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2026 Local Government Election Candidate Information Session

Purpose of Tonight's Session

This session is intended to help prospective candidates understand the nomination process, key election dates, campaign financing responsibilities, and the role of elected officials.

The information provided tonight is neutral, general information only. It is not meant to be campaign, legal, or financial advice.

Candidates remain responsible for reviewing the applicable legislation, guides, forms, and official instructions, and for seeking independent legal or financial advice if needed.

Questions that require legal, financial, campaign strategy, or Elections BC interpretation will be noted and directed to the appropriate resource. Election officials can provide general process information but cannot provide campaign advice or legal advice.

What This Session Will Cover

This session will focus on the essentials: what it means to run for Mayor or Councillor in Hudson's Hope; candidate eligibility, nomination requirements, and filing deadlines; campaign financing and advertising responsibilities; the governance role of elected officials; and where to find official guidance after the session.

Is Local Office Right for You?

Before beginning a campaign, prospective candidates should take time to consider why they want to serve, what they understand about the role, and whether they are prepared for the responsibilities that continue well beyond election day.

- Why do I want to serve the community?
- What community issues am I hoping to contribute to?
- Am I prepared to make decisions in the best interests of the whole community?
- Can I work respectfully with people who have different views?
- Am I prepared for public scrutiny, feedback, and public visibility?

Campaigning vs Governing

Campaigning is different from governing. Candidates may speak about their priorities and ideas during a campaign, but individual Council members cannot promise specific outcomes on their own. Council decisions are made collectively and often require budget approval, staff capacity, legislative authority, public process, and majority support.

Candidates should be careful not to overpromise outcomes that depend on future Council decisions, available resources, statutory processes, or input from the public and other governments.

Public Service in a Small Community

Elected officials are public representatives. Residents may approach them about service levels, taxes, roads, recreation, utilities, land use, bylaws, development, community safety, and other local concerns. Elected officials are expected to listen respectfully, direct people through the appropriate channels, and avoid making commitments outside Council authority.

In a small community such as Hudson's Hope, elected officials are highly visible and may be approached informally about municipal matters. Candidates should consider how they will remain accessible while maintaining respectful boundaries and directing operational concerns through the appropriate staff process.

Common Misunderstandings About Local Office

Misunderstanding	Reality
"If elected, I can direct staff."	Council sets direction collectively; staff report through administration.
"I can fix individual operational issues myself."	Operational matters should go through the appropriate staff process.
"Campaign promises automatically become action."	Council decisions require discussion, budget, authority, and majority support.
"I only need to attend Council meetings."	The role also includes preparation, committees, public hearings, community engagement, and regional work.
"Social media is separate from public office."	Public comments online can affect trust, reputation, and governance relationships.

Local Office May Be a Good Fit If You...

- Care about the whole community, not only one issue or one neighbourhood.
- Can listen to different perspectives and weigh competing priorities.
- Are willing to read complex material and prepare for meetings.
- Can make decisions under public scrutiny.
- Respect process, confidentiality, legislation, and staff roles.

Local Office May Be Challenging If You...

- Want to manage day-to-day operations directly.
- Expect quick individual authority to make decisions alone.
- Are uncomfortable with compromise or collective decision-making.
- Are not prepared for criticism, public feedback, or public visibility.
- Cannot commit time to agenda review, meetings, committees, public hearings, regional work, and community engagement.

Roles and Responsibilities of Mayor and Council

Locally elected officials provide community leadership, set strategic direction, and make decisions in the public interest. Their role is governance-focused: Council considers the needs of the whole community, adopts policies and bylaws, approves budgets, and makes decisions collectively through properly convened meetings.

- **Set direction:** Establish community priorities, adopt bylaws and policies, and provide overall direction for municipal services and long-term planning.
- **Make collective decisions:** Read agenda materials, ask informed questions, consider public input and staff advice, debate respectfully, and vote on matters before Council.
- **Provide financial stewardship:** Consider service levels, taxation, fees, capital projects, grants, reserves, asset management, and long-term financial sustainability.
- **Represent the community:** Listen to residents, consider diverse perspectives, and communicate Council decisions accurately and respectfully.
- **Support transparent governance:** Participate in open meetings, public hearings, committee work, and community engagement processes.
- **Provide oversight, not administration:** Ensure policies and decisions are in place while recognizing that the CAO, Corporate Officer, and staff manage day-to-day operations and implement Council direction.
- **Work with partners:** Collaborate with neighbouring local governments, the regional district, Indigenous governments, provincial and federal agencies, and community partners on shared priorities and services.
- **Meet legal and ethical obligations:** Follow meeting procedures, conflict of interest rules, confidentiality requirements, responsible conduct expectations, financial disclosure obligations, and other legal responsibilities.

Council–Staff Roles and Boundaries

Elected officials and local government staff have distinct but complementary roles. Council provides governance, policy direction, and collective decision-making, while the Chief

Administrative Officer, Corporate Officer, and staff provide professional advice, implement Council decisions, and manage day-to-day administration.

Individual elected officials are not authorized to direct staff, assign work, interfere with operational decisions, or perform staff duties. Operational concerns should be brought forward through the appropriate administrative process, normally through the Chief Administrative Officer or Corporate Officer.

Role of the Mayor

In addition to the responsibilities of a councillor, the Mayor provides leadership by recommending bylaws and resolutions that may assist in good governance; chairing meetings and maintaining the order and conduct of debate; attending ceremonies and meetings on behalf of Council; communicating information from the Chief Administrative Officer or outside meetings to Council; and establishing standing committees.

Responsible Conduct

Serving on Council is not only about winning an election. Elected officials are expected to act with integrity, respect the institution of local government, work productively with others, maintain confidentiality, avoid conflicts of interest, and support good governance. Responsible conduct helps Council make decisions effectively and maintain public trust.

- Understand and follow conflict of interest rules.
- Protect confidential information until it is properly released.
- Use the office responsibly and avoid personal advantage or improper influence.
- Debate respectfully and support productive, transparent decision-making.
- Respect that Council acts collectively and that individual members do not direct staff unless authorized.

Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest rules are an important part of maintaining public trust in local government decision-making. Elected officials must be alert to situations where their private interests, or the interests of certain family members or close associates, could conflict with their public duties.

A conflict may arise when a Council matter could result in a direct or indirect financial benefit or disadvantage to the elected official. Conflicts may also arise where an elected official's participation could reasonably raise concerns about impartiality, fairness, or the use of office for personal advantage.

When an elected official has a conflict of interest, they must declare the conflict, state the general nature of the conflict, leave the meeting while the matter is considered, and not participate in discussion, debate, or voting on the matter.

- Do not use confidential information obtained through office for personal, business, or campaign advantage.
- Do not attempt to influence staff, Council, committee members, or other decision-makers on a matter where a conflict exists.
- Seek advice early if unsure whether a conflict exists.
- Remember that conflict of interest obligations continue after election day and apply throughout the term of office.
- When in doubt, candidates and elected officials should seek independent legal advice.

Confidentiality

Past and present elected officials are required to keep confidential information private until that information is made publicly available by the municipal council.

Information discussed in closed meetings and information contained in records that have not been released to the public must be kept confidential until that information is released in an open meeting.

A local government may recover any damages that result from an elected official, or former elected official, who intentionally disclosed confidential information.

Obligation to Vote

Every elected official present at a municipal council meeting must vote either “for” or “against” a motion. Councillors who do not expressly vote “yes” or “no” on a matter are deemed to have voted in favour of the motion.

The obligation to vote does not apply where an elected official has declared a conflict of interest related to the matter being voted on, or where the elected official is a respondent or complainant in a code of conduct investigation and the matter is whether to impose recommended sanctions. In those circumstances, the elected official is prohibited from voting and must leave the meeting until after the vote is taken.

Term of Office

Candidates elected in general local elections serve a four-year term. This term begins at the inaugural meeting. The inaugural meeting is held within the first 10 days of November following the general local election. The term for sitting councillors ends immediately before the next inaugural meeting following the next general local election four years later.

Time Commitment

Holding local office can involve a significant and ongoing time commitment. Council typically meets every two or three weeks, and elected officials are expected to review agendas, reports, bylaws, correspondence, and background materials before each meeting.

The role may also include special meetings, committee meetings, public hearings, community engagement events, training sessions, regional work, and representation at civic or community functions. Elected officials should be prepared to read complex material, ask informed questions, and participate in collective decision-making in a respectful and well-prepared manner.

Absences from Meetings and Disqualification

An elected official who is absent from meetings for 60 consecutive days or four consecutive regularly scheduled council, whichever is longer, may be disqualified from office.

This does not apply when the elected official is absent because of illness or injury; has been provided permission by the municipal council to be absent; is on parental leave; is on a mandatory leave of absence; or is suspended as a result of a sanction imposed after a code of conduct investigation.

Attending a council meeting remotely is not considered an absence where the local government has electronic meeting provisions in its meeting procedure bylaw.

Regional District Context

Hudson's Hope is part of the Peace River Regional District. Municipal council members may be appointed by Council to serve as municipal directors on the regional district board, where they participate in decisions about regional services, shared priorities, and matters that affect more than one local government.

Regional district boards are made up of representatives from municipalities, electoral areas, and, in some cases, Treaty First Nations. This means municipal elected officials may also be required to consider regional collaboration, service participation, cost-sharing, and the broader interests of communities beyond their own municipality.

Remuneration

Council is in the process of adopting Council Remuneration Bylaw No. 984, 2026, which, if adopted, would take effect on January 1, 2027. The proposed bylaw would update the remuneration framework by reducing fixed annual base remuneration, introducing attendance-based compensation, maintaining expense reimbursement controls, and establishing regular review requirements.

Under the proposed model, members of Council would receive annual base remuneration for holding office and carrying out general Council duties, as well as per diem compensation for attending eligible meetings or approved municipal business.

The proposed structure is intended to support attendance and accountability while remaining generally consistent with the existing overall compensation level for members who attend all anticipated Council meetings. A member who attends fewer meetings would receive lower total compensation accordingly.

Remuneration Item	Proposed Amount
Mayor annual base remuneration	\$22,050
Councillor annual base remuneration	\$9,775
Meeting fees for eligible Council meetings and approved municipal business	\$125+ per eligible meeting or approved activity

Ongoing Personal Financial Disclosure

Elected officials are required under the *Financial Disclosure Act* to file a financial disclosure statement at the time they submit nomination documents, each year while holding office, and shortly after leaving office.

The *Financial Disclosure Act* disclosure statement details an elected official's corporate and personal holdings and must be available for public inspection. Prospective candidates are required to file a financial disclosure statement at the time they submit nomination documents to the Chief Election Officer.

An elected official must file a financial disclosure statement annually with the local government Corporate Officer while in office. Failure to file a financial disclosure statement carries a penalty of up to \$10,000.

How Local Elections Work

General local elections in British Columbia are held every four years on the third Saturday in October. Local governments administer their own elections, including receiving nominations, arranging voting opportunities, counting ballots, and declaring results. Elections BC is responsible for administering campaign financing, election advertising, and third-party sponsor rules.

For candidates, this means there are two important sources of information: the District of Hudson's Hope for nomination, voting, and local election administration matters, and Elections BC for campaign financing and advertising obligations.

Key Election Dates

Milestone	Date / Time
Start of Election Period	January 1, 2026
Expense Limits Published	May 31, 2026
Nomination Period Opens	9:00 a.m., September 1, 2026
Nomination Period Closes	4:00 p.m., September 11, 2026
Declaration of Candidates	September 11, 2026
Candidate Withdrawal Deadline	September 18, 2026
Campaign Period Begins	September 19, 2026
Advance Voting Days	October 7, 2026
General Voting Day	October 17, 2026
Official Results Determined	October 21, 2026
Campaign Financing Disclosure Statement Filing Deadline	January 15, 2027
Late Filing Deadline with Late Filing Fee	February 16, 2027

Key Election Dates

Milestone	Date / Time
Elected Official Training – how to access email and agendas, etc	November 4, 2026, 1-4:30 pm
Inaugural Meeting and Picture Day	November 4, 2026, 6 pm
DOHH Elected Official Training	
PRRD Regional Elected Official Training – Dawson Creek	November 16 -17, 2026
Council Meeting	November 25, 2026, 6 pm
Council Meeting	December 16, 2026, 6 pm
Strategic Planning	February - TBD
2027 Council Meeting Schedule	TBD
Elected Official Training – how to access email and agendas, etc	November 4, 2026, 1-4:30 pm
Inaugural Meeting and Picture Day	November 4, 2026, 6 pm
DOHH Elected Official Training	November 6 – 7, 2026
PRRD Regional Elected Official Training – Dawson Creek	November 16 -17, 2026

Key Participants in the Election

Participant	Role
Chief Election Officer	Administers the election locally, receives nomination documents, oversees voting opportunities, and declares candidates and results.
Candidate	An individual seeking election who has been nominated by eligible electors and declared by the Chief Election Officer.
Financial Agent	Responsible for campaign financial administration and disclosure requirements. Candidates may act as their own financial agent unless another person is appointed.
Official Agent	May represent the candidate in election-related matters if appointed by the candidate.
Scrutineer	May observe voting and counting proceedings on behalf of a candidate when properly appointed.
Campaign Volunteer	May assist with canvassing, signs, events, communications, and other campaign activities, subject to election rules.
Third Party Sponsor	A person or organization that conducts election advertising independently of candidates and must follow Elections BC rules.

Candidate Eligibility

To be nominated for local office, a person must meet all the following requirements:

- Be 18 years of age or older on general voting day.
- Be a Canadian citizen.
- Have been a resident of British Columbia for at least six months before filing nomination documents.
- Not be disqualified under the *Local Government Act* or any other enactment.

A person is **not** eligible to run for local government office if they:

- Have been convicted of an indictable offence and are disqualified from the date of conviction until the date of sentencing.
- Have been convicted of and sentenced for an indictable offence and are in custody.
- Have been found guilty of an election offence, such as intimidation, vote buying, or another election offence.
- Are a judge of the Provincial Court, Supreme Court of British Columbia, or British Columbia Court of Appeal.
- Are involuntarily confined to a psychiatric facility or other institution.
- Failed to file a required campaign financing disclosure statement for a previous election.

Prospective candidates should confirm their eligibility before filing nomination documents. A person may meet the general age, citizenship, and residency requirements but still be disqualified under provincial legislation, a court order, election-related rules, or another enactment.

Prospective candidates are encouraged to review the official eligibility requirements before submitting nomination documents and to seek independent advice if they are unsure whether they are eligible to run.

Nomination Process

- Nomination packages are available beginning July 31, 2026, from the District of Hudson's Hope and District website.
- Completed nomination documents must be submitted to the Chief Election Officer or Deputy Chief Election Officer during the nomination period.
- **The nomination deadline is firm: documents must be received by 4:00 p.m. on September 11, 2026.**
- Prospective candidates should confirm that all required forms are complete, signed, and submitted in accordance with the instructions in the nomination package.
- Candidates are responsible for ensuring they meet the legal requirements to run for office.

Nominating Candidates

To be a prospective candidate, you need two eligible electors from the District of Hudson's Hope.

To nominate a candidate for local office, the nominator must:

- Be 18 years of age or older when they register to vote or will be 18 years of age or older on general voting day
- Be a Canadian citizen
- Have been a resident of BC for at least six months before registering to vote
- Be a resident in the municipality or electoral area for which the nomination is being made, or in the case of a non-property resident property elector, own real property in the municipality or electoral area

They must not be disqualified under the Local Government Act or any other enactment from voting in an election or be otherwise disqualified by law.

Completing Nomination Documents/Packages

- Candidate Cover Sheet and Checklist Form (C1) - mandatory
- Nomination Documents (C2) - mandatory
- Important: You must sign the declaration on page 3 of Form C2 in front of the Chief Election Officer or designate at the time of filing the nomination documents, or a lawyer, notary or Commissioner for Taking Affidavits for British Columbia
- Other Information Provided by Candidate (C3) - mandatory
- Appointment of Candidate Financial Agent (C4) - if applicable
- Appointment of Candidate Official Agent (C5) - if applicable
- Appointment of Candidate Scrutineer (C6) - if applicable
- Statement of Disclosure - Financial Disclosure Act - mandatory
- Candidate Information Authorization Release Form - optional

Hard copies of the District of Hudson's Hope nomination package are available from the District Office. Candidates should confirm office hours, filing arrangements, and submission requirements with the Chief Election Officer or Deputy Chief Election Officer before the nomination deadline.

Filing Nomination Documents

Filing your completed nomination documents correctly and on time is a critical step in becoming a candidate.

Step 1: Complete Your Solemn Declaration

All candidates must include a completed solemn declaration with their nomination documents.

Recommended Method: Have the declaration administered by the Chief Election Officer or designate when you file your nomination documents in person at the District Office.

Alternative Method: Have the declaration witnessed and signed ahead of time by a lawyer, a notary public or a Commissioner for Taking Affidavits for British Columbia.

Step 2: Choose a Submission Method

While you may choose how to submit your documents, it is **strongly recommended that you file in person**.

In Person - Candidates are encouraged to contact the District of Hudson's Hope to confirm filing arrangements and, where available, book a time to submit completed nomination documents in person.

Completed nomination documents must be submitted to the Chief Election Officer or Deputy Chief Election Officer for the District of Hudson's Hope during the nomination period and in accordance with the instructions in the District's nomination package.

Appointments for filing nomination documents in person are available now. Email election@hudsonshope.ca

After Nomination Papers Are Filed

- The Chief Election Officer reviews nomination documents to determine whether the required information has been provided.
- Redacted nomination documents are posted on the District website and provided to Elections BC, as required.
- Nomination documents are available for public inspection at the District Office during regular office hours. A person inspecting or requesting copies of nomination documents must complete the required declaration confirming that the information will be used only for purposes permitted under local election legislation.
- After the nomination period closes, the Chief Election Officer declares the candidates who have met the candidacy requirements.
- A candidate may withdraw only within the period allowed by legislation and by submitting the required withdrawal documents.
- If there are more candidates than positions available, voting proceeds. If the number of candidates is equal to or fewer than the number of positions, candidates may be elected by acclamation.

Campaign Financing and Advertising

- Elections BC administers campaign financing and election advertising rules for local elections.
- Candidates must follow the Local Elections Campaign Financing Act, including contribution rules, expense limits, advertising rules, and disclosure requirements.
- Only eligible individuals may make campaign contributions, and all campaign contributions must be reported.
- Campaign-related financial transactions must go through a separate campaign account.
- Candidates must file a campaign financing disclosure statement even if they withdraw, are acclaimed, or have no financial transactions to report.
- Candidates and financial agents should review Elections BC's candidate handbook, campaign financing guide, forms, quick reference sheets, online training, and information sessions.

Campaign Activities

A campaign is a connected series of actions intended to elect a candidate. Activities may include public appearances, speeches, canvassing, doorknocking, phoning electors, social media, printed materials, signs, mailouts, events, and advertising.

- Candidates are responsible for ensuring campaign messages, signs, advertisements, and social media activity comply with applicable rules.
- Campaign advertising may require sponsorship information and must comply with Elections BC requirements.
- Canvassers should be prepared to identify themselves and show authorization when required.
- Campaign teams should keep organized records from the start of the election period, not just during the formal campaign period.
- Candidates should review District signage rules, public property use rules, and facility use expectations before installing signs or booking spaces.

Social Media and Privacy

Social media has increased the amount of exposure and feedback elected officials receive in the course of their duties. As a result, aspects of an elected official's life may become a matter of public interest and may result in a loss of privacy to a lesser or greater degree.

Before starting an election campaign, candidates may wish to take steps to protect their privacy and manage public communications online.

- Become familiar with the privacy settings and moderation tools available on each social media platform being used.
- Consider creating or optimizing social media accounts that clearly separate public campaign communications from private life.
- Use each platform's available settings to manage account visibility, comments, messages, tags, and notifications.
- Prepare a plan for responding to different kinds of behaviour or messages from users, including questions, criticism, misinformation, inappropriate comments, or abusive messages.

Candidate Readiness Checklist

- Before filing nomination documents, prospective candidates should confirm that they understand the role of Mayor or Councillor.
- They should confirm that they meet the eligibility requirements and have reviewed the nomination package and required forms.

- They should understand campaign financing and advertising obligations, including contributions, expenses, advertising, campaign accounts, and disclosure filing.
- They should be prepared for the time commitment, public visibility, confidentiality, conflict of interest, and collective decision-making responsibilities that come with elected office.
- They should know where to direct questions: the District for nomination filing and local election administration, Elections BC for campaign financing and advertising, and independent legal or financial advice where needed.

Recommended Resources

The following resources should be provided as a leave-behind so candidates can review the detailed requirements after the session.

- District of Hudson's Hope Elections and Assent Voting information
- District of Hudson's Hope Candidate Information page and 2026 nomination package
- Province of British Columbia Candidate's Guide to Local Elections in B.C.
- Province of British Columbia "What Every Candidate Needs to Know" brochure
- Elections BC Candidate Handbook
- Elections BC Guide to Local Elections Campaign Financing in B.C. for Candidates and their Financial Agents
- Elections BC local election forms, quick reference sheets, online training, and information sessions