

Role of the RETURNING OFFICER

**(For the Gabriola Fire Protection
Improvement District Elections)**



Gabriola Fire Protection
Improvement District

The Role of the Returning Officer

The Returning Officer accepts the position from the GFPID Board of Trustees & The Board of Trustees sets the Election dates for the Advance & General Election days.

As the person responsible for ensuring the integrity and honesty of the electoral process within an Election, the Returning Officer must also clearly demonstrate certain personal qualities. Sound judgment, patience, tact, discretion, and lots of energy are essential.

Returning Officers must make many important decisions based on local circumstances and conditions, and resolve many problems that can arise over the course of an electoral event.

Respond with patience, good humour and discretion to numerous requests for information from electors and exercise tact and common sense when dealing with complaints from disgruntled electors and with candidates competing against each other during the campaign.

The Returning Officer meets with the Corporate Officer to set up the schedules & form a calendar of events. Plans and organizes the delivery of access to voting to the GFPID Landowners.

In conjunction with the GFPID Corporate Officer, the Returning Officer shall:

- Publishes statutory public notices
- Administers oaths
- Implements security measures as required for the protection of information, assets, staff and the general public at polling sites.
- Assigns election officers to polling stations, train them and issues their supplies
- Arranges for the distribution of the lists of electors to candidates
- Manages the revision and the printing of the lists of electors
- Coordinates, validates and reports on the results of the vote
- Manages the available budget for staff, essential services, supplies, materials and equipment
- Develops a plan/budget for allocating of resources
- Ensures that Poll Clerks are trained in procedures and understand their roles and responsibilities



- Ensures Poll Clerks, Candidates & Scrutineers and staff respect confidentiality guidelines issued by GFPID Policy 24-09
- Determines Election Day supplies & or any office requirements
- Establishes a floor plan and supervises set-up of Election Voting area
- Manages the inventory, supply and distribution of materials
- Ensures the maintenance of peace and good order throughout the electoral process
- Work well under pressure.

Communicates information to the GFPID Board of Trustee's, members of the public, candidates & scrutineers

- Ensures that systems are in place and working efficiently and accurately within the GFPID from Corporate officer & the Returning officer to respond to the needs of personnel and inquiries from members of the public
- Ensure all communications are professional, respectful and provided in requested time
- Contributes to the improvement of the electoral process, (see manual)
- Completes an administrative Election report to the GFPID Board of Trustees
- Participates as requested in event post-mortems and consultations
- Continuously seeks more efficient ways of administering the electoral process within the GFPID electoral district

To ensure a fair and impartial process, the Chair, if (potentially) running for another term, must completely step away from all election-related duties.

The Board then appoints a Trustee representative to serve as the sole, official representative instead of the Chair. This individual functions as the primary liaison between the Board, the Corporate Officer, and the Returning Officer, ensuring that responsibilities are clearly understood from the outset and that the election is conducted in a highly structured, organized manner. Once the election date is officially locked in by a Board motion, the Trustee representative enters the planning and setup phase. This involves meeting directly with the Corporate Officer and the Returning Officer to map out the comprehensive election calendar and timeline, establishing a clear blueprint for all key deadlines.

Ongoing coordination and strict communication protocols are vital to keeping the election on track and preventing organizational issues like triangulation, where individuals become caught between mixed messages or partial data. The representative maintains regular contact with staff and fields general

questions from both the public and fellow Trustees. However, the guide establishes a strict rule for complex or highly specific inquiries: all detailed, technical questions must be routed directly to the Returning Officer or Corporate Officer, who are best positioned to provide definitive guidance. Finally, the representative ensures that public-facing website materials remain accurate, accessible, and up to date to minimize repetitive inquiries and maintain total transparency for voters. (refer to manual-Trustee rep booklet)

Trustee Designate Role

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As a working reference, this document should be reviewed and refined over time. Lessons learned over time, along with practical feedback, should be incorporated to strengthen clarity, consistency, and overall effectiveness. Any questions,

suggested improvements, or requests for clarification in this document should be directed to the Corporate Officer at corporateofficer@gabriolafire.ca.