



The Township of Tarbutt

2026 Municipal and School Board Election

Candidates' Guide

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1.0 Introduction

This guide has been prepared for individuals seeking candidacy in the 2026 Municipal Election for The Township of Tarbutt and the four local school boards in the Algoma District. Although the content of this document highlights many of the electoral processes involved in the upcoming election, candidates are urged to refer directly to the *Municipal Elections Act*, 1996 (MEA), as amended, available at www.elaws.gov.on.ca in order to fully understand all legislative requirements.

Becoming a member of Municipal Council is a **four year commitment** which requires time, dedication, can be controversial at times, but also rewarding. It is imperative that candidates satisfy themselves, through their own determination or on the advice of legal counsel, of the various legal and financial requirements relating to their candidacy. Candidates for School Board offices are encouraged to contact the office of the Director of Education of the appropriate School Board to obtain information on the duties and responsibilities of a trustee. Candidates for the position of representative on the French language School Board should contact the Clerk's Office in Sault Ste. Marie.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing also publishes a Municipal Candidate's Guide and is available for download. <https://www.ontario.ca/document/2026-candidates-guide-ontario-municipal-council-and-school-board-elections>. The provincial guide serves as an excellent supplemental resource with respect to articulating many of the key roles and responsibilities with respect to municipal election campaigns. A copy of the provincial candidates' guide may be provided to you upon request.

Over the course of the next few months, candidates will be receiving information periodically from municipal staff; therefore, it is important that your current contact information is on file with the Clerk. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact the Clerk at the number provided below.

Thank you for your interest in running for a seat on Council, and best of luck.

Carol O. Trainor, CAO/Clerk
Returning Officer
The Township of Tarbutt
705-782-6776

Most of the information for candidates contained in this document will also apply to school board trustee candidates.

2.0 Contact Information

Carol O. Trainor, A.M.C.T.
CAO / Clerk / Returning Officer clerk@tarbutt.ca
The Township of Tarbutt,
27 Barr Road South
Desbarats, Ontario
P0R 1E0
PH: 705-782-6776 Fax: 705-782-4274.

The Role of the Clerk is to prepare for and conduct the election, to uphold the election principles provided herein, to maintain peace and order in connection with the election, and to provide for any matter or procedure that, in the Clerk's opinion, is necessary or desirable for conducting the election.

Additional Election staff will include, but not be limited to Jillian Hayes Elliott, Treasurer, and Jared Brice, Deputy Clerk.

ELECTION PRINCIPLES:

- Secrecy and confidentiality of individual votes
- Fair and non-biased
- Accessible
- Integrity of the process
- Certainty of results
- Voters and candidates will be treated fairly and consistently.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS

Nominations for the Algoma District School Board must be filed with The Township of Macdonald, Meredith & Aberdeen Additional. Nominations must be filed in person with the Clerk at the **Township of Macdonald, Meredith & Aberdeen Additional**, 208 Church Street, Echo Bay, Ontario. Please call 705-248-2441 for more information.

Huron Superior Catholic District School Board nominees must file at the City of Sault Ste. Marie, Office of the City Clerk, 99 Foster Drive. Please call Please call 705.759.5388 or email cityclerk@cityssm.on.ca to schedule an appointment.

3.0 IMPORTANT DATES

Nomination Period: May 1, 2026 to August 21, 2026

Nomination forms may be filed by candidates during regular office hours, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm from Friday, May 1 until Friday, August 21, 2026 at 2:00 pm. Candidates shall not accept contributions or begin their campaign before nomination forms have been filed.

Nomination Day: Friday, August 21, 2026

August 21 is the last day in which nominations may be filed by candidates at the Municipal Office between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. August 21, 2026 is also the last day to **withdraw** nominations. The prescribed form must be submitted to the Clerk's Office in writing and in person before 2:00 p.m.

Campaign Period: From the date of filing through December 31, 2026

The campaign period begins when a candidate files a nomination paper and ends on December 31, 2026 (unless the candidate withdraws the nomination, the nomination is rejected, or the candidate files to extend their campaign to erase a deficit). No signage, campaign material or other promotional material may be distributed outside of the campaign period.

Certification of Nomination: August 24, 2026

The Clerk will certify all nomination papers before 4:00 pm on Monday, August 24, 2026 and notify any candidate deemed to be ineligible for office. Any candidate whose nomination is rejected will be notified as soon as possible. The Clerk's decision is final.

Acclamations: After 4:00 pm on Monday, August 24, 2026, the Municipal Clerk will declare all candidates to be acclaimed if they are the only qualified individuals seeking candidacy for a respective office.

Advance Vote: October 17, 2026

One advance vote will be held on Saturday, October 17, 2026, from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm at the Township Municipal Office, 27 Barr Road South. Candidates may attend the advance vote OR on voting day for the purpose of voting, but may not campaign, display or promote their campaign material anywhere within the voting location, nor may they speak to voters inside or on the property of the voting location.

Voting Day: Monday, October 26, 2026

Polls will be open from 10 am to 8:00 pm. Ballots will be counted following the close of the polls at 8:00 pm on Voting Day. The Clerk will make every attempt to declare unofficial results following the completion of the counting of ballots. All attempts will be made to post official results on the Municipal website by Wednesday, October 28, 2026. These dates are subject to change if a recount is required.

End of Campaign Period: December 31, 2026

This is the last day a candidate can spend money or raise funds for their campaign unless a request to extend the campaign has made and granted. The end of a campaign period can also occur on the date in which a candidate withdraws their nomination, or on the day it is rejected by the Clerk.

4.0 GENERAL INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

Elected Offices

Council members will be elected for the four year period commencing November 15, 2026, and ending November 14, 2030, for the following offices:

- a) One Head of Council / Mayor
- b) Four Councillors to be elected at large.

Qualifications and Eligibility for a Member of Council

A person is entitled to be an elector at an election held in a local municipality if, on voting day, he or she,

- (a) resides in the local municipality or is the owner or tenant of land there, or the spouse of such owner or tenant;
- (b) is a Canadian citizen;
- (c) is at least 18 years old; and
- (d) is not prohibited from voting under subsection (3) or otherwise by law.

Disqualification of a Member of Council

The following are not eligible to be elected a member of a Council or to hold office as a member of a Council under Section 258 of the Municipal Act:

- a) An employee of the municipality;
- b) A judge of any court;

- c) A member of the Ontario legislature, Senate or House of Commons of Canada;
- d) A person who is not disqualified by any legislation from holding municipal office.

A member of municipal Council is disqualified from holding office if, at any time during the term of office of that member, they:

- a) cease to be a Canadian citizen;
- b) are not a resident in the municipality; the owner or tenant of land in the municipality or the spouse of an owner or tenant in the municipality; or
- c) would be prohibited under this or any other Act from voting in an election for the office of a member of Council of the municipality if an election was held at that time.

Elector Qualifications

Sec. 17 (2) of the *Municipal Elections Act*, states that:

A person is entitled to be an elector at an election held in a local municipality if, on voting day, he or she,

- (a) resides in the local municipality or is the owner or tenant of land there, or the spouse of such owner or tenant;
- (b) is a Canadian citizen;
- (c) is at least 18 years old; and
- (d) is not prohibited from voting under subsection (3) or otherwise by law.

Persons prohibited from voting

The following are prohibited from voting:

1. A person who is serving a sentence of imprisonment in a penal or correctional institution.
2. A corporation.
3. A person acting as executor or trustee or in any other representative capacity, except as a voting proxy in accordance with section 44 of the *Municipal Elections Act*.
4. A person who was convicted of the corrupt practice described in subsection 90 (3), if voting day in the current election is less than five years after voting day in the election in respect of which he or she was convicted.

Voters' List:

Elections Ontario is responsible for managing voter information for municipal and provincial elections. Elections Ontario prepares a Preliminary List of Electors and will provide it to municipal clerks after August 14, 2026.

Each certified candidate is eligible to receive a copy of the Voters' List as of September 1, 2026. The List will only be provided upon signing the Declaration of the Proper Use of the Voters' List to comply with the requirements of the *Municipal Elections Act*.

Eligible voters whose names do not appear on the voters' list or who are identified incorrectly may file an Application to Amend the Voters' List with the Municipal Clerk between Tuesday, September 1, 2026 and October 26, 2026 using the prescribed form.

5.0 FILING A NOMINATION FORM

Nominations may be filed from **Friday, May 1, 2026** until Friday, August 21 at 2:00 pm at the Municipal Office, 27 Barr Road South, Tarbutt Township. Nominations must be on the prescribed form and are to be filed in person with the Clerk at the Municipal Office in the following manner:

- in person or through an agent;
- with the original nomination form to be signed in front of the Clerk;
- with the Declaration of Qualifications, signed by the person being nominated;
- with the Consent to Release Personal Information;
- with the prescribed nomination filing fee of \$200.00 for Head of Council and \$100 for all other offices, to be paid by cash, certified cheque or money order payable to The Township of Tarbutt;
- Electronically transmitted nomination papers will not be accepted

If a person is present at the Clerk's Office on Nomination Day at 2:00 pm and has not yet filed a nomination, they may file the nomination as soon as possible after 2:00 pm.

The filing fee will be refunded to all candidates unless a candidate fails to file campaign financial statements by the deadline of December 31, 2026.

A candidate **must** file a nomination paper and pay the nomination fee prior to raising campaign funds or incurring election relation expenses.

Withdrawal of Candidacy

Any candidate wanting to withdraw their nomination must file a Withdrawal of Nomination form in person or through their designated agent at the municipal office (fax or email copies will **not** be accepted) **no later than 2:00 pm on Friday, August 21, 2026**.

A withdrawn candidate will still be required to submit a financial statement covering all financial transactions up to the time of the withdrawal.

Certification of Nomination by Clerk

The Clerk shall examine each nomination that has been filed, in accordance with the following timetable:

- a. All nominations filed on or before Nomination Day shall be examined before 4 pm on Monday, August 24, 2026.
- b. All additional nominations filed under subsection 33(5) shall be examined before 4 pm on the Thursday following Nomination Day (August 27, 2026).

If satisfied that a person is qualified to be nominated and that the nomination complies with the *Municipal Elections Act*, 1996, the Clerk shall certify the nomination by signing the nomination paper.

If not satisfied that a person is qualified to be nominated or that the nomination complies with this Act, the Clerk shall reject the nomination and notify all candidates as soon as possible.

When the Clerk rejects a nomination, they shall, as soon as possible, give notice of the fact to the person who sought to be nominated and to all candidates for the office.

The Clerk's decision to certify or reject a nomination is final.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure they meet all the qualifications and file proper nomination papers. Nomination forms will not be certified until after the nomination period ends. A candidate may find that they are too late to file additional information or provide proof to the Clerk of their qualifications, so filing early is advantageous.

6.0 SCRUTINEERS

Each candidate may appoint a scrutineer for each ballot box in a voting place, if you wish. If you have appointed one scrutineer for each ballot box, a scrutineer must leave while you are in the voting place.

Scrutineers may observe but they are not allowed to interfere with voters, attempt to influence how they vote, or ask a voter how they voted.

You must provide each of your scrutineers with an appointment in writing, which must be provided to election officials at the voting place. Scrutineers may be required to take an oath of secrecy. There are no general restrictions on who can be appointed as a scrutineer however, an acclaimed candidate cannot be appointed as a scrutineer for another candidate.

7.0 ELECTION SIGNS

Placement of Municipal Election Signs may only occur in accordance with the Township's Election Sign Policy available on the Township Website at www.tarbutt.ca

- Election Signs adjacent to a Provincial Highway (Hwy 17 and Hwy 548) are governed by the Ministry of Transportation Election Sign Policy.
- Election signage may not be posted on any private property without the consent of the owner.
- Election signage shall not be placed on any municipal property with the exception of a road allowance, and shall not be placed within 100 yards/92 metres of the Voting Location or Polling Place (Tarbutt Community Hall, 762 MacLennan Road North and 27 Barr Road South).

All election signs on any roadway or private property must be removed within five (5) days after Election Day.

8.0 VOTER INFORMATION

Candidates should encourage eligible electors to log into the Elections Ontario site to ensure that they are registered to vote and that their personal information is correct.

<https://vreg.registertovoteon.ca>

Revisions to the Voters' List

Eligible voters not appearing on the Voters' List can update, add or remove their personal information during the revision period beginning September 1. Revision forms must be completed using the prescribed form and must be presented at the Municipal Office, 27 Barr Road, South, Tarbutt Township. Proper identification verifying both the individual's identity and qualifying address must be presented along with a completed revision form. Changes to the Voters' List cannot be made over the telephone or by e-mail or fax.

Common corrections to the Voters' List include changes of an elector's name, birth date, residential address and school support.

Voting Identification Card: Every person listed as an eligible elector on the Voters' List shall receive a Voter Identification Card (VIC) providing notice of the dates and times the Polling Stations will be open. If eligible voters have not received a VIC two weeks prior to the election, they should contact the municipal office and complete a request to add or revise the voters list.

One Advance Vote day will be held on Saturday, October 17, 2026 from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm at the Tarbutt Municipal Office, 27 Barr Road South.

Voting Day: The MacLennan Hall, 762 MacLennan Road, will be the voting location on Monday, October 26, 2026 with the Polling Station open from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Votes will be counted after the closing of the vote.

Voting Methods: The Township of Tarbutt will be using "Traditional Paper Ballot Voting" for the 2026 municipal election.

Persons Prohibited from Voting

The following persons are prohibited from voting:

- a) A person who is serving a sentence of imprisonment in a penal or correctional institution;
- b) A corporation;
- c) A person acting as executor or trustee or in any other representative capacity, except as a voting proxy in accordance with Section 44;
- d) A person who was convicted of the corrupt practice described in subsection 90(3), if Voting Day in the current election is less than four years after Voting Day in the election in respect of which he or she was convicted.

9.0 CANDIDATE'S FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The following section provides an overview of the various financial responsibilities of a candidate; however, all candidates are urged to refer directly to Sections 88.8 to 88.37 of the *Municipal Elections Act* in order to fully determine the legislative requirements regarding their financial responsibilities. The onus is on candidates to satisfy themselves through their own determination, or with professional assistance, of the various legal and

financial requirements relating to their candidacy. The Municipal Clerk and/or Election Staff are not obliged to interpret the provisions of the MEA regarding these matters.

The Financial Statement, Form 4, must be completed and submitted to the Clerk:

<https://forms.mgcs.gov.on.ca/en/dataset/017-9503p>

Campaign Contributions:

A campaign bank account must be opened prior to any financial transactions for the purposes of an election campaign. All contributions of money and payments for expenses must be deposited into or made from this campaign account. A candidate does not have to open a bank account unless they raise or spend money. All financial documents will be public information and must be made available. Nomination fees are not considered an election expense and will be refunded if the financial statement is filed on time.

Contributions from trade unions and corporations are prohibited.

Anonymous and cash contributions cannot exceed \$25. Cash contributions over \$25 must be recorded so that the contributor's name and account are available.

Self Funding Limit for a candidate and their spouse:

Candidates and their spouses (considered one person) have limits on the amount they can contribute to their own campaign. The self funding limit is based on the preliminary list of electors from the previous election:

- Councillor - \$5,000 + \$.20 per elector, or \$5,132.60.
- Head of Council - \$7,500 + \$.20 per elector, or \$7,632.60.

Maximum Campaign Spending Limits

Campaign contributions are money, gifts, or any type of service that is provided to you for your campaign, including discounts received on purchases, contributions from individuals, and fundraising event expenses. Candidates are required to open a separate bank account which may only be used for campaign spending and contributions. Candidates will be required to report on all transactions in this account following the election.

The general spending limit in 2026 for your campaign is based on a formula:

- \$5,000 + \$0.85 per eligible elector for a council member, or \$5,563.00; and
- \$7,500 + \$0.85 per eligible elector for Head of Council, or \$8,063.00.

Candidates are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with expenses that are ineligible for campaign spending. Cash donations of less than \$25 must be reported. Records must be kept until the subsequent Council takes office in 2030.

Contributions

Contributions are monies, goods or services given to a candidate for their campaign which include:

- The amount charged for admission to a fundraising function
- The difference between the amount paid and the market value of a good or service sold at a fundraising function
- The difference between the amount paid and the market value of a good or service purchased for the campaign, eg) previously used election signs
- Any unpaid but guaranteed balance of a campaign loan

Goods & Services Donated and Deemed not to be Contributions

The following are NOT deemed to be contributions:

- The value of services provided by voluntary unpaid labour
- The value of services provided voluntarily by employees of an entity as long as they do not receive extra compensation from their employer
- An amount of \$10 or less that is donated at a fundraising function
- The value of free political advertising, provided it is in accordance with the Broadcasting Act (Canada) and is made available to all candidates
- The amount of a campaign loan obtained by the candidate or the spouse of the Candidate

Timing of Contributions

Contributions can be solicited by, or accepted on behalf of a person seeking local municipal office between the date of filing the nomination, and December 31, 2026. Any contributions received outside the campaign period must be returned. If they cannot be returned to the contributor, these monies must be turned over to the Municipal Clerk.

Ineligible Contributors

The following shall **not** contribute to a campaign:

- A federal political party registered under the Canada Elections Act or any federal constituency association or registered candidate in a federal election

- A provincial political party, constituency association, registered candidate or leadership contestant registered under the Election Finances Act
- The Crown in right of Canada or Ontario, a municipality or local board
- Trade unions and corporations

Where the candidate learns that a contribution has been made or accepted in contravention to any provision of the Act, the candidate must immediately return the contribution. If this is not possible, any such contribution should be paid to the Municipal Clerk. The following are examples of a contribution which must be returned or paid to the Municipal Clerk:

- Any funds issued/received outside the campaign period
- Any funds issued/received from anonymous sources (except for cash under \$25)
- Any funds received from ineligible sources, eg: corporations or trade unions
- Anonymous donations exceeding \$25.00

Contribution Disclosure

Notice of all contributions received by the candidate within the campaign period must be included on the Form 4 and submitted to the Municipal Clerk in the prescribed form and manner. Financial records shall be available to the public.

How can contributions of cash be made?

Cash contributions may only be accepted up to \$25; contributions of more than \$25 must be made by cheque or money order. Candidates are not required to record the name of the donor, but they must record the fact that the donation was received.

All contributions of goods or services the candidate receives are considered contributions and should be supported by an invoice from the contributor of the good or service. The contribution must be recorded as if it were money. If a supplier charges the candidate less than the market value for the purchase of a good or service, the difference between the amount charged and the market value is a contribution. If suppliers have agreed not to accept payment, such non-payment will constitute a contribution and must be given a receipt.

Who can accept campaign contributions?

Only the candidate and those persons authorized as an agent of the candidate can accept campaign contributions.

How are anonymous contributions handled?

An anonymous contribution cannot be accepted except a donation received at a fundraising event held on behalf of a candidate (eg. "pass-the-hat" donations).

Fundraising

Fundraising activities for a candidate must occur within the campaign period. The MEA defines a fundraising function as “an event or activity held by or on behalf of a candidate for the purpose of raising funds for his or her election campaign”. An account of all revenues and expenses generated from each fundraising function must be included in a candidate's financial statement. The price of admission and/or any amount paid for a good or service (offered for sale in excess of fair market value) is to be treated as a campaign contribution.

Financial Statements and Disclosure

It is the responsibility of the candidate to file a complete and accurate financial statement **in person at Municipal Office** by the deadline applicable to their respective campaign. All nominated candidates for the 2026 Municipal Election (including those who have withdrawn or were not elected) must disclose their contributions and expenses, using the prescribed form, no later than 2:00 p.m. on March 30, 2027.

If a candidate files for an extension to his or her campaign, he or she is **still required to submit a financial statement by March 30, 2027** to account for all expenses related to their campaign up to December 31, 2026 on the prescribed form.

At least 30 days prior to the filing date, the Municipal Clerk will provide to every candidate a notice under which they are required to file as well as with respect to any penalties that may be associated with non-compliance.

Candidate's financial statements are deemed to be public documents and will be available to the public until the new council or local board takes office following the next regular election in 2030.

9.20 Compliance Audits

A Compliance Audit Committee will be constituted and delegated full authority to address any applications requesting an audit of a candidate's financial statement. The Committee's term will be equal to that of the elected council. A Terms of Reference will be established by the Municipal Clerk, and the role of the Committee will be to review

applications and grant or reject audit requests. Where granted, the Committee will appoint an auditor to review the final statement and, where indicated, the Committee will decide whether legal proceedings shall be commenced.

In Tarbutt, the Compliance Audit Committee will be established and operate from the Township of Macdonald, Meredith and Aberdeen Additional.

10.0 THIRD PARTY ADVERTISERS

A Third Party Advertiser is an Ontario resident, an Ontario corporation or an Ontario trade union, and who's Notice of Registration for Third Party Advertiser has been certified by the Clerk.

Eligibility for Registration [MEA Section 88.6 (4), (5) and (6)]

Registration shall be restricted to the following persons and entities:

- An individual who is normally resident in Ontario.
- A corporation that carries on business in Ontario.
- A trade union that holds bargaining rights for employees in Ontario.

The following persons and entities are deemed ineligible to register:

- A candidate whose nomination has been filed.
- A federal political party registered under the *Canada Elections Act* or any federal constituency association or registered candidate at a federal election endorsed by that party.
- A provincial political party, constituency association, registered candidate or leadership contestant registered under the Election Finances Act.
- The Crown in right of Canada or Ontario, a municipality or local board.

A Candidate whose nomination has been filed shall not direct any third party advertisers.

10.2 Filing the Notice of Registration [Section 88.6 (2), (7) and (13)]

"Notice for Registration" shall be filed with the Clerk in the same manner and with the same timelines as those of a candidate.

Any candidate who has any questions about any information contained in this Candidate's Guide, or information that may have been omitted, is encouraged to contact the Municipal Clerk at clerk@tarbutt.ca or the Candidate's Guide prepared by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.