

Request for Decision United Townships of Head, Clara & Maria Council

Type of Decision									
Meeting Date	Friday, February 21, 2014				Report Date	Tuesday, December-17-13			
Decision Required	X	Yes		No	Priority	X	High		Low
Direction	X	Information Only			Type of Meeting	X	Open		Closed

Clerk's - Report #21/02/14/801

Subject: AMCTO Elections Training, Bonnechere Valley, January 29, 2014

This is a report of preliminary elections training in preparation of a municipal election in 2014. The information is not important for Council to understand but is included as a requirement of any training... to present a report to Council. The notes are mainly for the Clerk.

Section 4 includes areas which Council has input on. All others are legislated to be at the discretion of the Clerk.

1. Importance of knowing the legislation – need to know where to find what you need to answer questions, not necessarily to know all the answers.
2. Sources of information – the Act, regulations, forms, MMAH guides, MMAH Candidates Guide and Voter's Guide, municipal procedure manual. Important for candidates and staff.
3. All discretionary authorities need to be addressed in the procedure manual. Make sure you've thought about it and begin to set a plan to deal with it. Whatever it may be.
4. There are a few issues which Council needs to consider and may pass by-laws for including:
 - i. Language of Notices and Forms, MEA s.9 – Not an issue in HCM;
 - ii. E-filing of Financial Statements, MEA s. 14,78 & 88(9)
 1. Council may pass a by-law authorizing the submission of Financial Statements electronically.
 2. If could would like to consider this option further, please provide direction.
 - iii. Contribution Rebates, MEA s.82
 1. This issue concerns financial contributions to election campaigns and the rebate of same so that they are not forfeited to the municipality after all election/audit periods expire.
 2. In the past, funds in surplus of campaign costs could be held by the municipality and returned to the candidate for the next election. This is no longer the case. Funds are now forfeited to the municipality.
 3. Personal contributions to campaigns by the candidate and/or their spouse may be refunded without this provision.

4. Staff do not believe this is an issue in HCM however; should you wish to make provision for rebates we can look at it.
- iv. Compliance Audit Committee, MEA s. 81
 1. Report #21/02/14/1206 addresses this issue with a request for other County municipalities to request that this process might be better served at the County level;
- v. Lame Duck contingency plan, MA s. 275(1) –
 1. The only issue which may require attention during the Lame Duck period (if it occurs) is the replacement of the Clerk/CAO.
 2. All other positions including those of the offices of Treasurer and CBO, although eventually appointed by a by-law of Council can be hired by the Clerk/CAO through designated authorities already provided.
 3. Any routine purchases or dispositions in excess of \$50,000 are either considered and planned for in our budget or would fall under Emergency Management criteria and again are provided for.
5. June 1, 2014 is the date that the Municipal Elections Procedure Manual is to be presented to Council by. Review is underway.
6. December 1, 2014 is the beginning of the new term.
7. Only original signatures may be used on all election forms.
8. During the election process the Clerk is working for the voter, not Council. Although Council has input on a few issues, they are ultimately the responsibility of the Clerk. During elections, the Clerk is responsible for declaring an emergency for election purposes and in determining all necessary steps to take to ensure the validity of the vote.
9. There are no new changes to the Municipal Elections Act however; there are some changes in the reg's.
 - a. New forms must be dated November 2013. Old forms are no longer valid.
 - b. ID requirements have changed. Must be original, no copies. ID must include a name and qualifying address. Be careful with Health Cards. Some versions do not have an address.
 - c. Make sure you provide written delegated authority to DRO's to complete the Declaration of Identification if the individual has no ID.
10. Plan for Accessibility
 - a. Not only do we need to plan and prepare for accessibility at every voting place, we must also communicate that we have prepared and planned.
 - b. Needs can and will be accommodated for both the Voter and the Candidate.
 - c. Need to make sure that all election workers receive the Accessible Customer Service training given to all other employees. Have a package prepared for new employees. Locate on-line training; it is available. Keep records of everyone who has taken the training.
11. Principles of the Act – add the list to the beginning of our Procedure Manual and include with Nomination packages.
12. Hunt camps/cottages – only the person on the lease which will show up on the preliminary list of electors can vote. Adult children, those who the lease has been “passed down to” are

not authorized even if they pay the taxes and spend all their time there. Proxy rules may apply.

13. The Preliminary List of Electors will arrive. The Clerk can use resources at hand to update the PLE. Clerk has the authority to correct the list prior to certifying it. After certification, the EL15 form must be used to make amendments.
14. **To Do** - With nomination should have information ready for candidate. Include the Council Code of Conduct, an example of a receipt for campaign contributions, list of Principles of the Act and a list of disqualifications which the candidate should sign prior to completing his/her nomination form. A Withdrawal form should be included in Nomination package.
15. Contribution Rebates – Council has a right to pass this type of by-law. Do not have access to money after any court costs etc. It becomes the property of the municipality. By-law allows portion of the funds to go back to the candidate. Can no longer use surpluses for the next election. There should be a minimum of \$100 or it's not worth the effort.
16. Certification of Nominations should be completed on Certification date and not before.
17. Notice of Declaration of Election should include Advance Vote info, Voting hours, Proxy and Methods of Voting information as well.
18. Clerk sets rules for hiring elections staff. Greeters may be used in busy locations to make sure that people have proper ID and to direct people to the correct poll.
19. For all Proxies, the Clerk should use a stamp or other distinguishable notation to identify which form you have actually signed to prevent fraudulent practises.
20. A list of proxies signed should be provided to all DROs.
21. Ballots s/b reverse printed.
22. Destroy all ballots plus all other docs as you deem possible/probable at agreed upon time
23. Freedom of Information – access to election documents refused as personal information. The IPC upheld the decision. Clerk is responsible for protecting the documents.
24. After the election
 - a. Provide a list of revision to MPAC asap.
 - b. Pay officers
 - c. 90 days, accessibility report to Council
 - d. Debrief for 2018
25. Pros/Cons of Vote by phone/internet
 - a. Elimination of proxies.
 - b. Increase in # of people who will vote simply due to convenience.
 - c. Won't increase opportunities for people who would otherwise not vote. No additional incentive.
26. Hold training session – record so that they can be shared and reviewed prior to Election Day. Send a copy with trainees so they can listen at their leisure.
27. Training Election Staff

- a. Accessible Customer Service training package.
- b. Check for existing web training.
- c. Sign off sheet available to record accessibility training.
- d. Those with experience have preference.

28. Procedures

- a. Principles of the Act – include as intro.
- b. Change list of required ID
- c. Review wages for DRO and poll Clerks

29. Spoiled ballots

- a. If the mark is beside the circle but the **INTENT IS CLEAR** it should be counted.
- b. Hesitation marks will void a ballot.
- c. On a composite ballot – if one section is ruined, the other section should still be counted.

30. Alternate methods of voting

- a. Traditional – need more staff, lower voter turnout
- b. Mail – reduced staffing, additional resources, higher voter participation
- c. Telephone and Internet – no proxy, no advance polls, no ID required, ease of access, accessibility issues alleviated.

Approved and Recommended by the Clerk

Melinda Reith,
Municipal Clerk