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REPORT TO GOVERNANCE AND FIRST NATIONS RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2026

SUBJECT **Bylaw No. 4781 - Capital Regional District Election and Voting Procedures Bylaw, 2008, Amendment Bylaw No. 5, 2026**

ISSUE SUMMARY

The *Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2025* has amended several sections of the *Local Government Act* (LGA) pertaining to local elections. As a result, the Capital Regional District's (CRD) Bylaw No. 3543, "Capital Regional District Election and Voting Procedures Bylaw, 2008" (Election Bylaw) requires amending in order to remain aligned with provincial legislation and to incorporate updates required for the 2026 General Local Election.

BACKGROUND

With the General Local Election scheduled for October 17, 2026, staff have reviewed the Election Bylaw to ensure it aligns with the changes in provincial legislation that have occurred since the last General Local Election and to address any process improvements that are planned for implementation in the upcoming election.

The proposed bylaw amendment (Appendix A) seeks to align the Election Bylaw with changes advanced by the province regarding protection of the privacy of individuals choosing to run for elected offices, as well as providing flexibility to municipalities and regional districts on receipt of mail ballots. In particular, mail ballots can now be provided at authorized drop-off locations and no longer directly to the Chief Election Officer located at 625 Fisgard Street, Victoria, BC.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Governance and First Nations Relations Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That Bylaw No. 4781, "Capital Regional District Election and Voting Procedures Bylaw, 2008, Amendment Bylaw No. 5, 2026", be introduced, read a first, second, and third time.
2. That Bylaw No. 4781 be adopted.

Alternative 2

That this report be referred back to staff for additional information.

IMPLICATIONS

Definitions

The definition of "Secrecy enclosure" has since been defined in the LGA and the Election Bylaw is being updated to reflect the legislation.

The definition of "Ballot" has been broadened to reflect the complexity and number of elections

that CRD administers for the regional district (i.e. EA Director, SSI Local Community Commission, JDF Land Use Committee) and on behalf of other organizations (i.e. Islands Trust Trustees and School District Trustees).

The previous definition also limited the CRD to a single automated ballot card. The new definition does not limit the CRD to using a single automated ballot card, while still allowing a composite ballot containing candidates for two or more elections and any assent voting question, if all the races can fit on one card. Due to the rising cost of renting automated vote counting systems, the CRD needs the flexibility to use hand counted ballots for voting where there are few electors, such as in a local service area where an assent vote (referendum) is to be held.

Public Access to Nomination Documents

The Election Bylaw allows for the posting of nomination documents to the CRD website. This practice allows the public and nominees to track new nominations as they are submitted during the nomination period. With the new provincial changes, any nomination documents posted to the website will be redacted to remove the residential address of the nominee, other than the municipality, electoral area or treaty lands in which the nominee is a resident. Members of the public may also request to view the documents in person at the CRD office during regular business hours after signing a statement to protect the use of the information reviewed for election purposes only.

Authorized Drop-off Locations

Pursuant to the legislative changes, the Election Bylaw has been amended to also allow for the designation of drop off locations for mail ballots to facilitate mail ballot voting where mail service is not fast enough to allow for return mail to CRD headquarters.

A redlined version of the proposed changes is attached as Appendix B. The proposed changes to the Election Bylaw must be adopted by the CRD Board no later than July 6th to meet the requirements of section 56 of the LGA.

CONCLUSION

With the upcoming General Local Election in October of 2026, staff have reviewed and updated the CRD Election Bylaw to reflect recent legislative changes and implement process improvements necessary to administration of the election.

RECOMMENDATION

The Governance and First Nations Relations Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That Bylaw No. 4781, “Capital Regional District Election and Voting Procedures Bylaw, 2008, Amendment Bylaw No. 5, 2026”, be introduced, read a first, second, and third time.
2. That Bylaw No. 4781 be adopted.

Submitted by:	Marlene Lagoa, MPA, Senior Manager, Legislative Services & Deputy Corporate Officer
Concurrence:	Kristen Morley, J.D., Corporate Officer & General Manager, Corporate Services
Concurrence:	Ted Robbins, B. Sc., C. Tech., Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

- Appendix A: Bylaw No. 4781, “Capital Regional District Election and Voting Procedures Bylaw, 2008, Amendment Bylaw No. 5, 2026”
- Appendix B: Consolidated Bylaw 3543 (redlined)