



INFO-24-188
TOWNSHIP OF
RUSSELL

CERTIFIED RESOLUTION

Date: **August 26, 2024** **Item(s) no.:** 10 (ref. a)

Subject: Resolution to Support AMCTO Provincial Updates to the Municipal Elections Act

Moved by: **Jamie Laurin**

Seconded by: **Lisa Deacon**

WHEREAS elections rules need to be clear, supporting candidates and voters in their electoral participation and election administrators in running elections; and

WHEREAS legislation needs to strike the right balance between providing clear rules and frameworks to ensure the integrity of the electoral process; and

WHEREAS the legislation must also reduce administrative and operational burden for municipal staff ensuring that local election administrators can run elections in a way that responds to the unique circumstances of their local communities; and

WHEREAS the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (MEA) will be 30 years old by the next municipal and school board elections in 2026; and

WHEREAS the MEA sets out the rules for local elections, the Assessment Act, 1990 and the Education Act, 1990 also contain provisions impacting local elections adding more places for voters, candidates, and administrators to look for the rules that bind the local democratic process in Ontario; and

WHEREAS with rules across three pieces of legislation, and the MEA containing a patchwork of clauses, there are interpretation challenges, inconsistencies, and gaps to fill; and

WHEREAS the Act can pose difficulties for voters, candidates, contributors and third-party advertisers to read, to interpret, to comply with and for election administrators to enforce; and

WHEREAS while local elections are run as efficiently and effectively as can be within the current legislative framework, modernization and continuous improvement is needed to ensure the Act is responsive to today's needs and tomorrow's challenges; and

WHEREAS to keep public trust and improve safeguards the Act should be reviewed considering the ever-changing landscape which impacts elections administration including privacy, the threats of foreign interference, increased spread of mis/disinformation and the increased use of technologies like artificial intelligence and use of digital identities; and

WHEREAS the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks, and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) reviewed the Act and has provided several recommendations including modernizing the legislation, harmonizing rules, and streamlining and simplifying administration; and

WHEREAS AMCTO put forward recommendations for amendments ahead of the 2026 elections and longer-term recommendations for amendments ahead of the 2030 elections; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Township of Russell calls for the Province to update the MEA with priority amendments as outlined by AMCTO before Summer 2025 and commence work to review and re-write the MEA with longer-term recommendations ahead of the 2030 elections; and be it further

RESOLVED that this resolution will be forwarded to all municipalities in Ontario for support and that each endorsement be then forwarded to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Minister of Education, the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery, Minister of Finance, the Premier of Ontario, MPP of Glengarry-Prescott-Russell and AMCTO.

MOTION APPROVED

I, Joanne Camiré Laflamme, Clerk of the Corporation of the Township of Russell, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the resolution adopted by the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Russell on the 26th day of August 2024.

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Clerk