

Running for Municipal Council

What you need to know:

Saskatchewan Municipalities need citizens to take on leadership roles as elected officials (council members) to represent the people in the community and provide direction on the policies and programs that will lead to better quality services.

Serving in an elected position is not easy, but being a member of council offers a lot of personal satisfaction, as it is an opportunity to help shape the future of the municipality.

Being elected to council requires a time commitment. If elected, you will serve a four year term. During that time, you should plan to attend the following:

- Meetings of council;
- Meetings of council committees;
- Meetings of other boards and agencies as a representative of council;
- Conferences, seminars, workshops and conventions for training and discussion; and
- Events that promote the municipality.

Key Standards and Values for Council Members

- Honesty
- Objectivity
- Transparency and accountability
- Confidentiality
- Responsibility
- Leadership and public interest
- Respect

It is not crucial to have education or experience in a government setting to run for council. You likely have skills, knowledge and abilities that are transferrable to the council member's role. You may want to take a self-assessment of your skills by thinking about your volunteer experience, community involvement, work experience, membership in different organizations and your family life. Often these experiences teach you how to work as part of a team, organize and prioritize, make decisions, debate and lead.

What is the purpose of a municipality and the role of council?

A municipality is the 'front-line' level of government. The municipality's purpose is to:

- Provide good government;
- Provide services and facilities that council feels are necessary and desirable for all or part of the municipality;
- Provide wise stewardship of public assets;
- Develop and maintain a safe and viable community; and
- Foster economic, social and environmental well-being.

A municipality is a level of government. It is governed by, and acts through, the elected council. Council members make decisions by passing resolutions or enacting bylaws. Bylaws are the laws of the municipality.

Council establishes policies about what services to provide, how those services will be delivered and at what levels.

The municipal administrator is then charged with implementing those policies. Council relies on the support, advice and assistance of the administration through the decision-making process.

What are the responsibilities of a council member?

If you become a member of council, you must take an Oath of Office in the prescribed form prior to carrying out any power, duty or function as a member of council.

Within 30 days of being elected to council, you must complete and sign a Public Disclosure Statement which is also required at the time of filing your nomination paper. This statement must be reviewed annually and updated when required.

Your Oath of Office and Public Disclosure Statement are accessible public documents.

All decisions of council must be made at a meeting open to the public with a majority of council members present. At these meetings, it is important for council members to listen to each other and collectively reach decisions that are in the best interest of the municipality. A member of council, including the mayor, does not have the authority to make independent decisions on behalf of the municipality, such as committing the municipality to expenditures or directing the activities of municipal employees.

What are Conflict of Interest rules for council members?

A conflict of interest occurs when a council member's private interests, or a closely connected person's interests may, or may appear to, be affected by a council decision. A financial interest is always a conflict of interest. If as a council member you think you may have a conflict of interest, you must:

- Declare the nature of the interest before any discussion occurs;
- Leave the council chambers; and
- Not vote or discuss the matter with other council members before, during, or after the matter is considered or decided.

What is the municipal election cycle?

General elections in urban municipalities (cities, towns, villages and resort villages) are held every four years. The council of an urban municipality has a mayor and at least two councillors. The Town of Outlook has a mayor and six councillors.

How do I run for council?

Am I eligible?

To be a candidate in a municipal election, you must:

- Be 18 years of age on election day;
- Be a Canadian citizen;
- Not be disqualified from being a candidate;
- Have resided in Saskatchewan for at least six consecutive months immediately preceding the date of submitting the nomination papers;
- Have resided in the Town of Outlook, or on land now in the Town of Outlook, for at least three consecutive months immediately preceding the date of submitting the nomination papers.

How do I file my nomination?

Obtain a nomination form and public disclosure statement from the Town Office.

The public disclosure statement identifies the name and nature of employment, financial interests or other involvement that may be seen to affect fairness in making a municipal decision.

Once the Town publishes a *Notice of Call for Nominations*, you can file your completed nomination paper and all required attachments including a recent Criminal Record check, with the returning officer or nomination officer at the location and during the time specified in the notice.

In the Town of Outlook, your nomination form must be signed by five qualified voters from the Town at large.

When do I need to file my nomination?

For the 2020 general election, by **4:00 p.m.** on **October 7, 2020**

The returning officer or nomination officer will review the nomination paper to ensure it is complete, including all required attachments. Only completed nomination forms will be accepted. If it is complete, you will be issued a "Receipt of Nomination and Candidate's Acceptance Form".