

**POL-SYS.2018.50****Title: The Library and Political Elections**

<b>Type:</b>	System
<b>Authority:</b>	Board
<b>Resolution No:</b>	BMPL 2018-92 on 4-26-18; POL-SYS.2018.50 POL.SYS.2018.89
<b>Associated Documents:</b>	Municipal Elections Act, 1996 Municipal Elections Modernization Act, 2016 Use of Corporate Resources for Election Purposes [Town POL.COR.18.01]
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**SYS.2018.50.1****Policy Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Blue Mountains Public Library (BMPL) operates in a non-partisan manner while supporting the democratic process, fundamental freedoms, and informed discussion during municipal, provincial, and federal election periods.

This policy establishes guidelines for political activities, the use of BMPL spaces and resources, and the conduct of Board members, staff, and volunteers, in accordance with applicable legislation, including the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and the *Municipal Elections Modernization Act, 2016*.

**SYS.2018.50.2****Scope**

This policy applies to:

- Library Board members;
- Employees and volunteers;
- Candidates, political parties, and third-party advertisers; and
- The use of BMPL property, resources, services, communications, and facilities during election periods.

**SYS.2018.50.3****Guiding Principles**

BMPL shall:

1. Maintain political neutrality in all Library and Museum operations, communications, and services.
2. Provide equitable access to publicly available spaces and services.
3. Support civic literacy and informed public engagement.
4. Uphold intellectual freedom and freedom of expression within the limits of the law; and
5. Ensure compliance with applicable legislation governing elections and public sector resources.

**SYS.2018.50.4****Use of BMPL Library Space and Resources**

1. No candidate, registered third-party advertiser, or political party shall be provided with an unfair advantage in the use of BMPL resources at any time.

2. Meeting rooms may be rented for campaign-related activities, including all-candidates meetings, provided:
  - Access is provided equitably;
  - Rentals comply with BMPL policies;
  - All applicable fees are paid; and
  - The event does not interfere with regular operations.
3. All candidates' meetings may be organized by the BMPL or external organizations, provided all confirmed candidates are invited to participate.
4. A candidate, political party, or campaign shall not be featured or promoted as part of a regular BMPL program, service, or event.
5. In accordance with section 81.1(1) of the *Canada Elections Act*, federal candidates and their representatives are permitted to campaign in facilities that are open to the public without charge. During municipal and provincial elections, BMPL shall provide equitable access to publicly accessible areas in accordance with applicable legislation and municipal by-laws.
6. BMPL may provide space for election-related informational materials in accordance with the *Community Information Policy*.
7. Election signs, campaign posters, or partisan displays shall not be installed or posted on BMPL property except where permitted under applicable legislation or municipal by-law.
8. Public internet and Wi-Fi services may be used for lawful political communication in accordance with Library technology and acceptable use policies.

#### **SYS.2018.50.5 Prohibited Use of Library Resources**

1. BMPL resources shall not be used to support or oppose any political campaign, candidate, party, or political viewpoint.
2. Prohibited uses include:
  - Use of staff time for campaign purposes;
  - Use of branding, logos, mailing lists, or communications platforms for partisan activities;
  - Distribution of partisan materials by staff while acting in an official capacity;
  - Political endorsements made on behalf of the BMPL;
  - Use of equipment, supplies, or operational resources for campaign purposes; and
  - Preferential treatment toward any candidate, party, or campaign.

#### **SYS.2018.50.6 Employees and Volunteers**

1. Employees and volunteers retain the right to participate in the political process as private citizens.
2. While working or representing the BMPL, employees and volunteers shall not:
  - Display or distribute partisan materials;
  - Wear campaign-related clothing, buttons, or promotional items;
  - Advocate for or against a candidate, political party, or campaign; or
  - Use their position to influence political support.
3. Nothing in this policy prohibits respectful, lawful political expression by individuals acting in a personal capacity outside of working hours.

#### **SYS.2018.50.7 Library Board Members as Candidates**

1. Board members shall continue to comply with all applicable legislation, Board policies, and conflict of interest requirements during election periods.
2. Board members who are candidates for elected office remain members of the Board unless otherwise disqualified under applicable legislation.

3. Board members running for office:
  - Shall not receive preferential treatment or additional access to BMPL resources;
  - Shall not use their Board position to support campaign activities; and
  - Shall not use Board meetings, BMPL communications, or BMPL events to promote their candidacy, except where participation is part of a non-partisan election-related event, such as an all-candidates meeting or debate.

**SYS.2018.50.8 Campaign Contributions**

In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the *Election Finances Act*, and the *Canada Elections Act*, BMPL shall not contribute money, goods, services, or resources to any political candidate, political party, campaign, or third-party advertiser.

**SYS.2018.50.7 Requests for Information about the Library**

1. Requests for information from candidates, political parties, or campaigns shall be coordinated through the CEO or designate.
2. Information provided by the BMPL to one candidate or political party shall be made equally available to all other candidates or parties upon request.
3. Candidates or political parties may request meetings or tours of BMPL facilities and services, subject to operational availability.