

OBTAINING INFORMATION FROM STAFF

Requests For Information and Communication with Candidates/Potential Candidates and Third-Party Advertisers

Staff is to remember the formal relationship which exists between The Township of Tudor and Cashel' candidates/potential candidates and third-party advertisers. To ensure the protection of the integrity of the election process, a procedure for the Use of Corporate Resources during an Election Year has been established to provide a common and anonymous process for candidates/potential candidates and third-party advertisers to request information for use during their campaign and to ensure that municipal staff is able to maintain their neutrality.

Enforcement

This policy must be strictly monitored and enforced. Staff who contravenes this policy may be subject to disciplinary action. Any concerns of non-compliance are to be brought to the attention of the Clerk immediately. Nothing in this Policy shall preclude a Member of Council from performing their job as a Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Councillor, nor inhibit them from representing their interests of the constituents who elected them.

Policies/Legislation

Municipal Elections Act, 1996
Ontario Municipal Act, 2001
Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, 1990
Bill 212

Procedure: Use of Corporate Resources During an Election Year

The purpose of this policy is to set out guidelines and expectations for existing members of Tudor and Cashel Council, staff, candidates, potential candidates and third-party advertisers to follow during municipal election campaigns including the provisions of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

This Policy also ensures that the Municipality's operations, events, and facilities are used for non-partisan purposes and are not used for election campaign related purposes/activities.

This policy will clarify that all Tudor and Cashel staff shall maintain the highest standards of ethical conduct throughout the election campaign period, generally recognized as beginning with the municipal election candidate registration date, being **May 2nd, through to Voting Day**, in a Municipal Election year.

To maintain fairness and transparency for all existing members of Council, candidates, potential candidates and third-party advertisers during the nomination and campaign period for the Municipal Election, the following procedure shall be utilized for answering any questions related to municipal operations:

- 1) All staff, existing Council, candidates and third-party advertisers will be provided with a copy of this procedure.
- 2) A copy of this procedure will be placed on the municipal website (election

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page).

- 3) The Clerk's department will provide notification to staff by e-mail when a candidate has filed their nomination papers. Department Heads and/or Managers are to provide the information to any of their staff who the municipality does not have email addresses for or do not have access to e-mail.
- 4) Candidates/potential candidates and third-party advertisers are requested to not ask questions directly of municipal staff regarding the operations of the municipality for campaign purposes.
- 5) No candidate/potential candidate or third-party advertiser shall compel staff to engage in partisan political activities or subject staff to threats or discrimination for refusing to engage in such activities.
- 6) All municipal staff has been directed to not respond directly to questions from candidates/potential candidates or third-party advertisers regarding the operations of the municipality for campaign purposes, but rather to refer all questions to the Clerk's department.
- 7) Questions shall be posed in writing addressed to the Clerk's department. The preferred method of contact shall be by email to election@tudorandcashel.com
- 8) The Clerk/Deputy Clerk shall remove any email addresses, or identifying information and immediately circulate the question to the appropriate Department Head for a response, if needed.
- 9) Where the Clerk/Deputy Clerk determines that:
 - a. The question requires more research time or, where appropriate, staff are not available to respond within a reasonable time, the candidate/potential candidate or third-party advertiser will be provided with an estimate of when the response will be available;
 - b. The question cannot be answered appropriately, for whatever reason, the Clerk/Deputy Clerk shall immediately inform the candidate/potential candidate or third-party advertiser that an answer will not be forthcoming and shall provide a reason for such a decision.
- 10) The Clerk/Deputy Clerk shall respond by e-mail to the candidate/potential candidate or third-party advertiser who originally asked the question.
- 11) Once a response has been provided, clarification may be requested of the Clerk/Deputy Clerk who will follow the above process.
- 12) Questions and answers will then be shared via personal email address to all candidates/potential candidates and third-party advertisers.
- 13) Questions and answers will be posted on the municipal website under 2022 Election, under the Frequently Asked Questions tab (FAQ) at the Clerk's department's earliest convenience, to ensure fairness to all.
- 14) A candidate/potential candidate, third party advertiser or member of the public

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may not use any corporate facility/property for any election-related purpose unless a market value rental fee has been established and the rental of such is available to all candidates/potential candidates and third-party advertisers to attend the event e.g. "All Candidates Meeting(s).

- 15) A candidate/potential candidate or third-party advertiser may not use municipal materials, municipal branding or visual identity, municipal crest or logo, (e.g. municipal business cards and logo jackets) equipment, technology, municipal email and supplies for election **campaigning and advertising**.
- 16) Tudor and Cashel Council shall not use their municipal email addresses for **campaigning**. All campaign-related email will be directed to and from their personal email address during the campaign period.
- 17) To avoid any confusion with any website or social media accounts used for Council work, members of Council who choose to create or use their own websites or social media accounts shall throughout the period from **May 1st of the municipal election year until Voting Day**, include a clear statement, easily found and readable, on each website or social media account's home or bio page indicating that the account is being used either:
 - solely for Council work
 - for both Council work and/or election campaign purposes; or
 - solely for election campaign purposes
- 18) Only the photos and contact phone and/or email posted for each member of Council at the commencement of each term shall remain on the corporate website. Links to Council member-related web sites or social media links will be removed during the campaign period.