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Policy Title:	The Library and Political Elections	Initial Policy Approval Date:	April 26, 2018
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The Mississippi Mills Public Library operates in a non-partisan manner at all times, and supports the democratic process, fundamental freedoms and informed discussion on political issues. This policy applies to municipal, provincial and federal election campaign periods.

Section 1: Scope and Responsibility

1. This policy applies to Board members, employees and volunteers:
 - a. in their dealings with candidates and political parties, and
 - b. the use of library resources during the campaign periods for municipal elections
2. It is the responsibility of the CEO/Chief Librarian or designate to ensure that the Library complies with legislation related to elections at all levels – municipal, provincial, and federal.

Section 2: Use of Library Resources and Property

1. It is the responsibility of the Library to ensure that no candidate, registered third-party advertiser or political party is provided with an unfair advantage in the use of library resources at any time.
2. For municipal elections, by May 1st in the election year, the Library will establish the rules and procedures with respect to use of library resources during the period leading up to the municipal election. This requirement is found in the ***Municipal Elections Act, 1996, S.O. 1996, c. 32, Sched.***, Section 88.18.
3. Rules for use of library resources and property are as follows:
 - a) All candidates and political parties have equal access to publicly available resources and Library services.
 - b) Meeting rooms may be rented in accordance with the **Mississippi Mills Public Library Facilities Operations Policy (OP-07)**.

- c) Library equipment, supplies, or personnel cannot be provided to candidates for campaign purposes.
- d) The Library's logo cannot be used in any campaign material.
- e) All-candidates meetings might 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 shall not be featured or promoted in association with any other regular library program or event.
- f) Candidates and political parties are permitted to distribute campaign materials on public right-of-ways at the Library, unless prohibited by a municipal by-law.
- g) In accordance with the **Canada Elections Act section 81.1 (1)** federal election candidates or their representatives are allowed to campaign in facilities that are available for free to the public. During municipal and provincial elections candidates are granted the same right to campaign in the Library. Such activities must be coordinated with the CEO/Chief Librarian or designate to avoid any conflict with regular or planned library operational needs.
- h) In accordance with the **Mississippi Mills Public Library Facilities Operations (OP-07) policy**, during an election the library provides an area where candidates may make available up to 25 copies of their campaign brochure; promotes awareness of the election; and provides general information on elections.
- i) No election sign or poster specific to a candidate or political party can be posted on the grounds of the Library or displayed in the library building.

Section 3: Campaign Contributions

The Library complies with legislation on campaign contributions at all levels.

1. Municipal Elections

The Board **may not** contribute to the campaign of any candidate or political party in the form of money, goods or services. This is in accordance with the **Municipal Elections Act, Section 88.8 (4)**

2. Provincial Elections

The Board **may not** contribute to the campaign of any candidate of a provincial election, constituency association, nomination contestant, candidates, and leadership contestant of provincial political parties in the form of money, goods or services. This is in accordance with the Ontario **Elections Finances Act, Section 16(1)**

3. Federal Elections

The Board **may not** contribute to the campaign of any candidate of a federal election, constituency association, nomination contestant, candidates, and leadership contestant of federal political parties in the form of money, goods or services. This is in accordance with the Canada **Elections Act, Section 363(1)**

Section 4: Participation in Election Campaigns

1. A Library employee or volunteer involved in a political campaign must be politically neutral in carrying out their library duties and must not participate in campaign activities during working hours.
2. A Library employee running as a candidate in a municipal election must comply with the ***Municipal Elections Act, Section 30***.
3. Board members may continue their library board responsibilities running as a candidate in an election.

Section 5: Requests for Information about the Library

1. The CEO/Chief Librarian or designate coordinates 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 is also 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/Chief Librarian or designate or make a tour of the Library.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- *Canada Elections Act* (S.C. 2000, c. 9)
- Election Finances Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.7
- Municipal Affairs Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.46
- Municipal Elections Act, 1996, S.O. 1996, c. 32, Sched.
- Mississippi Mills Public Library Policies
- Ontario Library Service (OLS), Trillium Public Library: Sample Policies
 - Trillium Public Library ***SC-01 Intellectual Freedom***
 - Trillium Public Library ***OP-08 Meeting Rooms***
 - Trillium Public Library ***OP-09 Community Information***