



March 30, 2017

MEDIA RELEASE

HASTINGS HIGHLANDS ADDRESSES VOTER PARITY

Maynooth, ON– At the Regular Council Meeting of March 22, 2017, Hastings Highlands decided by resolution to solve Voter Parity for the 2018 Election by switching from a wards to an at-large system with a seven member Council of five Councillor positions as well as the Mayor and Deputy Mayor being elected at-large.

On December 14, 2016, Council had received a petition requesting that the Municipality of Hastings Highlands restore the civil rights of its citizens under the Canadian Charter of Rights namely that the value of all electoral votes in the jurisdiction be equal.

It was identified that in the 2014 Election, there were 3,048 electors in Ward 1 (Bangor, Wicklow, McClure), 2,581 in Ward 2 (Herschel) and 1,483 in Ward 3 (Monteagle). The petition stated that the value of a vote in Ward 3 had over twice the value of a vote cast in Ward 1 and almost one and three-quarters the value of a vote cast in Ward 2. Under Section 223(1)(4) of the Municipal Act, the Municipality is required to pass a bylaw in accordance with the petition within 90 days of receiving the petition or anyone who has signed the petition may apply to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) to have the municipality divided or re-divided or have the existing wards dissolved.

Bylaw # 2017-035 will be presented to Council at their meeting on April 19, 2017 with a 45 day appeal period subsequent to the passing of the bylaw.

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For additional information, please contact:

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