



Voter Questions

VOTING

When is Election Day?

The first General Election of Tsawwassen Government will take place on September 17, 2009. Voting will take place at the Tsawwassen First Nation recreation centre, located at 1929 Tsawwassen Drive, Tsawwassen, BC, or by mail-in ballot. The polls will be open from 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

How do I know if I'm eligible to vote?

Any one is eligible to vote if they are enrolled as a Tsawwassen Member by the date of the General Election (September 17, 2009). This includes Tsawwassen Members living off Tsawwassen Lands. Tsawwassen Individuals, leaseholders and other non-Member residents of Tsawwassen Lands are not eligible to vote.

Do I need identification in order to vote?

Yes. In order to vote you will be required to provide the election officer with identification that confirms your identity. Any item or two items that together provide your name, signature and current address will suffice. Examples include a Status Card, drivers license, library card, credit card, etc.

Can I vote by mail?

Yes. All eligible voters will be sent a mail-in ballot package. Completed ballots must be received by the election officer no later than 8pm on the Election Day. If you do vote by mail, you will need to have someone over the age of 18 sign a witness statement confirming that it was you that voted.

What if I lose my mail-in ballot package?

If you lose your mail-in ballot package you can contact the election officer to request a replacement ballot. This request must be submitted no later than 10 days before the election to ensure that you receive the package with enough time to return the completed ballot.

What if I have mailed in my vote but want to vote in person on Election Day?

If you send in a mail-in ballot prior to the Election Day and then come and vote in person, the mail-in ballot will not count and the in-person vote will count.

Can I take someone into the voting booth to help me?

No. If you have any questions about how to mark your ballot you may ask the election officer or appointee(s) to clarify the voting instructions. An eligible voter with a disability may request special assistance from the election officer to mark his or her ballot.

Nominations

Can I nominate myself?

Yes. Any individual that wants to run must be nominated for office, but they must be supported by two eligible voters. If you want to submit the nomination form by mail and are unable to get two eligible voters to support your bid, you may fill in your portion of the form announcing your intention to run for office. In this case, the election officer will announce your intention to run and that you are seeking one individual to officially nominate you and one to second your nomination.

How do I nominate someone?

Any eligible voter may nominate or second any other eligible voter to stand as a candidate by mail or in person at the Nomination Meeting. The Nomination Meeting for the General Election will be on July 20, 2009 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the TFN Rec Centre. The election officer will be receiving in person nominations throughout the meeting and opening mail-in nominations.

Whether nominating someone by mail or in person, you must complete a nomination form. That form must then be submitted to the election officer by the close of the Nomination Meeting for an in person nomination or received by the election officer prior to the meeting if submitted by mail.

How many people need to nominate me to run for office?

Two. In order for a nomination to be valid you will need to be nominated by an eligible voter and that nomination must be seconded by an eligible voter.

How many people can I nominate to run in the election?

There is no limit to the number of people you can nominate. You can nominate as many people as you like.

Am I eligible to stand as a Candidate?

Not all eligible voters are eligible to stand as a candidate. In order to be eligible to stand as a candidate, a nominated eligible voter must:

- Have been enrolled as a Tsawwassen Member for the entire 12 month period prior to the nomination day (July 20, 2009) – if you are unsure when you enrolled please contact the eligibility and enrolment committee;
- Be at least 18 years old on the Election Day;
- Not have declared or declare personal bankruptcy June 17, 2009 (the day notice of the election was given) and the Election Day;
- Not be in debt to Tsawwassen First Nation for an amount greater than \$5,000 for a period longer than 90 days – if you have owed \$5,000 or more to Tsawwassen First Nation for the entire period from April 20th to July 20th, you are not eligible to run for office. But if at the start or end of that period, or any time during that period, your debt was below \$5,000, you are eligible to run for office;
- Not have committed an indictable offence, which is a criminal offence which is triable by way of indictment and carries the possibility of imprisonment for two years or more; and
- Not be suspended from elected office on Election Day.

Can I stand as a Candidate for Chief and Legislator?

Yes. If you run for both and are elected for both, you serve as the Chief and not as a Legislator.

Can I stand as a Candidate if I work for Tsawwassen First Nation?

Yes. As long as you meet all other eligibility requirements.

Can I stand as a Candidate if I don't live on Tsawwassen Lands?

Yes. As long as you meet all other eligibility requirements.

What if I decide I don't want to run for office after I've been nominated?

If you are nominated to run for office and you do not feel that you are able to continue to participate as a candidate in the election, you may withdraw your nomination by sending notice to the election officer.

Do I have to pay a fee to stand as a Candidate?

Yes. If you decide to run for a seat in the Legislature, then you must submit a \$50 deposit along with signed documents stating that you are qualified to be a nominee and you accept your nomination. If you are running for Chief, the deposit amount is \$150.

What can I do if I think someone who is nominated is not eligible to run for office?

You should contact the election officer or appointee.

Role and Responsibility of Elected Officials

How long is the term?

The term for the Tsawwassen Government is between 33 and 36 months. This means that the next election for Chief and Legislators will be in approximately 3 years.

What is the time commitment for elected officials? And, can I hold another job and be an elected official?

There are three different positions in the Tsawwassen Government – Chief, Executive Councilor and Legislator – and each role has a different level of responsibility and expected time commitment.

Chief

The office of the Chief is at least a 2/3 time position, and he or she will have a number of responsibilities, both working on behalf of Tsawwassen and representing Tsawwassen in a number of different forums. The Chief will be the head of the Legislature and Executive Council, and will also be a member on various regional boards – such as the Board of Metro Vancouver. Remuneration is provided for the Chief for appointment to the Metro Vancouver board, as determined and paid by Metro Vancouver on a basis equal to other mayors. Given the responsibilities it would be very difficult to continue to hold a full-time position elsewhere and be Chief.

The overall salary for Chief takes the Metro Vancouver remuneration in to account and is set according to it being a 2/3 time position and is \$73,000 per year. That salary includes the Executive Council salary of \$25,500 and the Legislative stipend of \$7,500.

Executive Council Member

The Executive Council will meet weekly throughout the year. If you have another job, and you get elected to the Executive Council (meaning weekly meetings), you will have to manage your schedule to make yourself available for the weekly meetings.

Executive Council salaries are set at \$33,000 per year, which includes a Legislative stipend of \$7,500.

Legislator

The Legislature will meet on a weekly basis during a two-month period. The Legislature will typically meet in the evenings or on weekends in late winter/early spring. In addition, those who live off Tsawwassen Lands should have no problem participating fully as members of the Legislature. If you get elected to the Legislature you will have to manage your schedule and make yourself available for meetings; however, the scheduling will be flexible to ensure that those living off Tsawwassen Lands and holding full-time jobs are able to participate in the Tsawwassen Government.

Legislators receive a stipend of \$7,500 and those that are not on Executive Council are entitled to receive a travel and accommodation expenses relating to the performance of their Legislative duties.

What is the difference between an Executive Council Member and a Legislative Assembly Member?

The Executive Council is made up of the 4 Legislators who get the most votes in the election for the Legislature, and the elected Chief. They will manage the government's day to day operations, debate proposed regulations under Tsawwassen Law and other responsibilities of Tsawwassen Government.

The Legislative Assembly is made up of 12 elected members, including those elected to the Executive Council. The elected Chief will be the 13th member. Specific responsibilities include meeting to debate, consider enacting Tsawwassen Laws and to pass the annual budget.

What if I receive enough votes to become an Executive Council Member but do not want to be one or feel I can not make the time commitment?

No problem! If you were one of the four highest vote getters in the election, but do not want to be on the Executive Council, you can choose to sit only in the Legislature.

Other Questions

Am I allowed to look at the list of eligible voters?

Yes. The election officer posts the voters list in the Tsawwassen administration office.

An eligible voter is also entitled to examine the voters list to see that their date of birth and address is correct. However, the voters list containing addresses and dates of birth of eligible voters may only be viewed and used by the election officer, the deputy election officer or the election clerk.

What can I do if I think someone on the list of voters is not eligible to vote?

If you think someone should or should not be on the eligible voters list you should contact the election officer.

What if my name is missing from the voters list?

If you think your name is missing from the voters list, contact the election officer. Before the election officer can change the list you will need to provide written confirmation from the enrolment committee that you are an eligible voter and should be on the voters list.

Where can I find information on election results?

The election officer will count the ballots after the close of the polls and announce the results at the end of the count. The election officer is also required to complete and post the Official Statement of Results of Election form in the Tsawwassen administration office, in the weekly newsletter, and on the website.

What type of campaigning is permitted? How do I get campaign information to the voters?

Candidates may send advertising to the election officer. If they do so, the candidates must prepare their materials by pre-stuffing it in stamped envelopes. The election team will use the confidential voter's list to apply labels to the envelopes. Once the election officer receives the material, he or she may, in accordance with the regulations, mail the campaign advertising to eligible voters at the address shown on the voters list. The election officer will reject campaign advertising that the election officer considers offensive, inappropriate or that brings the election into disrepute.

No candidate may post campaign advertisements in the Tsawwassen administration offices.

Want more information about the election?

The Election Act, Election Amendment Act and the associated regulations can be found on the TFN website.

For any other questions on voting please call or email:

Election Officer

Gina Beddome

Email: gkbeddome@shaw.ca

Toll free: 1-888-564-4841

Election Clerk

Madonna Mayall-Joe

Email: mmayall-joe@tsawwassenfirstnation.com

Tel: 604-948-5290

For questions about eligibility and enrolment please call or email:

Eligibility and Enrolment Committee

Email: enrollinfo@tsawwassenfirstnation.com

Tel: 604-948-5290

Toll free: 1-888-943-2112

