



The Corporation of

**THE TOWNSHIP OF MELANCTHON**

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Denise B. Holmes, AMCT  
CAO/Clerk

**TO:** Mayor White and Members of Council  
**FROM:** Denise B. Holmes, CAO/Clerk  
**DATE:** November 5, 2018  
**SUBJECT:** Accessibility Report 2018 Municipal Election

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**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Report is to comply with Section 12.1 of the *Municipal Elections Act* regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

**BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION**

As a requirement of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, s. 12.1(2) the Clerk, within 90 days after voting day, shall submit a Report to Council pertaining to the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect Electors and Candidates with disabilities. Accessibility was a major consideration during every aspect of the Election, and the attached appendix indicates actions taken to make the voting process more inclusive.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There is no financial impact.

**RECOMMENDATION**

This Report is for the information of Council.

Respectfully submitted,

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Denise B. Holmes, CAO/Clerk

## APPENDIX - ACCESSIBLE ELECTIONS REPORT

### Identification of Barriers

The following actions were taken to identify barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities:

1. Consider various disabilities to identify potential barriers in the election process.
2. Assessed past election administration policies, identifying the likelihood of our practice creating a risk to the accessibility of candidates and electors, then identified the impact of the risk and developed measures to mitigate or minimize the risk.

### Removal and Prevention of Barriers

The following actions were taken to remove and prevent barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities:

- Township Council on January 4, 2017 approved a Report by the CAO to use Vote By Telephone/Internet as the alternative method of Voting. This clearly removed any barriers that would be associated with the Election as people were able to vote in the comfort of their own home. The Township recognized the many other benefits of electronic voting, including: the large number of non-resident electors, eliminated the need for proxies and advance poll voting and voting places, it provided voters with an extended period of time to vote, a Voter Information Letter was provided to every qualified elector and was mailed directly to each elector or provided directly at the Township Office.
- The Township dedicated a separate section on the website for Election Information and posted information there regularly. The information was in clear, simple language. Information was also posted on the office bulletin board, in the local newspapers and through MailChimp (a subscription based information tool). The website also assisted in educating the electors of the voting method and included a tutorial on the Vote By Telephone and Internet.
- Candidates were provided with a "Candidate Information Package" containing useful information on the Municipal Election. A copy of the Voters List was provided to the Candidates, upon request, as well as the information regarding maximum campaign expenses.
- as per Section 5 of the Customer Service Accessibility Policy, dated January 1, 2010, if candidates and electors required alternative formats for documents and forms, this could be provided to them at their request, in a manner that was mutually agreed upon.
- Electors were able to confirm that they were on the Voters List by email, telephone or attending at the office.

- When the Voter Information Letters were mailed to each elector, it contained the following: a Personal Identification Number (PIN), a telephone access number and internet address for voting, the number for the Voter Help Centre (Melancthon Township Office) and a list of the candidates for office.
- The Township also provided an accessible Voter Help Centre at the Municipal Office for those electors who required assistance or just wanted to come out and vote. The Returning Officer, Assistant Returning Officer and Election Assistants were available at the Voter Help Centre to answer any questions the Electors had and all were sworn to an Oath of Secrecy. Instructions to vote were also available on the Township website.
- Electors could vote 24 hours per day from 10:00 a.m. on Friday, October 12, 2018 until 8:00 p.m. on Monday, October 22, 2018 by using a touch tone phone or via the internet. The Voter Help Centre was open extended hours on Monday, October 22, 2018 for Electors to either come in to vote or call if they required assistance.
- Allowed for the use of service animals and support persons at the Voter Help Centre as Service Animals and Support persons are allowed as per the Township of Melancthon Customer Service Accessibility Policy dated January 1, 2010.
- The Township provided a process for an elector to be assisted by a support person, a friend or a Deputy Returning Officer at the Voter Help Centre. The support person would take an Oral Oath of Secrecy.
- All Election Staff, dealing with the Electors, had received the Accessible Customer Service Training.
- The Township has a Policy in place for temporary disruptions of services and is provided in the Township of Melancthon Customer Service Accessibility Policy, dated January 1, 2010.