

POLICY

**Policy Type:** Operational

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

**Signature**

**Chairperson** \_\_\_\_\_

**Policy No:** 01-05-2018

**Effective:** May 1, 2018

**Review Date:** April 2021

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## Section 1: Purpose, Legal Framework and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent approach and direction on how library resources can and cannot be used during municipal, provincial and federal election campaigns or questions on the ballot. It is also to ensure that GHPL is in compliance with relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the Canada Elections Act, the Province of Ontario Elections Act, and 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.*

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.

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 federal, provincial and municipal elections.

### Definitions:

- “Campaigning” means any activity by or on behalf of a candidate, political party registrant, advocate, supporter or opponent of a question on a ballot meant to elicit support during the election period. Campaigning does not include the appearance of elected officials, other candidates or their supporters, or registrants at an event in their personal capacity without the display of any signage or graphic that identifies the individual as a candidate or registrant and without the solicitation of votes.
- “Library Resources” include but are not limited to Library Employees and Volunteers, events, programs and services (including online services such as online and social media channels), facilities, equipment and supplies, funds, information, intellectual property and infrastructure. These are further defined as follows:

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- “Employee” means a person who is employed by the Library and includes all Employees, including Casual and contract staff.
- “Volunteer” means a person who voluntarily extends his or her services to actively support the Library, and who does so without remuneration.
- While Library Board Members volunteer their time and do not receive remuneration, for the purposes of this policy they will be referred to as Board Members as they have roles and responsibilities that are different from those of other volunteers.
- “Library Events” means events funded or organized by GHPL including events that may be jointly organized with community organizations and/or with external sponsors. Library events include, but are not limited to: community meetings and consultations, cultural celebrations, and special events.
- Events organized by agencies and corporations are not considered Library events for the purpose of this policy.
- “Library” Facilities means any facility that is owned or leased by the GHPL and that is directly managed and operated by the Library.

## Section 2: Campaign Contributions

1. 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.

## Section 3: Use of Library Resources and Property

1. All candidates and political parties have equal access to publicly available resources and services of the library.
2. Meeting rooms may not be used or rented for any election- related purposes during regular operating hours in accordance with the Municipality of Grey Highlands Policy no. A09-C-04 -**Use of Corporate Resources for Elections Purposes**.
3. Candidates may not use equipment, supplies, staff or other operational resources of the library nor may they use the library’s logo in any campaign material.
4. A candidate may not be featured or promoted in association with any other regular library program or event.

5. Websites or domain names, social media channels and tv channels that are funded by the Library will not include any campaign materials, make reference to and/or identify any individual as a candidate, political party, registrant, advocate, supporter or opponent of a questions on a ballot during an election, or profile any slogan or symbol associated with a candidate, political party, registrant or a supporter of a question on a ballot during an election.
6. Candidates and political parties are not permitted to distribute campaign materials on public right-of-ways at the library, in accordance to the Municipality of Grey Highlands Policy no. A09-C-04 -**Use of Corporate Resources for Elections Purposes.**
7. During Federal, Provincial and Municipal elections candidates may not campaign in the library.
8. 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.

### **Section 4: Employees, Board members and Volunteer Participation in Election Campaigns**

1. Any library employee running as a candidate in the municipal election will comply with Section 30 of the *Municipal Elections Act*.
2. A library employee or volunteer involved in a political campaign must be politically neutral in carrying out his or her library duties and must not participate in campaign activities during his or her working hours.
3. A Library Board Member may not use his or her position on the Board to influence Board Members, Employees or Volunteers for the benefit of a specific candidate, political party, registrant or a supporter of a question on a ballot during an election

### **Section 5: Library Board Members as Candidates**

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

### **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.

## **Section 7: ACCOUNTABILITY**

Should any written complaint arise regarding the alleged use of Library resources in contravention of this policy, the CEO and Chief Librarian, or his or her designate, shall have the delegated authority to investigate it and resolve any issues.

### **Related Documents:**

#### **Grey Highlands Public Library Facilities Use Policy**

##### **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**

Municipality of Grey Highlands Policy no. A09-C-04 -**Use of Corporate Resources for Elections Purposes.**