

## Election News: September 6, 2022

### The MLA and FOM Select and Announce our Endorsed Candidates in Township of Muskoka Lakes

Thank you to our team of 30+ volunteers who late last week and through the weekend delivered [flyers](#) announcing candidates for the October 24<sup>th</sup> municipal election endorsed by the MLA and Friends of Muskoka to docks across the 3 big lakes in the Township of Muskoka Lakes ("TML"). Many volunteers rode environmentally friendly personal watercraft, some paddled kayaks and one intrepid volunteer delivered hundreds of flyers on her pedalboard!



MLA Director Debbie Korolnek uses human power to deliver flyers to docks over Labour Day weekend

We thought long and hard about printing these flyers and decided the small environmental footprint was worth it. We know some of you are disturbed by materials dropped on your docks but how else does one reach island and waterfront electorate efficiently and effectively?

This election is too important not to inform as many of our Muskoka community as we can.

Many seasonal property owners are unaware that they are able to vote in Muskoka **as well as at their permanent homes.**

Our small lake partners reached most of their neighbours via electronic means to inform them and encourage them to vote. We don't yet have that reach on the three big lakes, so we used the flyers to inform waterfront residents of their right to vote. We included a list of candidates who we believe are best suited to find solutions to important issues facing Muskoka.

The amount of paper used to produce the flyers represents less than 25% of a single tree. **Please reuse or recycle the bag and keep the flyer close for voting day on October 24th.** We will offset our carbon impact of doing this by making a donation to Trees for Life.

The total cost of printing the flyers and plastic bags was approximately \$1,100 covered entirely by donations made by MLA and Friends of Muskoka directors solely for this purpose.

In a survey of our members, 88% said that they wanted the MLA to continue to provide recommendations for candidates in Muskoka. Additional recommendations will be coming for Bracebridge, Gravenhurst and Sequin in the next couple of weeks. The MLA is a registered Third Party Advertiser ([Click here](#)) in each of the municipalities we are active in.

Some have questioned why the MLA gets involved in politics. Our members have told us that they want us to advocate for responsible development (97%) and reasonable taxation (85%) - both activities that are directly controlled by our local councils. We cannot effectively represent our members if we do not engage with council and their positions throughout their term and at election time. This is what democracy is all about. Waterfront and seasonal residents need to be effectively represented and being informed and engaged is essential to make sure that happens.

#### How did we determine the endorsed candidates?

The MLA along with representatives of the Friends of Muskoka has been meeting for over a year as the Political Action Team to prepare for the upcoming municipal election. These activities have included finding volunteers, encouraging candidates to come forward, developing a website to share content and assessing the performance of existing councillors.

Did you know the MLA has a Public Affairs manager? She attends largely TML council meetings and sometimes Gravenhurst, Bracebridge, Seguin and District of Muskoka meetings, reporting on positions taken by the councillors and how the debates and votes went on issues of importance to the MLA. This information is used by the MLA as we assess the effectiveness of council and councillors.

After the nominations closed, we offered all mayoralty and new candidates for TML a meeting with the MLA and FOM to discuss their qualifications, expertise and positions on key issues.

Each organization was represented by at least one director in each meeting. Meetings in the other municipalities will follow.

Everyone accepted our invitation, and it was evident that all candidates have a deep love of Muskoka. Much like hiring decisions, the candidates were assessed for their expertise and experience, knowledge of issues of importance to waterfront residents and ability to work effectively at the council table. A draft list of endorsed candidates was presented to the Political Action Team and to the Board of Directors of the MLA and were **unanimously approved** prior to being finalized and released publicly. All candidates were informed prior to the release of the list. Flyers were printed for dock drop by keen volunteers across the 3 big lakes in TML around the Labour Day weekend.