

**Subject:** Overview of 2022 Municipal and School Board Election

**Recommendation:**

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive Report #2022-0259 - 2022 Municipal and School Board Election, for information.**

**Background:**

The Town of Pelham Clerk's Department has been preparing to facilitate the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election for the last year and a half.

Election Day was Monday, October 24, 2022.

**Analysis:**

**VoterView – Candidate Access Portal**

The Clerk's Department implemented VoterView's Candidate Access Portal this election, being an electronic system allowing candidates to access an up-to-date, accurate voters' list to the minute. The portal replaced the Clerk's Department downloading voters' lists onto individual USB drives or physically printing lists for candidates. Furthermore, the Clerk's Department was able to immediately restrict access to the portal after Election Day. In the past, the Clerk's Department would have to arrange for candidates to return the USB drives or printed lists, which at times caused issues.

The Clerk's Department is only aware of one candidate having access issues. This candidate was provided a copy of the list on a USB drive.

**Voters' List**

Municipalities receive the voters' list from the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC).

In an effort to have the most up-to-date and accurate voters' list, MPAC launched "Voter Look-Up" in late summer, being a tool for electors to update or add their information on the said list. Furthermore, the Clerk's Department attended the Pelham Farmers' Market for two Thursday's in September and invited individuals to check the list and make any necessary corrections.

The Clerk's Department understands the Province of Ontario will be providing the voters' list in 2026. This *new list* is intended to be shared amongst the province and municipalities for provincial and municipal elections. Updates or additions made at either level will carry forward on the voters' list, eliminating duplication of work for the elector.

### **Live Voters' List**

During this election the Clerk's Department implemented a live voters' list during advance voting polls and on Election Day. On Election Day, one of VoterView's servers temporary went down and therefore the program ran slowly for the first hour of voting. However, no other issues were reported to the Clerk.

The use of a live voters' list means all election workers are using a list which is updated to the second. Historically, the Town of Pelham has used a downloaded list which periodically syncs. Using a live list enhances the security of the vote as an elector cannot vote more than once, as the deputy returning officer serving the elector would instantly be notified the elector has already cast a ballot.

The use of a live voters' list also eliminated the need for a Poll Clerk and allowed for more Deputy Returning Officers to be stationed at the polling location. This enhanced voter experience and allowed voters to be served more efficiently and quickly.

This new implementation is also an important step should the Town of Pelham wish to provide 'vote anywhere' elections in the future.

### **Advance Voting**

In total, three advance voting opportunities were held, being: Saturday October 1, 2022 at Pelham Fire Station 2, Saturday October 15, 2022 at the Pelham Meridian Community Centre and Tuesday October 18, 2022 at Old Pelham Town Hall.

In total 1,782 electors took advantage of the advance voting opportunities, as follows:

<b>Advance Polling Date</b>	<b>Ballots Cast</b>
October 1, 2022	394
October 15, 2022	680
October 18, 2022	708

### **Alternative Voting – Special Ballot on Demand – Vote by Mail**

The Town of Pelham adopted vote by mail as the alternative voting method in the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election.

The Town of Pelham received 57 vote by mail applications and delivered 57 vote by mail ballot kits to eligible electors. 52 vote by mail ballots were correctly received and processed. A total of 5 ballot kits were either: not returned, returned late or were returned with no declaration and therefore were not processed. Therefore, the Town of Pelham received an overall 91% success rate using this alternative voting method.

## **Election Day**

The Town of Pelham provided for six polling stations throughout the municipality, and attended three institutions. In total, 3,345 electors voted on Election Day.

<b>Polling Station Location</b>	<b>Polling Subdivision</b>
Pelham Fire Station #3	Ward One
Pelham Fire Station #2	Ward One
Pelham Fire Station #1	Ward Two
Meridian Community Centre – Accursi Room	Ward Two
Pelham Friends Church	Ward Three
Meridian Community Centre – Gym	Ward Three
<b>Institutional Voting</b>	
Lookout Ridge Retirement Community	Ward Two
Shorthills Villa Retirement Community	Ward Two
Woodlands of Sunset Home for the Aged	Ward Three

For the first time, the Meridian Community Centre held two polling stations for two separate wards and saw great success. This demonstrates the ability to use this location as a potential ‘super poll’ in elections to come.

Unofficial results were reported live on the Town’s website and streamed into the Kinsmen Room at the Meridian Community Centre. Since this time, the Clerk’s Department has been notified by the Town’s website provider that numerous Ontario clients experienced website outages and issues which lead to difficulties in displaying results quickly. The Clerk’s Department along with IT will review this process for future elections.

## **Accessibility**

The Clerk’s Department did not receive any complaints with respect to the accessibility of the election, however did receive a compliment from one voter with mobility issues which were served at their car in the parking lot by the Poll Supervisor and Deputy Returning Officer.

The Clerk’s Department will continue to make all efforts to ensure the accessibility of future elections.

## Voter Turnout

The Town of Pelham has 15,852 eligible electors and saw a total of 5,179 cast their ballot during the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election. Therefore, the Town had a 32.62% turnout.

Voter turnout by ward for the 2022 Municipal and School Board Election are as follows:

<b>Ward (incl. nonresident electors)</b>	<b>Eligible Electors</b>	<b>Ballots Cast</b>	<b>Voter Turnout</b>
Ward 1	4,754	1,367	28.85%
Ward 2	5,578	2,043	36.40%
Ward 3	5,520	1,769	32.00%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>15,852</b>	<b>5,179</b>	<b>32.62%</b>

## Voter Turnout throughout the Niagara Region

The Clerk's Department gathered voter turnout statistics throughout the Niagara Region and the Town of Pelham has the sixth highest turnout in the Region.

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Voter Turnout</b>
Niagara-on-the-Lake	47.79%
West Lincoln	43.54%
Wainfleet	41.60%
Grimsby	37.54%
Fort Erie	34.36%
<b>Pelham</b>	<b>32.62%</b>
Port Colborne	31.59%
Lincoln	27.69%
Niagara Falls	27.53%
St. Catharines	26.31%
Thorold	25.06%
Welland	25.00%

## Election Personnel

The Clerk's Department hired and trained approximately 80 election workers throughout the community. These workers, including the Deputy Clerk, Elections Coordinator and Legislative and Committee Coordinator, made running a fair, safe and accessible election for the Town of Pelham possible.

The Clerk's Department has not received any complaints from election personnel, rather have received compliments and interest in returning to work future elections!

**Financial Considerations:**

The Clerk's Department is still receiving invoices from vendors and processing payments, therefore a finalized total of expenses will be provided in a future memo to Council.

**Alternatives Reviewed:**

None.

**Strategic Plan Relationship: Build Strong Communities and Cultural Assets**

A Municipal and School Board election is a significant community event, which encourages active civic engagement. It is important that the Clerk offer a fair, safe and accessible election to the Town of pelham electors. It is equally important to report on the election in an open and transparent manner.

**Consultation:**

None.

**Other Pertinent Reports/Attachments:**

Declaration of Election of Candidates

Final Summary of Election Results

Final Summary of Election Results for Trustee, English Language Public Board

District School Board of Niagara

Final Summary of Election Results for English Separate Trustee

**Prepared and Recommended by:**

Holly Willford, B.A.  
Town Clerk

Sarah Leah, B.A.  
Deputy Clerk

**Prepared and Submitted by:**

David Cribbs, BA, MA, JD, MPA  
Chief Administrative Officer