

DISTRICT OF STEWART COUNCIL
Information Package



2021 Municipal By-Election

General Information for
those considering
nomination for the 2021
Municipal Byelection



MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS OVERVIEW

General municipal elections are held every four years in B.C. Elections are held at the same time for school boards and regional district directors from electoral areas.

All eligible voters are qualified to be nominated for election except for judges, employees of the municipality or the regional district of which the municipality is a member (unless they take a formal leave of absence) and people who are disqualified for other specified reasons, such as having voted as a councillor for an illegal expenditure.

To be eligible to vote, a person must be 18 years or older, a Canadian citizen, a resident who has lived in B.C. for at least six months and a resident of the municipality for the 30 days preceding registration. People who own property in the municipality but do not reside there may be eligible to vote if they meet the other age and citizenship qualifications.

Nominations

Nomination packages will be accepted starting Tuesday, June 1, 2021 at the District office. The nomination period runs from 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, June 1, to 4:00 p.m. Friday, June 11, 2021.

The nomination package will include information on:

- All necessary documents for filing a nomination;
- Qualifications of nominators and nominees;
- Candidate representatives, scrutineers and financial agents;
- Challenge of nominations;
- Financial disclosure form;

Nomination documents are available for public inspection at the District office as soon as they have been received.

Nominators must be electors of the municipality. A person who is entitled to make a nomination may subscribe to as many nomination documents as there are persons to be elected to office.

Campaign Contributions and Election Expenses

All financial agents must open separate accounts at a bank or credit union in the name of the candidate's or elector organization's campaign. The accounts must be used exclusively for the election campaign. All contributions received and all expenses made to the election campaign must be processed through the campaign account.

A candidate or elector organization must not accept campaign contributions or incur election expenses except through their financial agent.

Campaign contributions must not be made except to the financial agent; anonymous contributions in excess of \$50 are not permitted, whether in a single contribution or multiple contributions to a candidate or elector organization; third party contributions are not permitted.

When anonymous contributions in excess of \$50 are inadvertently accepted by either a candidate or elector organization, the contribution must be given by the financial agent to the local government holding the election, for use at their discretion.

The financial agent must record the information outlined in s. 88(1) of the *Local Government Act* for each campaign contribution made, and maintain records of election expenses. The records of contributions and expenses must be kept by the financial agent, candidate or elector organization for seven years after general voting day.

Section 89 of the *Local Government Act* sets out the manner in which campaign contributions of property or services in kind must be valued. It also defines a volunteer for the purposes of valuing service.

Section 89.1 of the *Local Government Act* requires that a candidate's surplus funds of \$500 or more must be paid to the chief election officer. Surplus funds are funds remaining after paying election expenses and expenses incidental to the election campaign and reimbursing the candidate for any cash contributions made with the candidate's own money. Surplus funds must be held in trust by the local government and are to be paid to the financial agent of the candidate if the person is declared a candidate in the next general election or by-election held before that time. If the candidate does not run again, the funds revert to the local government.

Voting Opportunities – BYELECTION

General voting day is **Saturday, July 17, 2021 from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

Advance poll will be held: **Wednesday, July 7, 2021 from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

COUNCIL

The District of Stewart Council is made up of a Mayor and six Councillors. Council makes the major policy decisions for the District.

The most important roles for Council are consideration and passage of municipal bylaws, budget approval, appointment of representatives to the Regional District of Kitimat/Stikine Board and the Northwest Hospital Board, appointment of administrative officials and determining the basic internal organization of the municipality.

Councillors are appointed to sit, as a representative of Council, on various internal Committees or Task Forces; which may vary from time to time.

It is important to note here that, while a Councillor may be representing Council on these committees and commissions, they cannot make a decision on behalf of Council. In many cases a Councillor will sit on these committees/commissions as a non-voting member. Municipal Council speaks with one voice. The Mayor or an individual member cannot bind Council to any decision or action.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Regular meetings of Council are held the second and fourth Monday of each month, beginning at 7:00 p.m – unless the Monday is a Statutory holiday – then the meeting will be on Tuesday. These meetings are open to the public. Meetings are currently being conducted on a virtual/on-line forum via Microsoft Teams.

Agendas for upcoming meetings and minutes that have been approved by Council are posted on the District website (www.districtofstewart.com) or by going directly to the Civic Web Portal: (<https://districtofstewart.civicweb.net/Portal/>). Council may, by resolution, cancel meetings and is known to do so in the summer months and in December.

Committee of the Whole (COTW) meetings are a somewhat less formal format that allows for greater interaction between Council, speakers and staff to address issues. Council may, during any meeting, by motion, resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider specific matters. COTW meetings are open to the public.

In-Camera (Closed) meetings often follow regular meetings and are normally held directly following the Regular Meetings. Special meetings of Council may be called by the Mayor or by two or more Council members. In-camera meetings are closed to the public and can deal only with land, legal and personnel matters.

All Agendas are available to Council digitally through iCompass. If you would like a hard copy of the Council or Committee of the Whole agenda, with all attachments, you may contact the office to make arrangements to have a copy printed for you.

LEGISLATION GOVERNING COUNCIL

The *Local Government Act* and the *Community Charter* govern all acts of Council and some parts of the administration of the District, particularly finance. This legislation regulates meetings, conflict of interest, financial disclosure, elections, etc. While it is important that all members of Council be aware of the legislation as it affects them, you are not required to be conversant on this legislation. The District of Stewart CAO can assist you with any questions you may have on legislation. You may view these acts online:

Local Government Act: https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/r15001_00

Community Charter: https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/03026_00

UBCM and Regional District of Kitimat/Stikine

The Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) and the Regional District of Kitimat/Stikine are two important organizations that the District belongs to.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

Council

The Council serves as the governing body of the District of Stewart and is generally led by the Mayor. The Mayor generally provides leadership to the Council, leading on behalf of Council on various issues and initiatives of the District. The Mayor also presides at Council meetings, provides (on behalf of the Council) general direction to municipal officers, establish standing committees, reflects the will of Council and carry out other duties on behalf of Council.

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

The CAO reports to Mayor and Council. Duties include administration and supervision of municipal affairs; personnel matters including recommendations for appointment, promotion, demotion or dismissal of all directors and senior staff; attending meetings of Council and committees as required; maintain contact with other municipalities and other levels of government; represent Council when

requested in public capacities; direct long range planning and analysis of same and additional duties as may be requested by Mayor and Council.

Unions

District Staff is represented by the Canadian Union of Public Employees (C.U.P.E.) 1804.

FUNCTIONS OF THE DISTRICT

Functions of the District of Stewart include:

Arena and sports facilities	Business licensing
Cemetery	Economic Development
Elections	Emergency planning
Fire protection	House numbering
General administration – purchasing, Contracting, labour relations, etc	Industrial park
Liquid waste management	Land development
Parks	Noise control
Public Works	Planning and zoning
Regulation of nuisances	Recreation facilities
Street cleaning	Storm drainage
Tax collection	Subdivision control
	Water supply and distribution

The above is a very short synopsis of election procedures and municipal operations. Please note that some of the functions listed above may also be performed jointly with or through the Regional District. We invite you to attend Council meetings and talk to the Mayor and Councillors about their duties.

HELPFUL INFORMATION

The District Website has designed a page specifically regarding the upcoming By-election located at:

<https://districtofstewart.com/district-hall/elections>

This page has information regarding voting, and notices that are posted during the by-election period. We encourage you to visit this site to keep informed throughout the process and checkout helpful links with articles and videos regarding running for Council, and becoming a potential candidate.