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# HALDIMAND COUNTY

## Report CLE-06-2022 Appointment of Members to the Joint Municipal Election Compliance Audit Committee



For Consideration by Council in Committee on September 20, 2022

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### OBJECTIVE:

To appoint a Municipal Election Compliance Audit Committee, as required by the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report CLE-06-2022 Appointment of Members to the Joint Municipal Election Compliance Audit Committee be received;
2. AND THAT the following individuals be appointed as members of the Joint Municipal Election Compliance Audit Committee, serving the City of Brantford, County of Brant, Haldimand County, and Norfolk County for the term November 15, 2022 to November 14, 2026:
  - Krista Russ
  - Leigh-Anne Unrau
  - Frank Gelinis
  - Ronald Kaufman
  - Andy Straisfeld

**Prepared by:** Evelyn Eichenbaum, Manager Clerks Division / Municipal Clerk

**Approved:** Craig Manley, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In order to meet legislative requirements, a Municipal Election Compliance Audit Committee (MECAC) must be established by October 1, 2022. Based on Council's approval to again establish a joint MECAC amongst the City of Brantford, County of Brant, Haldimand County and Norfolk County for the 2018 – 2022 term (Report CLE-02-2022), and after staff from the four municipalities having reviewed the applications, five individuals are being recommended for appointment to the committee for the upcoming term of Council, one of which is a Haldimand County resident.

### BACKGROUND:

Section 88.37 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, as amended (Act), requires that a council or local board shall establish a MECAC before October 1 of an election year for the purposes of the Act. The purpose of the MECAC, is to review and consider an application for a compliance audit of candidates' election campaign finances or of registered third party election campaign finances. If an application is granted, an auditor will be appointed to conduct a compliance audit and produce a report. The MECAC will consider the auditor's report, and in the case where there is an apparent contravention of the Act, will decide whether to commence legal action.

The Act also requires that the Clerk review the contributions reported on the financial statements submitted by candidates and registered third parties to determine whether any contributor appears to have exceeded any of the contribution limits under the Act. In the case where a contributor appears to have contravened a contribution limit, the Clerk shall prepare a separate report concerning each apparent contravention and shall forward the report(s) to the MECAC for consideration and decision on whether to commence legal proceedings against the contributor.

In 2018, the City of Brantford, County of Brant, Haldimand County and Norfolk County established a Joint MECAC for the first time, and found the process of forming a joint committee amongst the four municipalities to be an efficient and cost effective way to meet the legislative requirement.

## **ANALYSIS:**

A total of twelve (12) applications to serve as a member of the Joint MECAC were received by the deadline including two (2) from Haldimand. In order to assess the applications, staff considered representation from individuals residing in a participating municipality, as well as experience with finance/auditing, the law/judiciary, and public administration. With Brantford having the largest population of the four municipalities, the staff group determined that one member would be chosen from the County of Brant, Haldimand County and Norfolk County respectively and two members from the City of Brantford.

After reviewing applications for work and volunteer experience, the following individuals are recommended, providing expertise in finance and public administration, as well as meeting the mandatory qualifications as outlined in the legislation.

| NAME             | MUNICIPALITY      | AREA OF EXPERTISE                 |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Krista Russ      | County of Brant   | Financial / Compliance            |
| Leigh-Anne Unrau | Haldimand County  | Financial                         |
| Frank Gelinas*   | Norfolk County    | Financial / Public Administration |
| Ronald Kaufman*  | City of Brantford | Financial / Public Administration |
| Andy Straisfeld  | City of Brantford | Business / Campaign Finance       |

\*Two members were previously appointed to the 2018-2022 committee.

Applicants had the opportunity to indicate whether their applications would be shared with the local boards of education for the purposes of serving as part of their Compliance Audit Committees, and those applications have been forwarded on to the Grand Erie District School Board and the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board, respectively, for consideration.

## **FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The Act requires that all municipalities appoint a Compliance Audit Committee by October 1 of an election year.

Members of MECAC are paid a per diem rate of \$150 plus mileage as noted in the Terms of Reference linked below. Costs for committee meetings are paid by the host municipality and are funded from the Election Reserve Fund.

## **STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:**

All four participating municipalities are appointing MECAC members during the week of September 19, 2022.

## **REPORT IMPACTS:**

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: No

## **REFERENCES:**

1. [Municipal Election Compliance Audit Committee Terms of Reference](#)

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

None.