

STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

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DATE: July 30, 2022

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: MAUREEN CONNELLY, MANAGER OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES/
CORPORATE OFFICER

SUBJECT: Campaign School

ATTACHMENT(S): Appendix "A" – Election Resources for Candidates

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION the report dated July 30, 2022 from the Manager of Legislative Services/Corporate Officer titled "Campaign School."

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with options regarding a campaign school to encourage candidates from diverse backgrounds to consider running in the upcoming 2022 General Local Election, as directed at the June 27, 2022 regular Council meeting.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

Campaign schools consist of a series of educational workshops used to promote diversity in municipal governance through the provision of encouragement, support, information, and tools needed for prospective election candidates. Their primary focus is running for office, undertaking campaigns, and leading effectively once elected. Their main goals are to move toward more representative government that includes women, marginalized and underrepresented groups. Topics addressed in the workshops typically include pre-campaign information such as role descriptions and time commitments, campaign planning including budget, fundraising, and canvassing, election day information including rules for the polling stations, role of scrutineers, election outcomes, and post-election activities, and, communications including campaign literature and media relations.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has been at the forefront of these campaign school initiatives through research, advocacy and programming and has maintained a focus on gender parity and women in local government. In 2014 FCM held a campaign school and political panel aimed to encourage women's participation in politics at the local level. Through this campaign various information, resources, networking opportunities and mentorship from other female councillors and provincial politicians was facilitated. Although this event was supported by FCM, it was largely organized and assisted by a community organization.

There are a variety of resources available to political candidates that cover the scope of election campaigns from start to finish. Appendix "A" attached to the report provide a list of resources available online for prospective election candidates. While the in-person and online campaign schools for British Columbia have concluded for the upcoming local election, there are a variety of resources with guides and videos available to answer many questions a candidate may have about running in the upcoming

General Local Election. Given the stage of the City's election planning and upcoming nomination period starting August 30th, Administration recommends promoting these resources on the City's website and social media channels prior to the close of nomination period on September 9th. This option also has limited financial impacts and would not require access to additional Council funding. This option would also supplement the existing resources developed by the Province this year that are available to prospective candidates online and in the candidate nomination package that is published on the City's website (www.princegeorge.ca/election). Prospective candidates may also wish to consider a peer-to-peer approach with existing members of Council or former politicians through sharing their experiences and allowing interested individuals to learn about their roles and responsibilities on City Council.

Various municipalities throughout BC have offered or are offering "Candidate Information Workshops" to share information with election candidates. These workshops in large part cover topics specific to that municipality including roles of elected officials, city managers and staff, municipality structure, demands of public office, time commitment, remuneration, the election process, requirements to be a candidate, nomination process, overview of nomination packages, elector organizations, offences and penalties, voting day and election day rules, role of scrutineers, and post-election activities.

Administration having done this research will take this into consideration in the planning for the next General Local Election in 2026. It is anticipated that other local organizations (i.e.: student unions, business improvement associations, business representative agencies, multicultural organizations, etc.) would share these resources and workshop opportunities with their membership to encourage diversity and support representation of a variety of cultures and backgrounds in the 2026 General Local Election.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

Municipal campaign schools exist across the country and aim to provide information, tools and strategies to ensure that municipal councils are representative of the communities they serve. They help to increase the representation of women serving and engaged in politics, provide leadership in areas of inclusion and gender equality and develop tools and resources for municipalities. Due to the later stage of election planning, Administration recommends that Council receive this report for information for the 2022 General Local Election and support the recommendation to add resources listed on Appendix A, attached to the report on the City's election webpage containing candidate information and resources. As stated, Administration will take into consideration the campaign school resources available in advance and as part the planning for the next General Local Election in October 2026.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Maureen Connelly, Manager of Legislative Services/
Corporate Officer

PREPARED BY: L. Kellett, Deputy Corporate Officer

APPROVED:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

Meeting Date: 2022/08/15