

REPORT ON THE CANEFIELD URBAN COUNCIL GENERAL ELECTIONS HELD ON SEPTEMBER 12, 2016

INTRODUCTION

The Electoral Office has the responsibility for preparing and conducting election for members of the Canefield Urban Council. This involves the selection and training of the election officers and preparation of the requisite documents for conducting the election.

LEGISLATION

The Canefield Urban Council election was conducted in accordance with Part IV, Sections 29 to 49 of the Canefield Urban Council Act, Chapter 25:30 of the Laws of Dominica.

Additionally, the election was conducted under the provisions of *Parts V, VI* and *VII* of the House of Assembly (Elections) Act, Chapter 2:01 of the Laws of Dominica.

SELECTION OF ELECTION OFFICERS

A Returning Officer was appointed by the Chief Elections Officer in accordance with Section 31(1) of the Canefield Urban Council Act. The Returning Officer recommended six (6) individuals to assist with conducting the elections as Presiding Officers, Poll Clerks and Assistant Poll Clerks.

Training sessions were conducted by the Returning Officer with the assistance of the Chief Elections Officer prior to Polling Day. The sessions were on the legislation governing the elections and on the procedures to be executed before, during and after the close of poll.

POLLING STATIONS

Two (2) polling stations were established in the municipality to accommodate the electors from Canefield and Morne Daniel in the Community Centre.

NOMINATION DAY

On Tuesday, August 23, 2016, Nomination Day, the Returning Officer and Assistant Returning Officer were available at the Canefield Urban Council Office between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:00 pm to receive nominations.

At the close of the day, there were nine (9) candidates nominated to contest the election. The candidates nominated were:

NAME	ADDRESS
Alliane Martha Abel	Canefield
Ingrid Abraham	Imperial Road, Canefield
C Stiengel Carter	River Estate, Canefield
Michael Coipel	Canefield
Joyce Dupuis	Hummingbird Drive, Canefield
Jefferson Mc Pherson	7th Street, Canefield
Maximin B. Powell	44 12th Street, Canefield
Michael Hazel Timothy	3544 Canefield Highway
Alleyne Wilson	95 Zion House River Estate, Canefield

The Returning Officer also received to Objection Forms from two (2) electors in the municipality objecting to the nomination of Maximin B. Powell. An investigation was conducted by the Returning Officer to determine the residency of the candidate and concluded that based on the information received from the nominators of the candidate, Maximin B. Powell resided in the municipality.

It should be noted that the decision of the Returning Officer can only be subjected to a reversal on an election petition set out in *PART V*, Sections 50 to 52 of the Canefield Urban Council Act.

The Notice of Grant of Poll was published in the *Official Gazette*, The Chronicle and broadcasted on the three (3) radio stations. Additionally, the Notice was posted on the Electoral Office website and Facebook page.

POLLING DAY

On Polling Day, September 12, 2016, both Polling Stations were opened at 8:00 am and remained opened until 5:00 pm.

ISSUES

The issue brought to the attention of the Electoral Office by a report of the Returning Officer was Mr. Oscar Coipel, the father of one of the candidates, was seen distributing leaflets to electors outside of the polling station. Mr. Coipel denied the act when approached by the Returning Officer and was cautioned on his behavior in the vicinity of a polling station. However, an elector handed a leaflet to the Returning Officer stating that it was given by Mr. Coipel on arrival at the Community Centre. The leaflet contained the names of five (5) of the nine (9) candidates contesting the election. The Returning Officer instructed the Police Officer to contact Mr. Coipel to conduct further inquiries; however, Mr. Coipel had left the area. A copy of the leaflet attached as Appendix I.

PRELIMINARY COUNT

The Preliminary count was conducted immediately after the close of poll on September 12, 2016 by the Presiding Officers, assisted by the Poll Clerk and Assistant Poll Clerk, in the presence of the candidates and agents of the candidates and the Police Officers.

The Preliminary results indicated the following:

Alliane Martha Abel	-	146 votes
Ingrid Abraham	-	152 votes
C Stiengel Carter	-	140 votes
Michael Coipel	-	163 votes
Joyce Dupuis	-	161 votes
Jefferson Mc Pherson	-	144 votes
Maximin B. Powell	-	182 votes
Michael Hazel Timothy	-	152 votes
Alleyne Wilson	-	120 votes

SECURITY OF THE BALLOT BOXES

On receipt of the ballot boxes from the Presiding Officers at the end of the Preliminary Count, the Returning Officer ensured that the boxes and documents were received in good condition. The boxes were sealed by the returning Officer and transported them to the Police Headquarters in Roseau to be secured for the night.

FINAL COUNT

The Final Count was conducted by the Returning Officer, assisted by the Assistant Returning Officer in the presence of the candidates, agents and Police Officer.

On completion of the Final Count, the results were as follows:-

Alliane Martha Abel	-	146 votes
Ingrid Abraham	-	152 votes
C Stiengel Carter	-	141 votes
Michael Coipel	-	159 votes
Joyce Dupuis	-	161 votes
Jefferson Mc Pherson	-	144 votes
Maximin B. Powell	-	183 votes
Michael Hazel Timothy	-	151 votes
Alleyne Wilson	-	119 votes

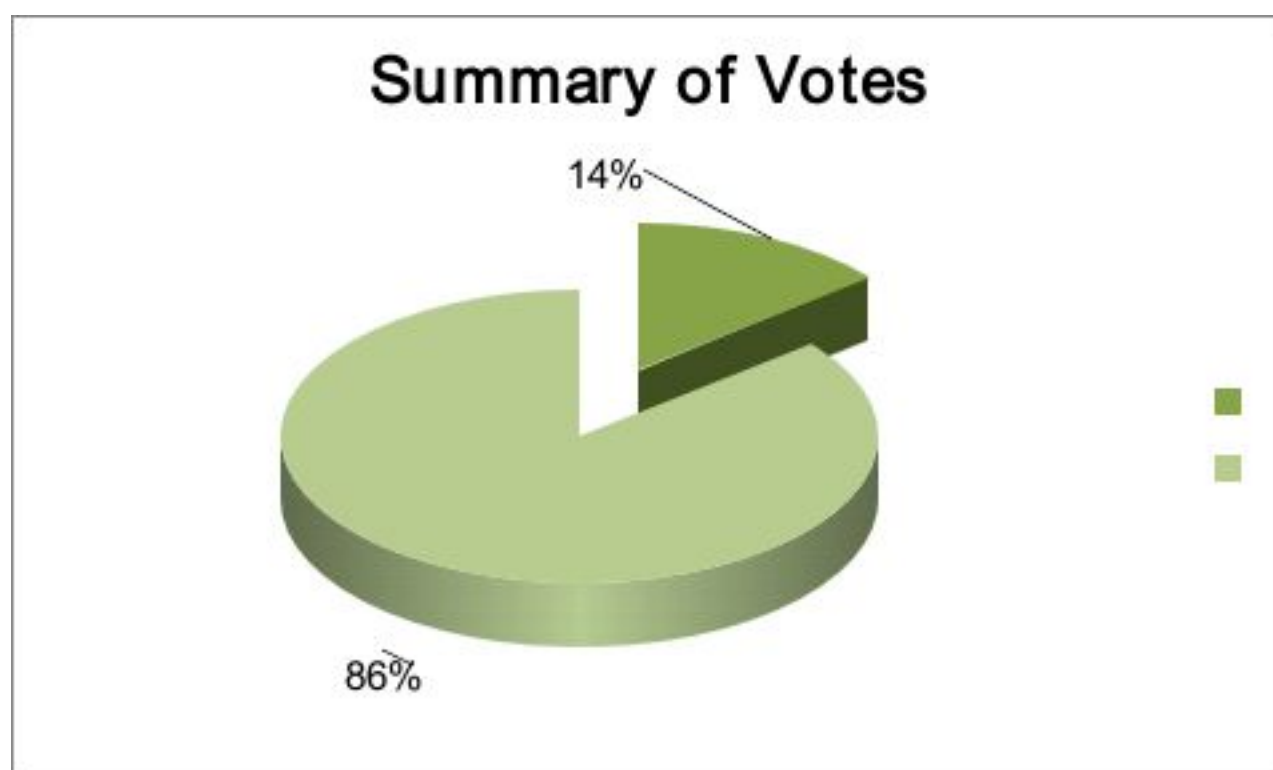
The Returning Officers declared the following candidates as elected:

Maximin B. Powell	-	183 votes
Joyce Dupuis	-	161 votes
Michael Coipel	-	159 votes
Ingrid Abraham	-	152 votes
Michael Hazel Timothy	-	151 votes

A breakdown of the votes by polling station is stated in the Statistical Data.

A total of two thousand, one hundred and forty-five (2,145) electors were registered to vote for the September 12, 2016 with three hundred and three (303) electors voting, representing 14.13% of the electorate. One thousand, eight hundred and forty-two (1,842) electors abstained, representing 85.87% of the registered electors. The table below indicates registered electors, votes cast and abstentions.

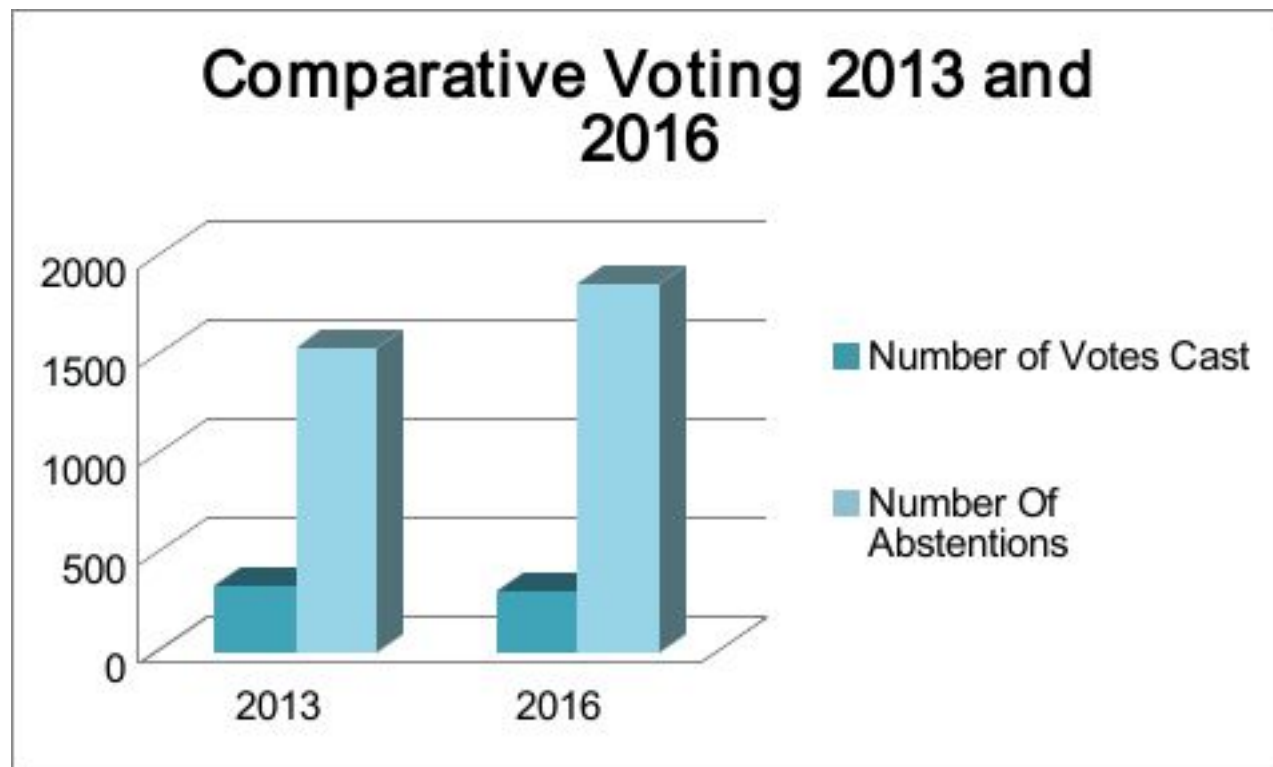
	Total	Percentage of Total
Number of Registered Electors	2145	
Number of Votes Cast	303	14.13
Abstentions	1842	85.87



Summary of Votes Cast

There were six (6) ballots rejected of the total votes cast, representing 1.98%.

The comparative voting for the last two (2) elections is indicated in the table below.



Comparative Voting for 2013 and 2016

A summary of the gender classification of the electors is indicated in the table below. A breakdown of the gender classification of electors who voted is stated in the Statistical Data.

GENDER	Total	% of Voter Turnout
Male	144	47.52
Female	159	52.48
Total	303	100.00

Summary of Gender Classification

DISPOSAL OF DEPOSIT

The candidates, both elected and not elected, received more than one-sixth (1/6) of the total number of votes polled, therefore were entitled to a refund of the deposit of fifty dollars(\$50.00) made on Nomination Day in accordance with Section 33 of the Canefield Urban Council Act.

CUSTODY OF ELECTION DOCUMENTS AND MATERIAL

The Chief Elections Officer has secured the ballot boxes, election documents and material in the storage facility of the Electoral Office in accordance with Section 47 (3) of the Canefield Urban Council Act.

EXPENDITURE

A total of four thousand, five hundred and seventy dollars (\$4,570.00) was expended on conducting the election. The administrative cost for printing of the ballot paper, nomination papers and election documents are factored into the expenditure. Additionally, the mileage done for delivering the material and conducting training of officers is not included in the total amount.

STATISTICAL DATA

The votes cast by polling stations, number of registered electors and the percentages are stated in the table.

SUMMARY OF VOTES BY POLLING STATION

Polling Station	Number of Registered Electors	Number of votes cast	Percentage
Community Centre – Canefield A – I and Morne Daniel	1075	151	14.05
Community Centre – Canefield J - Z	1070	152	14.21
Total	2145	303	14.13

Summary of votes cast by polling station

GENDER CLASSIFICATION

Polling Station	Total Electors	No. of Male Voters	No. of Female Voters	Total	Percentage of Male voters	Percentage of Female Voters
Community Centre – Canefield A – I and Morne Daniel	1075	65	86	151	43.05	56.95
Community Centre – Canefield J - Z	1070	79	73	152	51.97	48.03
Total	2145	144	159	303	47.52	52.48

Gender Classification

AGE CLASSIFICATION

Polling Station	MALE				FEMALE				TOTAL
	YOUNG ADULTS	ADULTS	MIDDLE AGE	SENIORS	YOUNG ADULTS	ADULTS	MIDDLE AGE	SENIORS	
	18 - 25	26 - 49	50 - 59	60 & OVER	18 - 25	26 - 49	50 - 59	60 & OVER	
Community Centre – Canefield A– I and Morne Daniel	2	25	13	25	5	34	16	31	151
Community Centre – Canefield J-Z	6	27	24	22	3	24	22	24	152
Total	8	52	37	47	8	58	38	55	303

Gender and Age Classification

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are forwarded for consideration:-

- A review of Section 31 (7) and (8) should be conducted to allow for the involvement of the Electoral Office in the decision making process of the validity of any objection raised by the electors of the municipality. This would enhance the transparency and management of the election process and reserve the election petition as the final stage thereby saving the financial cost associated with filing such petition after the election has been concluded.
- The inclusion of the provisions of *PARTS V, VI* and *VII* of the House of Assembly (Elections) Act as it relates to the maintenance of the polling stations and influencing of electors in the vicinity of the polling station.
- The clarification of Section 5 (1) (a) relating to the ability to speak, read and write English since this has been raised at every election cycle of the Canefield Urban Council. The procedure to be followed should be clearly stated to avoid putting the Returning Officer and the Electoral Office in the difficult position of determining this qualification by assumption.
- There is a need to stimulate more interest by the Council and Local Government Department in the election of members for Council, since the turnout was only 14.13% as compared to the turnout for General Elections for the area was 56.07%.
- The review of the deposit made by candidates should be undertaken to reflect the responsibilities in accepting to be a candidate for the Local Government Authority.
- A review of the Second Schedule should be undertaken to reflect the provision of Section 36 (4), (5) and (6) as it relates to symbols to be allocated to candidates and the provisions of the House of Assembly (Elections) Act where certain symbols are reserved for political parties.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Electoral Office would like to acknowledge and express gratitude to the stakeholders who assisted in the conducting of the Canefield Urban Council Election. The stakeholders include:-

- The Chief of Police and Officers for providing security at the Polling Station and securing the ballot boxes.
- The Government Printer and Staff for printing the notices and ballot books for conducting the election.
- The Chairman of the Canefield Urban Council for use of the Community Centre as the polling stations.
- The Returning Officer, Assistant Returning Officer, Presiding Officers, Poll Clerks and Assistant Poll Clerks for their cooperation and assistance in conducting the election.
- The Staff of the Electoral Office for their support and assistance in conducting the election.






Chief Elections Officer

Leaflet distributed in the vicinity of the Polling Station

ELECTION NOTICE
CANEFIELD URBAN COUNCIL GENERAL ELECTION – 2016
MONDAY SEPTEMBER 12, 2016.

The progressive team for new vision for Canefield, to provide better community services to you the residents of Canefield. Different colors,

For progress, VOTE THIS TEAM.

TIMOTHY Michael Hazel TIMOTHY		<i>Chair</i>
ABRAHAM Ingrid ABRAHAM		<i>Car</i>
COIPEL Michael Coipel		<i>Boat</i>
POWELL Maximin B POWELL		<i>Flag</i>
DUPUIS Joyce DUPUIS		<i>Lamp</i>

Demarcation of the Canefield Area

The Canefield Area, which is situated in the Parish of St. Paul in the Commonwealth of Dominica, is bounded as follows:

NORTH: Checkhall River from the sea up to the inter-section with the eastern boundary;

SOUTH: Ravine Cocque - from the sea up to its source;

EAST: From the source of Ravine Cocque due north to Bernard Ravine - thence westerly along Bernard Ravine to the boundary of Canefield Estate and Bernard Estate, thence north-westerly along the boundary of Canefield Estate and Roger Estate to the Imperial Road - thence in a straight line north to Checkhall River;

WEST: By the Caribbean sea.