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Report from the Elections Ontario Political Advisory Committee Meeting held in Toronto – June 28, 2017

Prepared by Jim McIntosh and Allen Small

EO PAC Meetings are held approximately every 6 months in Toronto. Two members from all registered Ontario political parties are invited, Jim and Allen were present.

EO staff are available to come to any meeting anywhere in Ontario to consult with members of any party given reasonable advance notice. They are also happy to answer any questions by phone or email.

Elections Ontario will provide an online 'portal' for all forms and documents (voters lists, maps, etc.).

<http://www.elections.on.ca/en.html> and for candidates: <http://www.elections.on.ca/en/political-entities-in-ontario/candidates.html>

EO will be conducting a simulation of their new voting technology in September 2017. It will be done across 4 regions in Ontario: Greater Toronto, Ottawa region, South-western Ontario and Northern Ontario - All parties are invited to participate. This is the technology they plan to implement in most (5000) of their polling stations for the election June 7, 2018.

The 2 northern ridings (Kenora-Rainy River and Timmins-James Bay) will be divided ("Redistributed") into 3 or 4 ridings; so 122 ridings → 123 or 124 ridings in total, decision by Sept. 2017.

EO privacy policy for election products has been updated. Products covered include;

- PREO (Permanent Register of Electors in Ontario)
- Absentee Register
- Lists produced from the above.

A Party must prepare a Privacy Policy governing Elector information before the Party or any of its candidates can obtain such information. A candidate must file a Privacy Policy before he or she can obtain a list of electors in the Electoral District. Neither Jim nor Allen would recommend that our candidates accept this sensitive information from their Returning Officer. However the riding maps that are offered may be useful.

Candidate Nomination Paper (F0400) **NEW REVISED form.**

Here is the location of the form:

<http://www.elections.on.ca/content/dam/NGW/sitecontent/2017/politicalentities/F0400%20-%20Candidate%20Nomination%20Paper.pdf>

This is the **essential document** that **ALL** of our candidates **MUST** complete to get their name on the ballot for the Ontario Libertarian Party in their assigned riding or electoral district. It has 5 sections:

- Section 1: Candidate Personal and Contact Information, including electoral district, party, and candidate name as it will appear on the ballot (witnessed)
- Section 2: Elector Consent to Candidacy. At least 25 names, addresses and signatures from electors in that electoral district. We recommend 30 to 35 signatures just in case.
- Section 3: Appointment of Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and their contact info.
- Section 4: Appointment of Auditor and their contact info. In most cases the CFO and auditor will be assigned to you by the Party to reduce candidate paperwork burden.
- Section 5: A letter or form endorsing the candidate from the Party Leader.

All sections **MUST** be completed. Candidates may submit their completed F0400 form (including the 25-35 elector signatures from their assigned riding) to EO HQ **before the writ is issued**. The F0400 form may be mailed, faxed, scanned/emailed or dropped off at EO HQ. This revised form will replace the C-1 form because it now includes sections for CFO, Auditor and Endorsement by Party Leader. Candidates will be registered the day the writ is issued and will receive a Certificate of Nomination (form F0403) from EO, which allows them to start accepting donations, incurring expenses and ensures their name appears on the ballot. This is **NEW** and is called a **Standing Nomination**. If the completed F0400 is not submitted before the writ is issued, it must be submitted to the Returning Officer (RO) in the Electoral District by the deadline as before. The RO will issue the Certificate of Nomination F0403.

NOMINATION CONTESTANTS: Effective July 1, 2017, anyone **competing** for the Leadership of the party or competing as the candidate in a riding must comply with:

- The CFO of the party or the Constituency Association (CA) must advise EO when a nomination campaign will begin and end, and must provide a post-nomination report identifying all nomination candidates.
- Contestants must register with Elections Ontario to accept donations or spend money on their nomination campaign.
- Registered Contestants must submit a financial report for the campaign after the nomination closes.

We expect that all of our nominations will be uncontested. That is, the candidate will be assigned or acclaimed. We do not anticipate any of our nomination contestants will need to spend any money to become nominated. In fact we advise candidates **NOT** to collect or spend any money before they become a registered candidate.

DONATIONS: Current and future donors to the party or to any candidate must now certify as follows:

“I certify this contribution made by me is from my own personal funds and I will not be reimbursed for it from any other source.”

That sentence has been added to our donor and membership pages on our web site, and will be added to printed donor/address coupons.

CONTRIBUTION LIMITS:

- \$1,200 per year to a political party, including campaign contributions.
- \$1,200 per year to all Constituency Associations and nomination contestants for a party.
- \$1,200 during each(?) campaign to candidates of a given party.

- \$1,200 x 3 to a Party, its CAs and candidates in a year with a general election or a by-election, possibly more if there is more than one campaign period.
- \$5,000 by a candidate to his own campaign.
- Presumably an individual can contribute to more than one party and donate more than \$3,600 in a year.
- Loan Guarantees are considered to be a contribution, limited to \$1,200. A loan of \$12,000 will require 10 Guarantors.

ATTENDANCE RESTRICTIONS at FUNDRAISING EVENTS: As a result of the "Pay for Access" scandal in 2016, the government decided to modify the Election Finances Act to prohibit MPPs, party leaders, candidates, nomination contestants, leadership contestants and certain key political staff from attending any fundraising event where the ticket includes a donation portion. Attendance restrictions do not apply if no portion of the ticket is eligible for a donation, or if no fee is charged to gain entry to meet a Party Leader or MPP, but have the option of making a contribution by bidding in a silent auction. (??)

Unfortunately this includes leaders and candidates of all parties, even small parties that have absolutely no ability to influence legislation in favour of donors. The Chief Elections Officer (CEO) has agreed that these changes have "unintended consequences" and will recommend changes to these rules when the Legislature returns.

Henceforth all Party Business Meetings (AGMs, Conventions, Policy meetings, Caucus meetings) must exclude the cost of the event from the donation portion. **Fees for our AGMs and Conventions may no longer be treated as donations eligible for a tax credit.**

Excerpted from CFO Handbook for Candidates: Tax credits for individuals

Individuals must include a tax receipt with their tax returns in order to claim the tax credit.

The tax credit discussed in this section is only for political contributions to registered Ontario political parties, constituency associations, leadership contestants and candidates. The tax credit is separate from the tax benefits available for contributions to federal political parties or charitable organizations.

The allowable tax credits for an individual taxpayer under the *Ontario Taxation Act* for the year 2017 are:

- 75 percent of the first \$399 of total contributions;
- 50 percent of the amount between \$399 and \$1,330; and
- 33 1/3 percent of the amount between \$1,330 and \$3,026. The current maximum credit allowable for an individual is \$1,330. The maximum tax credit is obtained when contributions total \$3,026. Either the contributor or the contributor's spouse may claim the tax credit. However, a single contribution may not be split between spouses.