

Community Government Elections

Mr. Speaker, municipal elections were held in nine hamlet communities in the Northwest Territories on December 10, 2018. There were 71 candidates in total, vying for 46 available seats. I am pleased with the large number of candidates, as this indicates there is keen interest in local government and that individuals want to serve as leaders and decision-makers for their community.

I am also pleased to report that through the elections held on December 10, our territory continues to benefit from near gender parity at the local government level, with 21 female candidates successfully securing seats. In total, 41 per cent of the 71 candidates for municipal office were female, and 46 per cent of those candidates were successful in their bid for a seat.

The voter turnout rate was between 44 per cent and 54 per cent across the territories. Thirty-nine per cent of candidates for councillor positions were acclaimed. Acclamations occurred in the hamlets of Aklavik, Enterprise, Sachs Harbour, and Tuktoyaktuk.

Mr. Speaker, local elections remain important to community residents. Being an elected official is one of the best ways that an individual can support their community in providing a safe, sustainable and healthy environment for their residents.

In addition to those elected in the October Municipal Taxation Authority elections acknowledged in this House in the fall, I congratulate all who were elected on December 10. In particular, I wish to congratulate Mayor William Koe in Fort McPherson; Mayor Ray Ruben in Paulatuk; Mayor Floyd Lennie in Sachs Harbour; Mayor Danny Beaulieu in Fort Providence; and Mayor Laverna Klengenberg in Ulukhaktok. I look forward to working closely with each of these community leaders in their new capacity.

Many thanks to all the candidates who ran in the nine community elections. People's willingness to serve is a critical component of democracy at all levels of government.

I would also like to thank the staff and volunteers who led the election process on behalf of the municipalities. It takes dedication and significant effort by many people to support this process behind the scenes, so that residents can exercise their right to vote in elections.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we will see 11 municipal elections held in 2019. There will be five mayor positions and 46 councillor positions available. This will be an opportunity for aspiring candidates in those communities to run for community leadership positions and for residents to choose their decision-makers. I encourage all qualified residents to put their names forward and, especially, to get out and vote.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.