn Public Library's Meeting Room Policy 4.4.1, a candidate could book a Library meeting room for a campaign event that they are hosting and could have campaign materials displayed in the room for the duration of the rental.
- Holding 'all-candidates' meetings 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
- Permitting a candidate, political party, registrant or supporter of a question on a ballot during an election to attend events held at Library facilities, in either their role as a current elected representative or as a private citizen, but not as a candidate

2. Unacceptable Use of Library Resources

Library resources may not be used to support, endorse or otherwise provide an unfair advantage to any candidate, political party, registrant or a supporter of a question on a ballot during an election. Thus, the Library will **not** allow:

- The use of facilities or property for campaign activities including the display of campaign posters, signs or flyers on Library property or in Library facilities, unless a meeting room has been booked as per the Selwyn Public Library Meeting Room policy 4.4.1
- Featuring or promoting candidates in association with any Library-sponsored program
- Featuring or promoting candidates in either internal or publicly distributed Library communications

- Use of photographic or video resources created by Library staff or with Library resources to be used in any campaign materials
- The dissemination of election materials or solicitation of votes by a candidate, political party, registrant, or supporter of a question on a ballot while attending a Library event in their role as a private citizen or elected representative
- Campaigning for candidates or political parties by Board members, staff, and volunteers during paid/volunteer duty hours with the Library. Those who want to work in support of a candidate or political party must do so outside of their working hours and must also clearly separate their political support from their role with the Library. They must not be identifiable as Library staff, volunteers, or Board member
- Library staff and volunteers to perform any service, offer any advice, or provide any information solely for the use of one candidate political party, registrant or candidate, political party, advocate, supporter, or opponent of a question on a ballot during an election under section 39.1 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 and in accordance with any other legislation governing elections, unless within the normal provision of service

Legislation & Policy Statements

Federal:

Canada Elections Act

Income Tax Act of Canada

Canada Revenue Agency Policy Statement CPS-022, Political Activities

Provincial

Election Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.6

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

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

Municipal

Sign By-law 2012-092 Section 4.6, Township of Selwyn

2022 Municipal Election Information for Candidates: Use of Corporate Resources During a Municipal Election Year, Township of Selwyn.

Attachments

Community Space & Public Meeting Rooms 4.4.1

History:		
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