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Dear s. 22

Thank you for your correspondence to the Honourable Anne Kang dated March 15, 2023, where you express concerns in relation to the City of Delta's latest general local election. Minister Kang has requested that I respond on her behalf.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs has primary responsibility for local elections legislation including the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* (LECFA). LECFA regulates local elections and local elections participants including individual candidates, elector organizations, and third-party advertising sponsors. Local elections are subject to campaign financing requirements that are similar to provincial elections, including banning campaign contributions from unions, corporations, or other organizations and limiting individual contributions to \$1,250 (in 2022), including money, property and services, per eligible individual to individual candidates or elector organizations, per election campaign. The province has implemented these rules to ensure that local elections are fair and transparent and undue influence arising from unregulated campaign contributions is limited. The rules seek to balance other interests, including an individual's choice to participate in local elections by supporting candidates.

The BC chief electoral officer (CEO) is responsible for administering compliance with the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* (LECFA). In fulfilling this responsibility, the CEO may conduct an investigation of a complaint received by their office regarding non-compliance by a candidate, elector organization, third party sponsor or assent voting advertising sponsor. The CEO must consider whether to investigate complaints alleging a contravention of the campaign financing laws and regulations.

As an independent officer of the legislature, the CEO via Elections BC is the appropriate office to refer specific complaints. They operate independently of political influence to protect the integrity of BCs local elections. As such, I cannot comment on the specifics of an alleged complaint. For more information on Elections BC's Investigation process please visit:

<https://elections.bc.ca/resources/investigations/our-investigation-process/>

Thank you for taking the time to write to Minister Kang.  
Yours truly,

Kara Woodward  
Executive Director  
Local Government Policy, Research & Legislation Branch

Ministry of Municipal Affairs  
Honourable Anne Kang  
Victoria BC.

March 15, 2023

Dear Ms. Kang:

**RE: Municipal Election financing for the City of Delta**

I have some serious concerns about the financing raised by Mayor Harvie and his 'team', "Achieving for Delta" and the methods employed in the last civic election.

I spoke with the elections office and was offered little in the way of assistance but told to register my comments at the investigations email address. I am writing you because I believe the details are worth looking into.

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The City has some major issues to address. An acclamation would not have engendered any discussion about issues like LNG and housing. s. 22

As you are aware, your Ministry instituted new finance regulations around 2017 that were meant to limit financial donations/costs and make the process open to all, including independents. Certainly, the results in Delta and a number of Vancouver municipalities would indicate the regulations have achieved just the opposite. .2)

The election in Delta is a strong case in point. Mayor Harvie included school board trustees on his team in order to be able raise more money. As you are aware, there is very little overlap between council and the school board making this no more than a veiled fund-raising effort.

As a part of the donations collected for the 'Team', the trustee candidates collected \$140,000.

The council race raised another \$160,000 and in total the slate spent an astonishing \$328,000.

One of the two main issues in Delta is housing. The crisis is affordability. However, the Harvie slate labeled it as 'the housing crises'. As a result, they are opening doors for developers/marketers. .1)

One of those is **EverNest Marketing** with Sukh Brar CEO & President. According to your summary information, at least 8 donations of \$1200 or \$1250 came in under the name of Brar.

This is hardly proof of any sort. However, multiple (maximum) donations can be found for at least two other developers. As well, there are names that have double donations, one each to the council and the trustees.

Leveling the playing field was the imperative behind changing the structure of election financing. Clearly this was not the outcome in Delta.

I do not have the resources nor ability to research this, but your ministry does, and it is ultimately responsible to ensure that elections are held fairly and in the spirit of the laws that govern them. How could a city with a population of 100,000 raise \$348,000 for an election that was won with only 17,000 votes?

Surely this represents enough red flags to suggest that the playing field is anything but "level".

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As with all civic elections, very little interest is shown in this democratic process. A strong reason for this is the fact that people feel disenchanting by politics and believe that voting is a waste of time. Much money was collected and spent on this election when the result was a foregone conclusion.

This just shows how little relevance the election has to the democratic process or people's daily lives. Certainly, that is not what you are hoping to achieve. Especially when the prevailing attitude to politics and democracy is carried on to the Provincial and Federal levels.

I sincerely hope you will review the finances for the "Achieving for Delta" slate.

Sincerely

s. 22

Cc Elections BC  
[investigations@elections.bc.ca](mailto:investigations@elections.bc.ca)

- 1.) <https://www.delta-optimist.com/local-news/mayors-message-clear-delta-is-open-for-business-6647576>
- 2.) <https://www.nsnews.com/opinion/editorial-bcs-civic-campaign-finance-laws-are-still-a-mess-6556899>