

City of Sarnia

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Internet/Telephone Voting

More information available online at www.sarnia.ca or by calling the City Clerks Department 519-332-0330 ext. 3320.

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When is the next municipal election?

The next municipal election will be held **Monday, October 22, 2018**. The last municipal election was held on October 27, 2014. Candidates will be able to file nomination papers from **Tuesday, May 1, 2018** up until 2 p.m. on **Friday, July 27, 2018**.

Who is responsible for municipal elections?

Under the *Municipal Elections Act* clerks of local municipalities are responsible for preparing for and conducting elections and must ensure privacy and integrity of the vote.

The clerk must ensure that all voters are given every opportunity to vote and that the voting process is as accessible and accountable as possible.

What has Council decided to date in regards to Internet/ Telephone Voting?

Council at their November 14th, 2016 regular meeting approved the following resolution;

"That Sarnia City Council authorize the use of internet and telephone voting as an alternative voting method in the 2018 municipal election; and;

That Sarnia City Council authorize the City's participation in a joint RFP for Internet/Telephone Service Providers with other municipalities in Lambton County."

At the March 20th, 2017 Council meeting, the awarding of the joint RFP and adopting of the by-law to implement internet/telephone voting was before Council. Council adopted the following resolution:

"That Sarnia City Council accepts the Proposal submitted by Intelivote System Inc. in the amount of \$130,219.12 including non-rebateable HST, for the services of telephone and internet voting.

That Mayor and Clerk be authorized to sign the necessary agreements if required.

That Sarnia City council adopts the By-Law to implement Internet/Telephone Voting for the 2018 Municipal Election.

Staff brought reports forward to Council for consideration as the Municipal Elections Act (MEA) stipulates that the deadline for having this alternative voting

method passed by a municipal Council is May 1st, 2017 for use in the 2018 municipal election.

In the 2015 Budget discussions (held in 2014) funds were included in the election reserve to accommodate internet voting. This was the direction given with the potential of reducing election costs in various areas, such as training, administration, staffing, and resources.

Partner municipalities in Lambton County will be bringing the Internet/Telephone voting proposal to their Council meetings during the March 7th to April 4th 2017 timeframe.

Who are the partner municipalities in Lambton County collaborating on internet/telephone voting as an alternative voting method?

There are eight Lambton County municipalities that were involved in the RFP process. The outcomes of their respective Council decisions are as follows:

- March 7: approved by Oil Springs to proceed.
- March 20: approved by Sarnia City Council to proceed.
- March 27: approved by Petrolia to proceed.
- March 28: approved by Lambton-Shores to proceed.
- March 28: approved by Point Edward to proceed.
- March 28: approved by Warwick municipality to proceed.
- March 29: approved by Plympton-Wyoming to proceed.
- April 4: Enniskillen decided not to proceed.

What are the benefits of Internet/Telephone Voting?

- **Accessibility:** If you are away on travel for either business or personal, may be suffering from illness, shift work, have a disability, or may have difficulty travelling, you can cast your ballot from anywhere with an internet connection or working touchtone telephone.
- **Convenience:** Remotely cast your vote from anywhere using a computer, smart phone, tablet device, or touchtone phone, 24 hours a day over a 10-11 day period of time (to be determined).
- **Enviro-Friendly:** Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions as voters no longer need to travel to polling locations. Additionally, the City will no longer require the printing and subsequent shredding of paper ballots, and will be providing Voters' Lists to candidates in electronic format only.

- **Fast, Reliable, and Secure:** The voting process will be serviced by Intelivote Systems Inc., who have helped to safely and effectively service 63 internet and telephone elections successfully for Ontario municipalities in 2014. As a whole, Intelivote Inc. has conducted over 1,150 elections.
- Other eVoting providers in Canada have also never had a penetration into their system that resulted in a contravened election. The industry keeps an open communication between all the suppliers when it comes to attempts on their technology and shares this type of information.

Will the 2018 municipal election strictly be using the internet/ telephone voting method?

Yes. Internet/telephone voting complies with the *Municipal Elections Act (MEA)* by making the election accessible to all voters, therefore, no paper balloting is required.

The *MEA* permits municipalities to use alternative voting methods that do not require a voter to attend a voting location or poll. This is not to say that polling stations with electronic voting platforms will not be available in the 2018 election; such deliberations will be presented to Council in the coming months.

Staff will be preparing a communications plan to further inform and educate Sarnia voters moving forward to the 2018 municipal Election.

How are security issues addressed for internet/telephone voting in a municipal election?

Many of the security issues have been addressed in the Request for Proposal (RFP); the Vendor, Intelivote Inc. scored the highest out of the various vendors in the technical/security area. Security measures include the following:

- Working in conjunction with internet voting experts (vendor), procedures are established by the municipality to address, mitigate, or eliminate, potential risks by employing both technical and process related security measures designed to support system administration and control user access.
- Technological advances in protective measures such as firewalling (a part of a computer system or network that is designed to block unauthorized access while permitting outward communication), and user authentication techniques (required passwords, etc.), all decrease the likelihood and effectiveness of these threats.
- Proper testing and auditing throughout the various implementation phases

also serves to protect the voting system from external threats.

- Validating the identification of voters is a concern regularly cited with internet voting. To respond, internet voting includes voter authentication practices which can be customized to include personalized security questions and/or unique identification codes (Voter IDs and PINs). Municipalities can request that the vendor include the requirement for an voter to enter an additional verification along with the provided voter ID and PIN (such as birth date). This step helps alleviate concerns associated with the risk of an individual obtaining a Voter Information Letter intended for another voter.
- Only voters on the voters list receive credentials in the mail which will be used to vote online. As with past practices voters must complete a form and/or provide ID to be added to the voters list.

Is a public information meeting required for the process of choosing an alternate form of voting?

It is not a requirement, since 2010 alternate forms for voting such as internet/telephone voting has been discussed by Sarnia City Council and staff.

In 2013, a decision was made by Council to appoint a citizen committee to recommend ways of improving the percentage of qualified voters in municipal elections in Sarnia. Among the Terms of Reference was "to review recommended alternative methods of voting". Advertisements were published seeking volunteers for this committee; however, no inquiries on the committee were received and the Clerk's Department received no applications.

What information was provided to Municipal Councils and staff regarding eVoting prior to the RFP process?

EVoting has been available to Ontario voters in municipal elections since 2003. Preceding and since that time, Evoting vendors have attended the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks & Treasurers (AMCTO) conferences to provide information on what e-voting services are available and to respond to questions. Most recently at the 2016 annual AMCTO conference, Mr. Dean Smith of Intelivote made a presentation on E-voting. After the 2016 annual AMCTO conference, interest was shown by Lambton Area Clerks to investigate eVoting. To date, no municipality in Lambton County had run a municipal election using the telephone/internet voting method.

Mr. Dean Smith was invited to present at the County of Lambton Administration building since it was a central location for area municipalities to attend. An email

invitation was provided to Councils across Lambton last September 2016, and Members of Councils attended the information session with their senior staff. Mr. Smith was asked to speak on the concept of internet/telephone voting as an option for the 2018 municipal Election, and not as a supplier of the service.

Mr. Smith presented information from his broad knowledge of eVoting including the security, legal and operational considerations of eVoting. He attended this session and provided this information at his company's own expense.

During the RFP process what distinguished Intelivote Systems Inc. from Dominion Voting and other vendors?

The Request for Proposal (RFP) had a scoring process based on three main areas; Technical, Financial and the Interview process. Intelivote scored 894 in total by eight of the Lambton area municipality clerks (or their designate). Dominion Voting scored 863 in total. The vendors were close in scoring, but Intelivote addressed security concerns directly and could provide staff assistance with standard operating procedures, project management and educational materials which was important to the eight area municipalities, since this is a new alternative voting method in these jurisdictions.

The other two proponents did not technically meet the threshold before the financials were opened.

How many people are employed by Intelivote Systems Inc.?

Dean Smith is the President and Founder of Intelivote, and the company currently has 9 full time employees (FTE's).

The team is divided into two resource areas; Operational and Technical. The Operational side consists of a Manager and three eVoting consultants. For the Technical side there are four technical staff that support the system and provide technical assistance to their clients as needed. Mr. Smith manages the business operations, providing marketing and sales support.

Has Intelivote Systems Inc. had any legal action against it?

Intelivote was the subject of a legal matter that occurred in November, 2015 where the Federal government's Atlantic Canada Opportunity Agency (ACOA) filed to have Intelivote repay investment loans. ACOA had changed the method of payment based on new rules the government has instituted requiring loans to be paid on a monthly basis rather than as a percentage of revenue per year. This change impacted how and when Intelivote would have to make loan payments and was inconsistent with their business model as

75% of Intelivote's business typically occurs in the 4th quarter each year. Intelivote still has a loan with the AOCA and a negotiated repayment schedule. Link provided to AOCA website: <http://www.acoa-apeca.gc.ca/eng/Accountability/ProactiveDisclosure/GCAwards/Pages/Details.aspx?pno=200548&rtty=2013>

What is Intelivote's prior experience in providing Evoting services to municipalities?

- Intelivote has provided Evoting services to municipalities across Canada since 2010.
- Most recently, Intelivote supported 23 elections in Nova Scotia where over 70% of the voters (over 500,000) in the province could vote electronically in 2016.
- Intelivote currently continues to use their technology to deliver elections across Canada and the United States, and have over 25 municipalities currently signed to 2018 election contracts with another 47 in various stages of review or acceptance.

What is included in the services provided by Intelivote?

- The costs of Voter Instruction Letter printing, production, and postage are included in the services provided by Intelivote. These services represent about 56% contract, or \$68,081 before HST. For comparison purposes, postage and printing costs for the 2014 election totaled \$71,827.
- The remainder of the contract is the cost of eVoting services. This also includes project management, onsite support, and travel. As a result of partnering with other Lambton municipalities, we will receive a discounted price of \$54,464 for eVoting services before HST.

Did staff research the experiences of other municipalities before recommending Intelivote?

- Staff conducted research on the election experience of Ontario municipalities that utilized Intelivote in 2014. Clerks from Ajax, Cobourg, and seven municipalities in Middlesex County were consulted.
- The Town of Ajax used Intelivote in 2014 without paper ballots. Intelivote delivered the service effectively and provided adequate support. Ajax was

able to deliver the election well under budget. No security issues were reported.

- The Town of Cobourg has used Intelivote since 2006 and utilizes their services without paper ballots. Cobourg responded positively regarding technical support and project management. Intelivote has delivered within budget and no security issues were reported.
- The Middlesex County municipalities used Intelivote without paper ballots in 2014. Staff reported that Intelivote security features are “trusted and secure.” Clerks from Middlesex County municipalities reported being “very impressed” with services provided including preparation of procedures and forms, which saved staff time.
- As a follow-up to a recent media interview staff contacted the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). HRM began using Intelivote in 2009. Most recently, Intelivote delivered the advance electronic polling service in HRM’s October 2016 full election. Election staff reported that Intelivote delivered services delivered as expected, and that support service exceeded expectations. HRM consists of former Halifax County and the former separated towns and cities of Halifax, Dartmouth, and Bedford. These were amalgamated in 1996. HRM has over 400,000 residents.
- Intelivote has a long list of clients that includes over 70 Canadian municipalities and over 40 unions and professional organizations. The company grosses millions of dollars a year in revenue and has minimal overhead beyond a staff of nine.
 - Financial due diligence has limitations in any procurement process because it is impossible to know with certainty that a company will remain financially viable. Circumstances can change within months or weeks.
- We understand that Intelivote is in a positive situation to deliver services and meet its debt obligations.

What services does Intelivote provide and what is subcontracted?

- Intelivote provides election software and support services. Intelivote’s main office is in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, and staff are located throughout Canada. Its electronic system is hosted in the Bell Canada Data Centre in Halifax.
- Intelivote will work with an approved elections communications company based in Ottawa for the purpose of producing and mailing secure voter letters.