

# HOW TO RUN FOR A TOWN BOARD POSITION

Each of the following forms must be completed and filed on time for candidates for municipal office, in order for the candidate's name to be placed on the ballot for the Spring Primary and/or the Spring Election:

Campaign Registration Statement • Nomination Papers • Declaration of Candidacy

**In the Town of Grand Rapids, candidates for municipal office must file forms and reports with the Town Clerk. Candidates should contact the Town Clerk with any questions.**

Prior to announcing your candidacy for office or circulating nomination papers, a Campaign Registration Statement should be filed in the Town Clerk's Office. The first day for circulating nomination papers is December 1, and the deadline for filing nomination papers is 5:00 P.M. on the first Tuesday in January. If all papers are not turned in by the deadline, the candidate's name will not be placed on the ballot.

Following validity of all forms submitted; the municipal clerk will draw the candidate names by lot for order placement on the ballot.

**Candidates for Town Board Chairman and Town Board Supervisor need to complete the following forms:**

1. **Campaign Registration Statement, Form GAB-1.** Candidates should file a campaign registration statement as soon as intent to seek elective office is known, before funds are collected or spent. The candidate's name will not be placed on the ballot if this form is not filed on time.
  - Sections 3 and 5 are to be completed even if the candidate does not intend to collect or spend campaign funds. If exemption from filing campaign finance reports is selected, sections 3 and 5 should be the candidate's name and financial institution.
  - It is recommended that candidates complete section 4, however it is not required.
2. **Nomination Papers, Form GAB-169.** Nomination papers may be circulated any time *after December 1, and after the candidate has filed a Campaign Registration Statement with the Town Clerk.* Signers must include their complete signature, complete address, and date of signing. The instructions for completion of the nomination papers are on the back of each paper, and should be followed carefully. For the Town of Grand Rapids, not less than 20 nor more than 100 signatures are required on the nomination papers. It is always a good idea to have more than the minimum, just in case some signatures might be declared invalid.
  - Anyone can circulate nomination papers for a candidate; they are no longer required to be an elector of the municipality. However, circulators are certifying that signers are electors of the municipality the candidate seeks to represent.
  - The nomination paper may NOT be left unattended on counters or posted on bulletin boards; the circulator must personally present the nomination paper to each signer.
  - Each nomination paper must be signed by the circulator.
3. **Declaration of Candidacy, GAB-162.** This form must be filed with the Town Clerk no later than the deadline for filing nomination papers or the candidate's name will not appear on the ballot. The candidate must indicate how their name should appear on the official ballot.
  - This form must be sworn to and signed in the presence of a notary or person authorized to administer oaths, such as the municipal clerk.

## CAMPAIGN FINANCING

Candidates are exempt from filing a Campaign Finance Report (GAB-2) if they meet the following criteria:

1. The candidate anticipates that he/she will not accept contributions, make disbursements, or incur loans and other obligations in an aggregate amount exceeding \$1,000 in a calendar year.
2. The Candidate anticipates that he/she will not accept any contribution or cumulative contributions from a single source exceeding \$100 in a calendar year.
3. The candidate or treasurer signs and dates the request for exemption on the Campaign Registration Statements.

The \$100 limit on contributions from a single source does not apply to contributions from a candidate's personal funds for his/her own campaign if the candidate's contributions total \$1,000 or less in a calendar year.

When the candidate is exempt, he/she is not required to file any Campaign Finance Reports. However, the candidate or treasurer is required to keep financial records adequate to meet the requirements of campaign finance law. This means that a record must be kept of all contributions to the committee and of all expenditures.

A candidate who is exempt from filing campaign finance reports may use a personal account as the campaign depository. A separate campaign depository account is not required.

If a decision is made at a later date to exceed the \$1,000 limit on contributions and disbursements, or to raise more than \$100 from a single source for the campaign during a calendar year, the candidate must amend the campaign registration statement immediately.

The Campaign Finance Report (GAB-2), for contributions of \$1000 or more, is a ten page form provided to candidates, upon request, by the Town Clerk.

## ELECTION DAY CAMPAIGN RESTRICTIONS

Persons are prohibited from electioneering on public property within 100 feet of an entrance to a building containing a polling place, or engage in any activity which disrupts voting or interferes with the orderly conduct of the election. This prohibition does not apply to the placement of election signs on private property within the 100 foot radius; an individual may place a political or campaign sign upon residential property owned or occupied by that individual during an election campaign period.

- ✓ **The Town Clerk, Election Inspector, or Police Officer may remove posters or other advertising which is placed in violation of this section and/or sign restrictions.**

## SIGN RESTRICTIONS

**Political and Campaign Signs.** Political and campaign signs do not require a permit; however are subject to the following regulations:

1. Signs may not be erected earlier than December 1<sup>st</sup>, and shall be removed within 15 days following close of polls on Election Day.

2. No sign shall be located in or over any street right of way nor within the vision clearance triangle as established in the Zoning Code; and must be at least 15' from the driven portion of road or driveway.
3. Must have permission of property owner.
4. Needs to include disclaimer "Paid for By".

### **DISCLAIMERS**

Every communication which is paid for by political funds must contain a disclaimer or attribution statement identifying the source of the funds paying for the communication. This includes every printed advertisement, billboard, handbill, sample ballot, television or radio advertisement or other communication paid for by political funds. Disclaimers should be included on each separate page of a political communication, including letterhead and enclosures. Disclaimers should also be on items such as T-shirts, bumper stickers and yard signs. The disclaimer **must** use the words "**Paid for by**" (abbreviations should not be used for this language) followed by the name of the committee or group making the payment or assuming responsibility for the communication and the name of the treasurer or other authorized agent. When the communication is being paid for through an in-kind contribution, it must bear the disclaimer of the recipient campaign committee. Abbreviations may not be used for the name of a candidate or campaign committee.

No disclaimer is required on:

- personal correspondence not reproduced by machine for distribution.
- a single personal item which is not reproduced or manufactured by machine or other equipment.
- nomination papers even if the papers contain biographical information.
- pins, buttons, pens, balloons, nail files and similar small items on which a disclaimer cannot be conveniently printed.
- envelopes which have campaign committee identification printed on them.

### **FORMATS FOR DISCLAIMERS**

When a communication is paid for by a candidate without a committee, or paid for by an individual, the disclaimer should read: "**Paid for by Mary Smith**".

When the communication is paid for by the campaign committee of a candidate or by a political committee, the disclaimer should read: "**Paid for by Friends of Mary Smith for Mayor, John Jones, Treasurer**" or "**Paid for by the Committee for Voters, John Jones, Treasurer.**"

When the communication is an independent expenditure, either supporting or opposing a candidate, the disclaimer should read: "**Paid for by the Committee for Voters, John Jones, Treasurer. Not authorized by any candidate or candidate's agent or committee.**"

The required forms can be found at the  
Governmental Accountability Board website:  
<http://gab.wi.gov>