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Subject: Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes	Effective Date: May 26, 2010
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Corporation of the Municipality of French River Policy for the Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent approach and direction regarding the use of Corporate Resources during the election Campaign Period in accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to all Members of Council, Candidates, Registered Third Parties in a municipal election, and Staff during a Campaign Period.

This Policy is intended to:

- i) ensure compliance with the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, with respect to the role of the Municipal contribution to a municipal and trustee election campaign;
- ii) ensure Candidates and Registered Third Parties are treated fairly and consistently within the Municipality;
- iii) ensure the integrity of the election process is maintained at all times;
- iv) establish the appropriate use of resources during an election period, in order to:
 - a. protect the interests of Members of Council, Candidates, Registered Third Parties, Staff and the Corporation; and
 - b. ensure accountable and transparent election practices.

DEFINITIONS

“Campaign Period” for a Candidate is the date on which the nomination is filed until December 31 in the year of a regular election, and 45 days after voting day in the case of a by-election, unless a request for extension of campaign period has been filed. See section 88.24 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

“Campaign Period” for a Registered Third Party is the date on which the registration as a third party advertiser is filed until December 31 in the case of a regular election, and 45 days after voting day in the case of a by-election, unless a request for extension of campaign period has been filed. See section 88.28 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

“Candidate” means a person who has filed a nomination, and not withdrawn that nomination, for an office pursuant to section 33 of the Act, and includes a person who has filed a nomination for election to a school board pursuant to the *Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2*, as amended.

“Clerk” means the Clerk of the Municipality of French River.

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“**Corporate Resources**” means real property, goods and/or services owned, controlled, leased, acquired, or operated by the Municipality including but not limited to: facilities, parks, materials, equipment, monetary funds, technology, Municipal IT system and resources, databases, social media, intellectual property, and supplies.

“**Members of Council**” means the Council of the Municipality of French River.

“**Municipality**” means The Corporation of the Municipality of French River.

“**Nomination Day**” for a regular election is the third Friday in August in the year of the election, as prescribed by the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

“**Registered Third Party**” means an individual, corporation or trade union that has filed a registration as a third party advertiser in the municipal election.

“**Staff**” means all full-time, part-time and contract persons hired by the Municipality.

“**Voting Day**” in a regular election, is the fourth Monday in October in the year of the election, or in the case of a by-election, the 45th day after Nomination Day, as noted in section 5 and subsection 65(4) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

POLICY

1. In accordance with the provisions of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, as amended, Members of Council, Candidates, and/or Registered Third Parties in a Campaign Period are not permitted to:
 - a) use the equipment, supplies, services, staff or other resources of the Municipality (for any election campaign or campaign related activities;
 - b) use municipal facilities or property for campaign events unless the facility or property is rented in accordance with Municipal Rental Agreements and the appropriate rates are paid by the Candidate or Registered Third Parties. Notwithstanding the foregoing, no facility/property shall be rented or used for any municipal election related purpose by members of Council, Candidates, Registered Third Parties, or the public during any day that voting is taking place on the property, including the set-up, hosting or take-down activities;
 - c) Use Municipal funds to acquire resources for any campaign related activities, including order of stationery and office supplies;
 - d) Use Municipal funds to print or distribute any material that makes reference to, or contains the names or photographs, or identifies Candidates or Registered Third Parties.
 - e) Use the Municipal logo, crest, or corporate program identifiers on any election campaign related material, either printed or on a campaign website. This includes any Municipal election log and any related identifiers;

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- f) Use any municipal facility or property for any campaign related activities, which includes displaying of any campaign related signs and/or material;
- g) Use any Council or Councillor Budgets for election-related purposes or to advertise, promote or support any Candidate, Registered Third Party or any position related to any questions which may be authorized to be placed on the ballot;
- h) Benefit from the use of any corporate pricing established under the Municipality’s Purchasing Policy;
- i) Use corporate Information Technology (IT) assets, infrastructure, or data (e.g. computers, wireless devices, portals, corporate email, web sites, domain names, blogs, telephone) to communicate election related messages.

Note: The Clerk will include the contact information for Candidates and Registered Third Parties on the Municipality’s website, on the “Municipal Elections” page of the Municipal website during the Campaign Period.

- j) The above recommendations also apply to an acclaimed Member or a Member not seeking re-election; and

2. The following services will be discontinued for Members of Council who are Candidates as of the end of Nomination Day:
 - a) all forms of advertising, including in municipal publications (i.e. paper or web-based);
 - b) all printing, photocopying and distribution of publications, such as newsletters, with the exception of communications specifically related to an authorized or scheduled Municipal event (i.e. public meeting);
 - c) the ordering of office furniture and furnishings, except those of an emergency nature, as well as no movement of furniture and furnishings; and
 - d) the ordering of stationery and business cards.

3. The Budgets for Members of Council for the period January 1 to Voting Day in a municipal election year be restricted to 11/12ths of the approved annual budget amount with the provision that subsequent to Voting Day:
 - a) new Members of Council be allocated a budget equal to 1/12th of the approved budget amount for the month of December; and
 - b) re-elected Members of Council have available to them the balance of the funds remaining as of Voting Day.

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4. Candidates, Registered Third Party and Staff Conduct

- a) A Member of Council attending an event as a representative of Municipal Council is not permitted to campaign while conducting Municipal business. A Member of Council may speak at an event as a representative of Municipal Council, but is not permitted to use the event as an opportunity to campaign.
- b) Candidates or Registered Third Parties are not permitted to engage in campaign activities directed at Municipal Staff while those Staff are at their workplace or engaged in work for the Town.
- c) Staff may not perform any work in support of a Candidate or Registered Third Party during hours in which the Municipal Staff is receiving any compensation from the Municipality, except during scheduled time off (i.e. vacation, leave of absence without pay, lieu time). Municipal Staff shall not post or distribute campaign material on behalf of a Candidate or Registered Third Party at Municipal Facilities or on Municipal Property.

EXCLUSIONS

It is recognized that Members of Council are holders of their office until the end of the Council term. Nothing in this Policy shall preclude a Member of Council from performing their job as a Councillor, nor inhibit them from representing the interests of the constituents who elected them.

CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

The Municipal Clerk is authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect to this policy.

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW CYCLE

This policy will be reviewed by the Municipal Clerk in time for the next election year and will be updated in accordance with legislative requirements.

This policy is approved by Resolution No 2022-58 of the Council of The Municipality of French River, this 6th day of April, 2022.