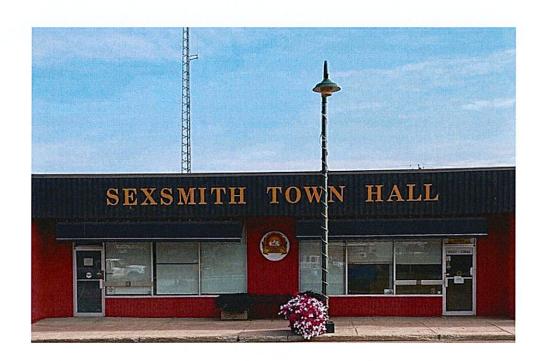


# EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT RUNNING FOR MUNICIPAL OFFICE IN SEXSMITH, ALBERTA.



January 17, 2025 Town of Sexsmith P.O. Box 420, 9921-100 Street, Sexsmith, AB T0H 3C0

## Running for Town Council – Election 2025

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## Running for Town Council - Election 2025

### Introduction/Election 2025

#### About the Town of Sexsmith

The Town of Sexsmith, Alberta, is a vibrant community that has successfully blended its small-town charm with modern amenities and growth opportunities. With a population of over 2,600 people, it is located just 10 minutes south of Grande Prairie, offering the convenience of proximity to the city while maintaining its own unique character. The town features many recreational facilities such as a skateboard park, splash park, walking trails, and playgrounds, making it an attractive place for families. Additionally, it offers essential services like a medical clinic, pharmacy, and a range of shops.

## History of the Name:

The town's name, Sexsmith, has piqued interest since its establishment in 1916. Originally, the town was named Bennville after early settler J.B. "Benny" Foster, who homesteaded the area in 1911. However, a name change was necessary when it was discovered that there was already a town called Bennville. The town was then named in honor of David Sexsmith, a trapper and trader who arrived in the region in 1898. Sexsmith set up a trading post just north of the current town site in 1912, and in 1916, he re-established his store and post office where the town stands today, coinciding with the arrival of the railroad.

## Continued Growth and Modern Development:

Sexsmith has experienced continuous development, with a particular focus on attracting both business and residential growth. The town offers property tax incentives to small businesses and new ventures, actively encouraging entrepreneurship and new investments. The local economy benefits from a thriving agricultural base, as well as the growing interest from businesses and developers. The community has fostered a strong connection to its history, seen in its 1920s-30s themed Main Street and various historical buildings, which are preserved and celebrated by an active museum society.

Overall, the Town of Sexsmith continues to evolve, offering a blend of historical richness, community spirit, and opportunities for both residents and businesses.

## Thinking about running for Council?

The role of Mayor or Councillor in a municipality like Sexsmith is indeed one of leadership, responsibility, and active community involvement. Elected officials on the council are tasked with representing the diverse views and opinions of residents, making decisions that shape policies, and guiding the town's growth and development in a way that reflects the community's values and priorities.

While no specific legislative qualifications are required to become a Councillor, there are several key qualities that are highly valued in effective local leaders. **Visionary thinking** is crucial, as it allows leaders to look ahead, anticipate future needs, and develop innovative solutions to challenges. **Strong communication skills**, both in

speaking and listening, are essential for building trust and fostering meaningful dialogue with residents, fellow council members, and other stakeholders.

Conflict resolution skills are also important, as they enable leaders to manage disagreements constructively and find mutually beneficial solutions. Being open to accepting opposing views creates an environment where collaboration can thrive, and decisions are made in the best interest of the community as a whole. Enthusiasm and dedication to the community are fundamental for maintaining motivation and ensuring that the needs of residents are consistently met.

Ultimately, serving as a Mayor or Councillor in Sexsmith offers the chance to make a tangible impact, shaping the town's future and fostering a sense of unity and progress. It is an opportunity to be a champion for the community, to listen, learn, and lead with integrity, all while fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment for all residents.

### **DECIDING TO RUN- Making an informed decision**

Running for municipal office is a significant decision that requires careful consideration. Municipal governments are the closest level of government to local citizens, meaning they are directly connected to the needs and expectations of the community. As a local council member, you can have a substantial impact on shaping the future of your town. This responsibility makes the role both rewarding and demanding.

## Why Should You Run?

If you're considering running for municipal office, it's important to understand the potential impact you can have. Here are some reasons why you might want to run:

- Representation of Your Demographic: By running for office, you bring your own perspective to the decision-making table. This helps ensure that diverse voices are heard and represented in local government.
- 2. **Influence Positive Change**: As an elected official, you can directly influence changes that benefit your community, promoting its sustainability and addressing the needs of residents.
- 3. **Introduce New Ideas**: You have the opportunity to put forward innovative ideas that could lead to positive changes and solutions for the town.
- 4. **Make a Difference**: You'll have a direct hand in improving the quality of life for your community by helping make decisions that impact education, safety, infrastructure, and more.
- 5. Advocacy at Other Levels of Government: As a council member, you will act as a representative for your community with other levels of government, ensuring your town's needs and interests are recognized.
- 6. **Teamwork and Collaboration**: Local governments operate as a team, and by running, you'll be part of a group that makes decisions that affect all aspects of community life.

## Do You Have the Skills and Knowledge?

You don't need to have formal education or experience in government to run for municipal office. Many successful elected officials come from a variety of backgrounds. Your skills, knowledge, and abilities from various life experiences can be highly transferable to the role of a Councillor.

Before deciding to run, it may be helpful to conduct a self-assessment of your skills:

- **Volunteer Experience**: Have you volunteered for community events, boards, or organizations? Your experience in these areas can demonstrate your commitment to the community.
- **Community Involvement**: Active participation in local initiatives, charities, or groups shows your investment in making the community better.
- Work Experience: Skills from your professional career, whether in management, customer service, or technical fields, are all valuable assets.

• Family Life: Your life experiences and understanding of family needs in the community can bring valuable perspectives to the council.

## Eligibility to Run for Office

Before you officially declare your candidacy, ensure you meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the **Local Authorities Election Act**, specifically in sections 21 to 23. These sections define the criteria for municipal candidates and any conditions under which a person may be disqualified from running.

Some general eligibility criteria include:

- Age: You must be at least 18 years old on the day of the election.
- Citizenship: You must be a Canadian citizen.
- Residency: You must be a resident of the municipality for a certain period before the election.
- No Disqualifications: Certain individuals may be disqualified from running, such as those with criminal convictions or other specific circumstances.

## Eligibility Criteria for Running for Town Council

To run for Town Council in Sexsmith, you must meet certain eligibility requirements. You are **not eligible** to run if:

- 1. **Employment Restrictions**: You are an employee of the Town of Sexsmith, unless you are granted a leave of absence prior to nomination day.
- 2. Auditor Restrictions: You are an auditor for the Town of Sexsmith.
- 3. **Outstanding Debts**: You are more than \$50 in arrears on your property taxes or have any debt to the Town of Sexsmith over \$500 that is more than 90 days in default. If unsure, you can contact the Town at **780-568-3681** to check your account status.
- 4. **Criminal Convictions**: You have been convicted of an offence under the **Local Authorities Election Act**, the **Elections Act**, or the **Canada Elections Act** within the last 10 years.

#### Time Commitment for Town Council

If you decide to run for council and are elected, you will be committing to a four-year term, starting from the general election in 2025 until October 2029. Being a Mayor or Councillor requires dedication and time for several key activities, including:

## 1. Regular and Committee of the Whole Meetings:

 The Town of Sexsmith holds council meetings every second Monday of each month, except for July, August, and December, when there is only one meeting.

#### 2. Special Meetings of Council:

o Additional meetings may be scheduled, such as for budget deliberations in April or May.

### 3. Board and Committee Meetings:

 As a Mayor or Councillor, you will be appointed to represent the council on approximately three committees, boards, or agencies, with meeting times that can vary. These could be biweekly, monthly, or less frequent.

#### 4. Conferences and Training:

- As part of the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association (AUMA) and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), council members have opportunities to attend annual conferences and conventions. These are great for networking and learning.
- Councillors may also be required to attend additional training, such as Media Training or Elected Officials Training.

#### 5. Travel:

- While travel is not frequent, there may be opportunities for council members to visit other communities to promote inter-municipal ties and learn about successful initiatives.
- The Mayor may occasionally need to travel to Edmonton or Calgary to meet with government officials on behalf of the municipality.

#### 1. Social and Other Events:

 Events range from local fundraisers and speeches to representing the municipality at industry-related social functions. The Mayor typically has more involvement in these events, but all council members may be invited to attend.

#### 2. Background Work:

- o Prior to meetings, you will need to review an Agenda Package that includes reports and correspondence to help prepare for decision-making.
- You may also meet occasionally with the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), who implements the policies and programs set by the council.

#### 3. Visibility and Public Engagement:

As a council member, you will be highly visible in the community. Many residents will
approach you with concerns or questions in everyday situations, such as at the grocery store
or at community events. It's essential to be prepared for public interaction at any time.

#### 4. Balancing Your Life:

 Council work can be time-consuming, and it's important to find a balance between council responsibilities and personal, family, work, and other commitments.

Running for town council in Sexsmith is a significant time commitment. The role involves regular meetings, representing the town at various events, attending conferences and training, and engaging with the public frequently. It is important to assess your ability to dedicate the necessary time and balance this responsibility with your personal and professional life. If you're ready for the challenge and have a passion for serving your community, being on council can be a rewarding and impactful experience.

## OFFICE FOR ELECTION

Office for Election: Mayor and Councillor Positions in Sexsmith

#### Office of the Mayor

- Term of Office: 4 years.
- Duties of the Mayor:
  - Chief Elected Official (CEO): The Mayor is the municipality's CEO and holds both the duties of a Councillor and additional responsibilities outlined in the Municipal Government Act.
  - Promote Welfare and Interests: The Mayor works to promote the welfare of the Town of Sexsmith and its residents.
  - **Public Interaction**: The Mayor must interact with the public via emails, phone calls, and face-to-face meetings.
  - **Council Participation**: The Mayor attends Regular and Committee of the Whole Council meetings, where they vote on bylaws, policies, municipal budgets, and other motions.
  - Liaison Role: The Mayor directs concerns about the municipality's administration to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and stays informed about local issues and legislation.
  - Community Engagement: The Mayor attends community events and functions, representing the town.
  - **Chair Council Meetings**: The Mayor chairs regular Council meetings and may need to attend public functions and ceremonies during evening hours and weekends.
  - Inter-Municipal Liaison: The Mayor liaises with other municipalities and all levels of government regarding municipal issues and communicates council policies to the public and media.
  - Work with CAO: The Mayor works closely with the CAO to monitor the municipality's performance and respond to issues.
- Remuneration & Benefits: Compensation details are available on the Town of Sexsmith's website (www.sexsmith.ca).
- Time Commitment:
  - The Mayor's position is part-time, typically requiring **20-25 hours per week**. This can vary depending on the season, emerging issues, and the number of meetings.
  - The Mayor must attend two regular Council meetings, one Committee of the Whole meetings per month, and various committee meetings.
  - Additional duties include attending public functions, meetings with elected officials, media engagements, and occasionally traveling to other municipalities.

#### Office of Councillor

- Term of Office: 4 years.
- Number of Councillors: 6 positions are available.

#### Duties of a Councillor:

- Promote Welfare and Interests: Councillors work to promote the welfare of the Town of Sexsmith.
- Public Interaction: Councillors are available to interact with the public via various channels.
- o **Council Participation**: Councillors attend regular council meetings and Committee of the Whole meetings and vote on important matters like bylaws, policies, budgets, and motions.
- Liaison Role: Like the Mayor, Councillors direct concerns regarding municipal administration to the CAO and stay informed about local issues and legislation.
- Community Engagement: Councillors also attend and participate in community events and functions.

#### Deputy Mayor:

- Role: The Deputy Mayor serves as a backup to the Mayor, stepping in for them at Council
  meetings or other functions the Mayor cannot attend.
- Rotation: The Deputy Mayor position rotates every eight months. This practice may be continued or adjusted by the newly elected council.

#### Acting Mayor:

 Role: The Acting Mayor steps in when both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are unavailable, fulfilling the same duties, such as chairing meetings and attending events.

#### Time Commitment:

- The Councillor position is also part-time, requiring about **15-20 hours per week**. This can vary depending on emerging issues and the time of year.
- Councillors are expected to attend 3 Council meetings per month (two regular meetings and one Committee of the Whole meetings).
- Councillors also sit on 2-4 boards or committees per month and may attend additional meetings as needed.
- o Time spent includes preparing for meetings, meeting with residents, liaising with administration, attending public events, and attending other meetings.

#### **General Information for Elected Office**

#### Town Council Meetings:

- Regular Council Meetings: Held on the first and third Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.
- Committee of the Whole Meetings: Held on the second Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m., also at the Council Chambers.
- Agenda Packages & Minutes: You can access the agenda packages and minutes for Council meetings on the Town of Sexsmith s website (<u>www.sexsmith.ca</u>).

#### Council's Powers and Duties in Sexsmith

- Delegated Authority: Council's powers are delegated from higher levels of government, and in Sexsmith, its legislative authority stems from an agreement with the Department of Canadian Heritage. This gives the Council authority over matters such as land use planning, and development..
- The Municipal Government Act (MGA): The MGA is the primary reference for municipal
  governance in Alberta, granting Council the authority to develop and evaluate municipal
  programs, policies, and to ensure the municipality's functions are carried out. It also mandates
  the employment of a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) who implements Council's decisions
  and manages municipal employees.

## Individual Powers of the Mayor and Council Members

- Majority Voting: Each Council member, including the Mayor, has one vote. Decisions require a
  majority of at least four votes out of seven to pass at a public meeting.
- No Direct Expenditures: Individual Councillors cannot independently commit the Municipality to
  expenditures or directly manage municipal employees. Any promises made during campaigning
  regarding such actions can only be executed with the support of the majority of the Council.
- Influence Through Persuasion: As a member of Council, your ability to influence decisions
  depends on your persuasive ability to convince other members to adopt your point of view.

## **Setting Policy**

- Annual Budget: Council sets policies and approves the annual operating and capital budgets, determining which projects and programs will receive municipal funding.
- Bylaws and Public Policy: Council also establishes public policy through bylaws, which are local laws. Some bylaws are mandatory, while others are optional depending on municipal needs, such as business licensing or traffic safety regulations. These bylaws must be consistent with higher-level government statutes (e.g., the Municipal Government Act, Traffic Safety Act). You can review current bylaws on the Town's website.
- Strategic Priorities: Each year, Council sets strategic priorities, which guide administrative staff's work and influences the allocation of funds during the budgeting process. These priorities also inform the public about the Council's progress.

## **Public Engagement and Speaking**

- **Public Speaking**: As a Council member, you should be prepared for **public speaking** at Council meetings, Committee of the Whole meetings, and other committee or board meetings. These sessions are open to the public, and media interviews may also be a part of the role.
- Media Representation: The Mayor often represents the municipality in speeches and
  presentations at conferences or public events. Councillors, especially those serving as Deputy or
  Acting Mayor, may also be called to speak publicly.
- **Networking**: Council members often engage with a variety of individuals, including local residents, fellow Councillors from other municipalities, and government officials. Building relationships is key in advancing the town's interests.

## Other Involvement Opportunities

If you decide that running for Council isn't right for you, there are other ways to engage in municipal governance:

- Boards and Committees: You can apply to be a public member on one of Sexsmith's boards or committees, offering a chance to contribute to the community without holding an elected position.
- Committee Contact: For more information about these opportunities, you can contact the
   Councillor appointed to each committee. A list of committee appointments is available on the
   official website.

#### Resources for Candidates

- Municipal Website: For detailed information on municipal programs, policies, bylaws, and more, visit www.sexsmith.ca.
- Chief Administrative Officer (CAO): For inquiries about municipal operations, you can reach out to Rachel Wueschner, the CAO, at:

o Phone: 780-568-3681

o Email: admin@sexsmith.ca

This summary provides an overview of the Council's powers, duties, and available opportunities, helping you make an informed decision about running for office or participating in municipal governance in other ways.

#### **Boards and Committees**

The Mayor and Councillors are appointed on an annual basis to various committees. These appointments are made at the annual Organizational Meeting of Council held in October of each year.

The following list of committees gives a general idea of the number of committees that Council members currently participate in.

Committee & Board Appointments from November 1, 2024, to Organizational meeting in October 2025 Monthly Meetings	Meetings Quarterly or Less
Corporate Services (4th Monday @ 6:30 p.m.)	South Peace Physician Attraction & Retention (3rd Thursday @ 7:00 p.m.)
Grande Prairie Sports Connection	Sexsmith Agricultural Society (4th Wednesday
Municipal Planning Commission	Recreational Opportunities Task Force
Grande Spirit Foundation	West County Regional Landfill
Community Futures (2nd Thursday)	ICC
Corporate Services (4th Monday @ 6:30 p.m.)	Aquatera Utilities*
Grande Prairie Regional Tourism Association	NAEL
EDAC	GPRRC
Sexsmith District Museum Society (3rd Thursday)	Sexsmith Wellness Coalition
PREDA/NTAB	GPREP
Town of Sexsmith Library Board	Peace Library System Board
FCSS	Recreational Opportunities Task Force
	County Recreation Board
	Sustainability

#### Membership

Municipal Planning Commission – Bylaw No. 980, (3) members of Town Council

Corporate Services – Bylaw No. 949, Minimum of (2) maximum of (3) members of Town Council with the Mayor as ex-officio whenever possible

Sexsmith Curling Club - Representative to be selected as meeting arise.

Sexsmith Community Centre Board - Representative to be selected as meeting arise.

## Liabilities and Disqualifications for Councillors

As a Councillor, it is essential to uphold a high standard of integrity, transparency, and responsibility. There are several key aspects you must be aware of, including **pecuniary interest**, **civil liability**, and **disqualifications**.

#### **Pecuniary Interest**

As an elected official, you have a duty to disclose any financial interests that may be in conflict with your role. **Pecuniary interest** refers to situations where a Councillor or their family stands to gain or lose financially due to a matter before the Council. This could include business dealings or financial interests that could influence or appear to influence a decision.

#### What to do if you have a pecuniary interest:

- Disclosure: The Councillor must disclose the nature of the interest.
- Abstention: The Councillor must abstain from voting or discussing the issue.
- Exit: The Councillor must leave the Council Chambers while the matter is being discussed.

For further information on pecuniary interest, refer to the Municipal Affairs website.

#### **Civil Liability**

Councillors can be held civilly liable in certain situations, including:

- **Unauthorized Expenditures**: If a Councillor approves or makes an expenditure not authorized by the budget or not approved by the Council.
- **Misuse of Funds**: If a Councillor votes to allocate borrowed funds or grant money for a purpose other than what it was intended for.
- Exceeding Debt Limits: If a Councillor approves borrowing, loans, or guarantees that exceed the municipality's debt limits.
- **Defamation**: A Councillor can also be held liable for defamation if they make false or harmful statements about others.

#### **Disqualification from Council**

A Councillor may be **disqualified** from holding office under the following conditions:

- 1. **Ineligibility at the Time of Nomination**: If it is found that the Councillor was not eligible to be nominated under the **Local Authorities Election Act**.
- 2. Loss of Eligibility: If a Councillor ceases to meet the eligibility requirements.
- 3. Failure to File Disclosure: If a Councillor fails to file a disclosure statement as required by law.
- 4. **Absence from Council Meetings**: If a Councillor is absent from all regular meetings for a period of **eight consecutive weeks**.
- 5. **Criminal Conviction**: If a Councillor is convicted of an offence punishable by imprisonment for five years or more.
- 6. **Failure to Vote or Participate**: If a Councillor does not vote on a matter before the Council, unless they are required to abstain, or fails to declare and leave the room when having a pecuniary interest.
- 7. Use of Unpublished Information: If a Councillor uses confidential information for personal gain.
- 8. **Becomes an Employee of the Municipality**: A Councillor cannot simultaneously be a municipal employee.
- 9. Civil Liability: If the Councillor is found to be civilly liable for any of the actions listed above.

#### **Election Dates and Tentative Schedule**

If you decide to run for office, here are the important dates and events related to the election and council schedules:

- Nomination Period: From January 1, 2025, to September 22, 2025.
- Nomination Day: September 22, 2025, between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon. This is the deadline for submitting your candidacy.
- Election Day: October 20, 2025.
- **Special Ballots**: The date by which special ballots must be received by the municipality is still **TBD**.

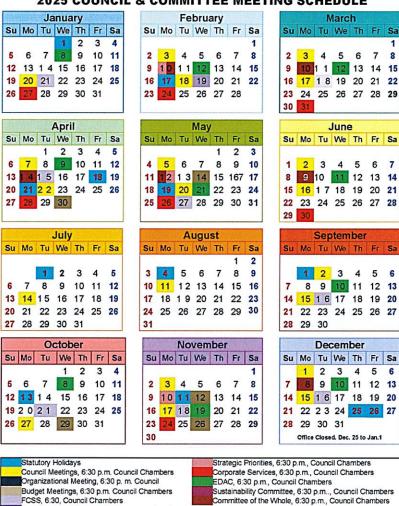
#### Tentative Council Calendar

- Organization Meeting: October 27, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. This is when newly elected officials will take the Oath of Office.
- Regular Council Meeting: The first regular meeting of the new council will be held on October 27, 2025, starting at 6:30 p.m..

Additional council events and meetings will be scheduled throughout the year, so it's important to be prepared for ongoing commitments.

## Council Calendar 2025

## 2025 COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE



Day of in lieu of Statutory Holiday on weekend

#### **Next Steps - The Nomination Process**

If you're still interested in running for Town Council, follow these next steps:

#### 1. Pick Up a Prospective Candidate Package:

This includes official nomination forms and is available at the administration office (9921 – 100 Street) during regular business hours.

#### 2. Contact for More Information:

Alex Wories (Returning Officer)

Phone: 780-568-3681

• Email: assistcao@sexsmith.ca

• Alex Wories (Assistant CAO) for general inquiries.

These resources will provide you with the necessary information to guide you through the election process, prepare for your role as a Councillor or Mayor, and become an active participant in the municipal governance of Sexsmith.

## Additional Resources for Running for Municipal Office in Sexsmith

Here are some key resources that can assist you in navigating the municipal election process, the roles and responsibilities of elected officials, and further details about the Town of Sexsmith:

#### General Information and Legal Framework

- Municipal Election Overview:
   Running for Municipal Office in Alberta
- Municipal Government Act (MGA):

Read the MGA

- Local Authorities Election Act:
   Read the Local Authorities Election Act
- Pecuniary Interest for Municipal Councillors:

Pecuniary Interest Information

 Roles and Responsibilities of Municipal Officials: Roles & Responsibilities of Municipal Officials

#### **Municipal Associations**

- Alberta Municipalities:
  - Visit Alberta Municipalities
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities: <u>Visit FCM</u>

#### Council Governance and Related Resources

- Reference & Core Documents
  - Available on www.sexsmith.ca
- Bylaw 1082 Procedural Bylaw for Council Meetings
- Code of Conduct for Councillors Bylaw No. 1040
- Council Remuneration & Benefits Policy (Policy Manual)
- Council Meeting Agendas & Minutes
- Bylaw Directory
- Financial Reports

## **Notice of Intent**

Local Authorities Election Act (Section 147.22)

LOCAL JURISDICTION:	, PROVINCE OF ALBERTA
Election Date:	
uate	
I,	, of
complete address an	nd postal code
intend to be nominated, or have been nominated, to run for election as	
name of local jurisdiction an	nd ward, if applicable
I understand that by completing this form, I am declaring my intent to be Act, which carries with it certain obligations and responsibilities.	ecome a candidate as defined in the Local Authorities Election
Candidate Information	
Title Candidate Last Name	Candidate First Name
Gender Telephone Number Email Address	**
Address of place(s) where candidate records are maintained:	
visition of proof(o) who obtained to the maintained.	
Name(s) and address(es) of financial institutions where campaign cont  Name(s) of signing authorities for each depository listed above (if appli	
SWORN (AFFIRMED) before me at the	
of, in the Province of Alberta, this	
day of, 20	
Signature of Returning Officer or Commissioner for Oaths or Notary Public in	Signature of Candidate
and for Alberta	DETUDNING OFFICEDIS ACCEPTANCE
Commissioner for Oaths Stamp	RETURNING OFFICER'S ACCEPTANCE Returning office signals acceptance by signing this form
	Signature of Returning Officer

#### IT IS AN OFFENCE TO SIGN A FALSE AFFIDAVIT OR A FORM THAT CONTAINS A FALSE STATEMENT

The personal information collected through this form is for administering the election. This collection is authorized by section 33(c) of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. For questions about the collection of personal information, contact your local municipal office.







