



THE CITY OF
NORTHFIELD
ESTD MINNESOTA 1855

Board and Commission & City Council Member Guide



Updated January 29, 2025

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City of Northfield

Vision

Northfield is an open, safe, and welcoming community, recognized for its world-class colleges and historic riverfront downtown, and is dedicated to sustainably enhancing and preserving its vibrant culture, celebrated arts, strong economy, and an excellent quality of life where all can thrive.

Mission

The City of Northfield works for the common good of our residents and businesses and the improvement of our community by providing excellent, innovative municipal services that carry out the City's vision for a high quality of life for all.

Values

- Teamwork
- Excellence & Innovation
- Integrity
- Celebration
- Stewardship

City Council



Mayor
Erica
Zweifel



Kathleen
Holmes
1st Ward



Chad
Beumer
2nd Ward



Peter
Dahlen
3rd Ward



Jessica
Peterson White
4th Ward



Davin
Sokup
At Large



Brad
Ness
At Large

City Staff

Department Coordination Team



Ben Martig
City Administrator



Jeff Schroepfer
Chief of Police



David Bennett
*Public Works Director/
City Engineer*



Brenda Angelstad
Finance Director



Natalie Draper
Director of Library Services



Michelle Mahowald
*Communications & Human
Resources Director*



Jake Reilly
*Community
Development Director*



Lynette Peterson
City Clerk



Risi Karim
*Assistant to the City
Administrator*



Kurt Wolf
IT Manager

Board and Commission Liaisons and Representatives

Arts & Culture Commission (ACC)

Natalie Draper, Director of Library Services
Becky Novotny, Library Assistant

Charter Commission

Ben Martig, City Administrator
Kirsten Fjeld Zillmer, Meeting Associate

Economic Development Authority (EDA)

Nate Carlson, Economic Development Coord.
Matt Bailey, Meeting Associate

Environmental Quality Commission (EQC)

Risi Karim, Assistant to the City Administrator
Matt Bailey, Meeting Associate

Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC)

Mathias Hughey, Associate City Planner
Matt Bailey, Meeting Associate

Hospital Board

Ben Martig, City Administrator
Zander Abbott, Hospital CEO
Kelly Velander, Hospital Exec. Admin. Assistant

Housing & Redevelopment Authority (HRA)

Melissa Hanson, Housing Coordinator
Kari Bonde, Administrative Associate

Human Rights Commission (HRC)

Claudia Garcia, Spanish Translator
Kirsten Fjeld Zillmer, Meeting Associate

Library Board

Natalie Draper, Director of Library Services
Francisco Murillo, Library Clerk I

Northfield Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention

Meleah Follen, HCI Network Impact Director
Issac Dahl, School Resource Officer

Northfield Area Fire and Rescue Services (NAFRS)

Ben Martig, City Administrator
Jeff Schroepfer, Chief of Police

Mayor's Youth Council

Martha Lundin, HCI Engagement Coordinator

Park & Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB)

Charlie Fredericks, Streets & Parks Manager
Alisha Hayes, Administrative Associate

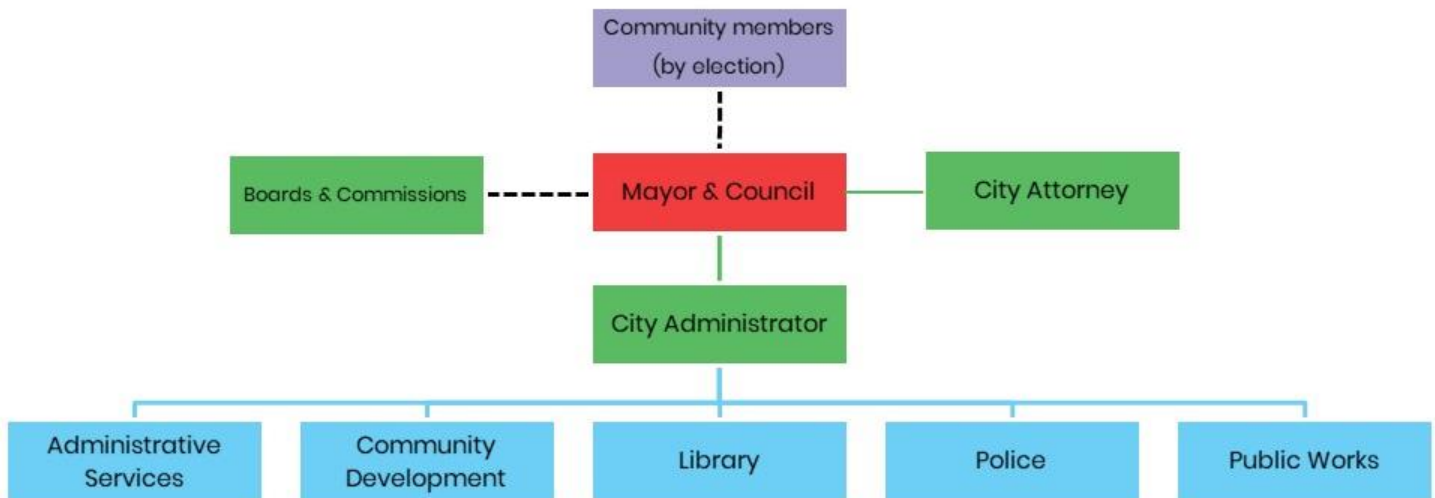
Planning Commission/Zoning Boards of Appeals (PC/ZBA)

Mikayla Schmidt, City Planner
Kari Bonde, Administrative Associate

Northfield Transportation Advisory Committee (NTAC)

David Bennett, Public Works Dir./City Engineer
Cindy Stock, Administrative Associate

City of Northfield Organizational Chart



City Resources (website, social media, Notify Me. Etc.)

City Website and Social Media



<https://www.northfieldmn.gov>



<https://www.facebook.com/cityofnorthfield/>



<https://www.instagram.com/cityofnorthfield/>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/cityofnorthfield>



<https://www.youtube.com/c/CityofNorthfieldMinnesota>

Notify Me



To subscribe to board/commission communications and meeting material through the City's webpage, select **Notify Me** on the homepage or go to northfieldmn.gov/notify. Follow the directions at the top to subscribe or unsubscribe to emails and/or text messages.

Boards and Commissions

Guiding Documents

Guiding Documents

[City Council Rules of Business](#)

[Board and Commission Rules of Business](#)

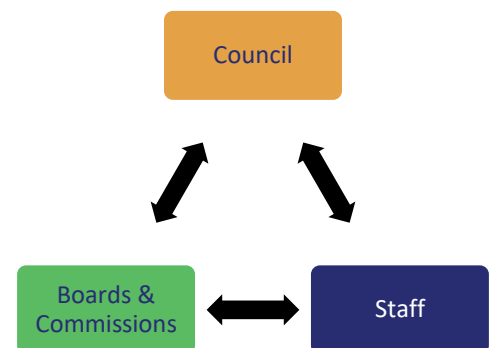
[City Code/City Charter](#)

[Board and Commission Webpages](#)

Roles Council/Boards and Commission/Staff

Northfield's Boards and Commission are established by the City Council and serve as advisors to the Council.

Council	Boards & Commission	Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Determine policy• Hire & supervise City Administrator• Appoint boards and commissions• Approve• Budgets• Ordinances and policies• Development proposals• Variances and rezoning requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide community perspective to Council• Advise Council• Hold hearings as appropriate to the board or commission• Assist as directed in initiative and engagement efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide technical advice to Council and board/commissions• Manage operations and staff• Propose budgets and policy• Carry out Council directives• Deliver services• Enforce codes and policies



Voting Member – A regular member who can participate in voting on board and commission business.

Non-Voting Member – A member of a board and commission who may participate in discussion but cannot vote.

Ex officio Member – A member of a board or commission who holds a position of relevance or is able to offer direction to a board or commission due to their specific area of expertise (ex. City Council Member, specific staff member) but is not eligible to vote.

Election of Officers

The following process shall be utilized for electing officers for boards and commissions:

- The city staff liaison shall give a summary introduction to the topic as outlined in the staff memo, which will include the recommended nomination process noted below.
- Additionally, the following process of taking nominations annually to elect officers may be used by members:
 - The chairperson shall call for any questions or clarifications of the nomination process.
 - The chairperson shall allow each member to express interest, or not, in an office along with any brief explanation. After all members have had the opportunity to express interest, the chairperson shall end the discussion and turn the nomination process over to the vice-chairperson.
 - The vice-chairperson shall then announce that “we will take nominations for the offices of chairperson from members of the floor for the office of chairperson.”
 - Any member may then call out, for example “I nominate _____ [fill in name],” without needing to be recognized by the chairperson. No seconds are necessary. The chairperson then announces, “_____ [Fill in name] is nominated.”
 - When it appears that everyone who wishes to make a nomination has done so, the chairperson says, “Are there any further nominations? [Pause.] If not, [pause] nominations are closed.”
 - Individuals who were nominated could choose to remove themselves from consideration of appointment. They should state “I respectfully decline my nomination.”
 - If only one candidate has been nominated for an office, the chairperson simply declares the nominee elected.
 - If there is more than one candidate, a vote shall be taken based on a motion to select a nominated candidate and second a written ballot process will be conducted with the one receiving majority approval elected. The city staff liaison will have paper and pencils available at the meeting for the ballot vote. The election becomes final when the chairperson announces the result of the candidate is present and does not decline or is absent but has previously consented to serve. Otherwise, it becomes final when an absent candidate is notified and does not immediately decline.

Repeat the process above with the new chairperson to lead the process to elect the “vice-chairperson” office.

Duties of Chair

The duties of the chairperson include but are not limited to the following:

- Provide input to the city staff liaison with preparation of the preliminary agenda.
- Provide input to the city staff liaison to cancel meetings.
- Lead the meeting in accordance with the agenda and facilitate discussion on agenda items.
- Ensure that applicable procedural rules, including this division, are followed and actions are properly taken.
- Provide input to the city staff liaison on the proposed annual work plan and assist on facilitation on implementation with the board or commission.
- Consult with members and work with the city staff liaison regarding meeting attendance issues of members.
- Encourage active participation by members.

Board & Commission Chairs/President

DO	WITH CAUTION	DO NOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow the agenda.• Start and end meetings on time.• Engage board members to speak and take turns.• Set a positive tone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assuming or assigning board members research.• Requesting items to be included on future agendas (consult with staff liaison).• Speaking for the board outside of meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Directing staff time and resources.• Assuming or assigning board member duties (e.g. resolutions, policies, research).• Individually assuming full board responsibilities.

Board & Commission Members

DO	WITH CAUTION	DO NOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be prepared by reviewing meeting agenda and materials.• Participate in discussion.• Keep focus on purpose and duties.• Arrive on time and stay to the end of the meeting.• Respect staff.• Be familiar with Council strategic initiatives and ask questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assuming or assigning board members research.• Requesting items to be included on future agendas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Directing staff time and resources.• Assuming or assigning board member duties (e.g. resolutions, policies, research).• Leading discussion and agenda items.• Speaking for the board and commission.

Board & Commission Staff Liaisons

DO	WITH CAUTION	DO NOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop agenda with input from chair.• Prepare background memos (resolutions, policies).• Take meeting minutes.• Set a positive tone for the meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitate board or commission focus on their purpose and duties.• Work to establish trust and candor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assume chair responsibilities such as running the meeting.• Assuming board responsibilities such as voting or deliberating on debate related to considering an action.

Board and Commission Application and Appointment Process

Below is a summary of the board/commission application and appointment process. For a more detailed document, please contact the Administration office.

May

- Recruitment for the following year will begin via website, social media, and word of mouth.

June

- City Clerk and staff liaisons will review board/commission eligibility and determine member(s) whose terms will expire at the end of the year and who is eligible for reappointment.
- The City Clerk will notify the Mayor of expiring terms, vacancies, etc.
- The City Clerk will prepare a draft letter for review by the Mayor to be sent to those with expiring terms.
- Staff liaisons will inform the Chairperson and members of eligibility.

July

- The City Clerk will publicize vacancies via KYMN Radio, the Northfield News, Northfield.org, the City of Northfield website, and social media beginning July 1.
- The City Clerk works with the Mayor to set up meetings with the City Administrator, City Councilors, Board/commission Chairs, and staff liaisons regarding the appointment process.
- Mayor provides verbal update on appointment process to the full Hospital Board.

August

- Deadline for board/commission applications, except for the Charter Commission.
- Staff work on setting up interviews with applicants.

- Mayor, Hospital CEP, and City Hospital Governance meet to discuss appointment and Mayor selects the interview committee for the Hospital Board process.
- The City Clerk works with the Mayor to set up meetings with prospective board/commission members.

September

- Mayor meets with the City Administrator, and City Councilors, as needed, to update them on the process.
- The Mayor selects those for appointment and the City Clerk works with the Mayor to notify those (via email) who will be presented for appointment.

October

- The City Clerk works with the Mayor to prepare the report for the first October Council meeting where appointments will be presented.
- The City Clerk prepares letters with the Mayor to be sent after the meeting.
- The City Clerk prepares letters with the Mayor to be sent to those not selected for appointment.
- Staff liaisons will contact new board and commission members to provide basic orientation information.

November/December

- Onboarding/orientation for new board and commission members.

January

- New board and commission members will begin their new term.
- Onboarding/orientation for new board and commission members.

February

- Deadline for appointment of new officers for boards and commissions.

Meetings

Common Terminology

Quorum – A majority of voting members; meetings can be held without a quorum of members, but official board or commission business cannot be conducted (i.e. voting). For the City Council and most City boards/commissions, a quorum would be four members.

Open Meeting Law

[What is the Minnesota Open Meeting Law and what is the intent?](#)

All board and commission meetings are considered public meetings. A meeting is defined, by law, as when a quorum (a majority of voting members) of a public body discusses, decides, or receives information as a group on issues relating to official business.

The Minnesota Open Meeting Law is in place to: prohibit actions being taken at secret meetings where the public does have access, ensure the public is fully informed, and afford the public an opportunity to present its views to the public body.

[What are serial meetings/communication?](#)

Exchanges between individual members of a public body on an official topic that collectively involves a quorum, which may include emails or a face-to-face meeting outside of an official meeting and can be subject to the Open Meeting Law.

[What must board and commission members do to comply with the law?](#)

All boards and commissions need to ensure they provide advanced notice of all meetings at least three days prior to the meeting with date, time, place, and purpose. The City of Northfield includes all upcoming official City meetings in a weekly Notice List. Staff liaisons will oversee adding meetings to the Notice List.

Meetings where a quorum might be in attendance but official business will not take place, such as social events, do not need to comply with the Open Meeting Law. However, it is best to err on the side of caution in these instances and ensure proper noticing of the event.

Board and commission members should limit email communication to their staff liaison(s) and not email the full board or commission, to avoid potential open meeting law violations. Board and commission members should also refrain from having discussions about official business outside of meetings.

What are examples of violations of the Open Meeting Law?

Replying to an email which includes all members of a board or commission regarding official business.

Having a discussion on an official topic outside of an official meeting with a quorum of board or commission members.

Not noticing a meeting within the required three days prior to the meeting.

Serial communications between a quorum of individual members regarding official board/commission business.

Data Practices Act

The Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA) controls how government data is collected, created, maintained, used, and disseminated.

The MGDPA regulates, among other things:

- What information can be collected.
- Who may see or have the information.
- Classification of specific types of government data.
- Duties of government personnel in administering processes surrounding the MGDPA.
- Procedures for accessing the information.
- Procedures for classifying information.

Most communications and information related to board/commission work is considered public data.

Contact board and commission staff liaison(s) or the Administration office with questions regarding the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.

Agenda/Meeting Packet

Meeting agenda items are determined by the staff with input from the Mayor/Chair. For additional information refer to the *City Council Rules of Business* or *Board and Commission Rules of Business* for this process.

At least three days prior to a City Council or board/commission meeting, a meeting packet containing the agenda, draft minutes from previous meetings, and any presentations or reports to be addressed at the meetings will be generated in Granicus and sent out to members via the Notify Me feature on the City's webpage. Every member should sign up for Notify Me for the City Council and/or their board/commission.

It is critical that all members review the meeting packet and agenda to ensure they are prepared for the upcoming meeting. Contact City staff with any questions or concerns regarding the meeting packet or agenda.

If a member would like to add an item to the agenda at the meeting, it will need a majority vote of the City Council or board/commission. Adding an item at the meeting is discouraged and should only occur where circumstances necessitate immediate action.

Minutes

City Council and board/commission meeting minutes are the official public record. Minutes will be taken by a designated staff member. Meeting minutes are intended to capture actions taken at a meeting, not discussions. The staff member designated to take minutes will complete the minutes in Granicus and include a draft version of the minutes at the City Council or board/commission meeting. Members will approve or suggest changes to the minutes at the next meeting. Once approved, meeting minutes will be uploaded to the City's website via Laserfiche/Granicus and maintained in accordance with applicable state law.

Robert's Rules of Order "Cheat Sheet"

Order	To do this	You say this	May you interrupt speaker?	Must you be seconded?	Is the motion debatable?	Is the motion amendable?	What vote is required?
1	Adjourn the meeting	"I move we adjourn"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
2	Recess the meeting	"I move that we recess until..."	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
3	Complain about noise, room temperature, etc.	"Point of privilege"	Yes	Yes	No	No	No vote; Chair decides
4	Suspend further consideration of something	"I move we table it"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
5	End debate	"I move the previous question"	No	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds
6	Postpone consideration of something	"I move we postpone this matter until..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
7	Have something studies further	"I move we refer this matter to a committee/attorney"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

Order	To do this	You say this	May you interrupt speaker?	Must you be seconded?	Is the motion debatable?	Is the motion amendable?	What vote is required?
8	Amend a motion	"I move that this motion be amended by..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
9	Introduce business (a primary motion)	"I move that ..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
no order	Object to a procedure or to a personal affront	"Point of order"	Yes	No	No	No	No vote; Chair decides
no order	Request information	"Point of information"	If urgent	No	No	No	No vote
no order	Ask for a vote by actual count to verify a voice vote	"I call for a division of the house"	No	No	No	No	No vote unless objection; then majority
no order	Object to considering some undiplomatic or improper matter	"I object to consideration of this question"	Yes	No	No	No	Two-thirds
no order	Take up a matter previously tabled	"I move we take from the table"	Yes	Yes	No	No	Majority
no order	Reconsider something already disposed of	"I move we now (or later) reconsider our action relative to..."	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
no order	Consider something out of its scheduled order	"I move we suspend the rules and consider..."	Yes	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds
no order	Vote on a ruling by the chair	"I appeal the chair's decision"	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority

The motions or points numbered are listed in established order of precedence. When one of them is pending, you may not introduce another that's listed below but it, you may introduce another that's listed above it. The motion or points that have no established order of precedence may be introduced at any time, except when the meeting is considering #1, #2, or #3.

Ethical and Respectful Conduct

Rules of Business and Decorum

City Council and board/commission members shall follow the Northfield City Council Rules of Business and Northfield Board and Commission Rules of Business, respectively.

City Council, board/commission members, and all in attendance at meetings, shall follow the *Rules of Business and Meeting Rules – Rules of Decorum (Appendix B)*. These rules guide how members and attendees should act in meetings and how presiding officers shall enforce these rules.

Ethical Conduct and Conflict of Interest

All City Council and board/commission members are required to sign a Public Disclosure Form at the beginning of each term recognizing any property or business enterprises they are involved in with. These forms will be sent out by the City Clerk's office. This is a requirement to participate in a City board or commission.

All City Council and board/commission members are required to disclose any conflict of interest they may have related to an issue coming in front of their respective body. If there are questions about a potential conflict of interest, contact staff liaisons for further clarification. They will contact the City Attorney, if needed.

If a member has a conflict of interest they must disclose it to the rest of the City Council or board/commission and abstain from discussing or voting on any items related to that matter.

Respectful Workplace

All City Council and board/commission members should:

- Treat others with courtesy, politeness, and kindness.
- Respect the diverse and varied backgrounds, experiences, personalities, values, and opinions of those they serve with and all they encounter in their board and commission work.
- Listen to the opinions of others and encourage others to share their opinions and ideas.

All City Council and board/commission members should avoid:

- Cutting off or speaking over another's comments.
- Insulting others or disparaging their ideas.
- Exhibiting behavior that can be seen as bullying, belittling, demeaning, judging, condescending, or patronizing.

Communications and Media Relations

Communication between City Council/Board/Commission Members

Limit all communications related to City Council or board/commission business to official meetings. If something needs to be addressed outside of official meetings, contact City staff to initiate and coordinate the email to other members.

Communication with City Council

Staff liaison(s) should be the primary resource for boards and commissions when communicating with the City Council or presenting to the City Council, as well as when receiving feedback or direction from the City Council.

If a board/commission member is requested to speak, they should speak in a clear and concise manner and in consultation with the staff liaison.

Communication with Staff

Staff liaison(s) should be included in all communication to ensure they are aware of all board and commission work.

Board and commission members should rely on staff for support but should not direct their actions or recommendations. Any requests of staff liaison(s) should be directed through the City Administrator or department head to ensure adequate time for staff to work on the request.

Any complaints regarding staff actions should be directed to the City Administrator or department head.

Communication with the Public

If approached by a citizen regarding a general, non-City Council or non-board/commission related concern, refer the resident to staff. This ensures all concerns are routed to the proper staff member(s) and that any relevant background information is considered and passed along to the resident.

When approached by a citizen regarding a specific City Council or board/commission issue, refer them to staff or take their name and contact information and pass along to staff. Do not offer an opinion or any feedback. Depending on the issue and body, there may be legal repercussions to conversations outside of official meetings.

Communication with the Media

All media requests should be referred to the staff liaison(s).

If a City Council or board/commission member wishes to speak to the media regarding events or initiatives they are overseeing they should discuss this with staff beforehand for consultation. Examples include submitting an editorial to the newspaper using your board/commission title or going on the radio to discuss board/commission work.

Guide for Successful Public Service on the City Council or a Board/Commission

City Council Members and/or Board/Commission Members Voting Rights

All members of the City Council and voting board/commission have equal votes. No City Council Member and/or board/commission member has more power than any other member and all should be treated with equal respect. All ex-officio or non-voting board and commission members have the same right to state their opinions and add to the conversation. They just do not have an official vote.

City Council Members and Board/Commission Member Expectations

- Demonstrate honesty and integrity in every action and statement.
- Comply with both the letter and spirit of the laws and policies affecting the operation of the government.
- Serve as a model of leadership and civility to the community.
- Inspire public confidence in Northfield government.
- Work for the common good, not personal interest, considering all impacts, influences and concerns, and not only those that are presented with the strongest emotions.
- Be thoughtful and deliberate when making decisions, relying on the mandate of the City Council or board/commission, City policy, legislation, and legal guidance to drive your decisions. Do not let personal experiences, beliefs, or potential impacts overrule your decision process.
- Attend all City Council or Board/commission meetings. If unable to be at a meeting, notify related staff as early as possible.
- Become familiar with all enabling/guiding legislation related to the City Council and board/commission.

- Prepare in advance of City Council meetings and/or board/commission meetings by having read and reviewed the agenda, meeting packet, and any additional material.
- Be aware of larger City initiatives or strategic directions when deciding on policy and educate yourself about the history, operations, finances, policies, and strategic goals of Northfield and the past and ongoing work of the City Council and board/commission.
- Recognize that there will be ongoing and annual initiatives the City Council and board/commission is working on. While there may be an item a member would like to see initiated, these may have to be delayed or tabled for other, higher priority initiatives.
- Ask questions. If unclear on an issue or item, ask for clarification from staff or other presenters.
- Fully participate in City Council and/or board/commission meetings and other public forums while demonstrating respect, kindness, consideration, and courtesy to others.
- Participate in scheduled activities to increase City Council and/or board/commission effectiveness.
- Review City Council and/or board/commission procedures, such as these guidelines, at least annually.
- Represent the City at ceremonial functions at the request of the Mayor and/or Chair.
- Be responsible for the highest standards of respect, civility, and honesty in ensuring the effective maintenance of intergovernmental relations.
- Respect the proper roles of elected officials, City staff, and appointed officials in ensuring open, transparent, and effective government.
- Accept and respect decisions made by the City Council and/or board/commission as a body. Deliver a consistent message to the community.
- Provide accurate contact information to the City staff.

City Council and Board/Commission Conduct with One Another

City Council and board/commissions are composed of individuals with a wide variety of backgrounds, personalities, values, opinions, and goals. Despite this diversity, all have chosen to serve in public office in order to improve the quality of life in the community. In all cases, this common goal should be acknowledged even as Council Members and board/commission members may “agree to disagree” on contentious issues.

City Council and Board/Commission Conduct in Public Meetings

- **Use formal titles**—The City Council and/or board/commissions should refer to one another formally during meetings as Mayor or Council Member and/or Board Member/Commissioner followed by the individual’s last name

- **Practice civility and respect for discussions and debate**—Difficult questions, tough challenges to a particular point of view, and criticism of ideas and information are legitimate elements of a free democracy in action. Be respectful of diverse opinions.
- **Honor the role of the presiding officer in maintaining order and equity**—Respect the Mayor/Chair's efforts to focus discussion on current agenda items. Objections to the Mayor/Chair's actions should be voiced politely, with reason, and through official actions.
- **Demonstrate effective problem-solving approaches**—Council Members and/or board/commission members have a public stage to show how individuals with disparate points of view can find common ground and seek a compromise that benefits the community as a whole. Council Members and/or board/commission members are role models for residents, business people, and other stakeholders involved in public debate.
- **Be respectful of people's time**—Stay focused on the matter being discussed and act efficiently during meetings.
- **Be prepared**—Review items for discussion prior to the meeting.
- **Submit questions on agenda items ahead of the meeting**—In order to focus the meetings on consideration of policy issues and to maintain an open forum for public discussion, questions which focus on the policy aspects of agenda items should be discussed at the meeting rather than administrative minutia. Any clarifications or technical questions that can be readily answered can be handled before the meeting. Members are encouraged to submit their questions on agenda items to the City Administrator and/or staff liaison as far in advance of the meeting as possible so that staff can be prepared to respond at the meeting. For any technical corrections in meeting information, contact the staff liaison(s) prior to the meeting, not during the meeting.
- **Dress and act professionally at all meetings** – City Council meetings and many board/commission meetings are recorded so be aware of your actions on camera.

City Council and Board/Commission Conduct in Private Encounters

- Treat others how you would like to be treated—ask yourself how you would like to be treated in similar circumstances, and then treat the other person that way.

City Council and Board/Commission Conduct with City Staff

Governance of a City relies on the cooperative efforts of elected officials, who set policy, board/commission members and City staff, which analyze issues, make recommendations, and implement and administer the Council's priorities. Therefore, every effort should be made to be cooperative and show mutual respect for the contributions made by each individual for the good of the community.

- **Treat all staff as professionals**—Clear, honest communication that respects the abilities, experience, and dignity of each individual is expected. As with your Council colleagues, practice civility and respect in all interactions with City staff.
- **Channel communications through the appropriate senior City staff**—Questions of City staff should be directed only to the City Administrator, department heads or staff liaisons. The City Administrator/department head should be copied on any request to senior staff and/or staff liaisons. When in doubt about what staff contact is appropriate, members should ask the Mayor/Chair and/or City Administrator/department head/staff liaison for guidance.
- **All members should have the appropriate information with which to make decisions**—The City Administrator, department heads and/or staff liaisons will endeavor to ensure members are provided with clear and consistent information upon which to base decisions.
- **Never publicly criticize an individual employee**—All critical comments about staff performance should only be made to the City Administrator through private correspondence or conversation.
- **Do not get involved in administrative or personnel functions**—Avoid any interactions with staff that may be construed as trying to shape staff recommendations. Members shall refrain from coercing staff in making recommendations to the City Council and/or board/commission as a whole.
- **Be cautious in representing City positions on issues**—Before sending correspondence related to the legislative position, check with the City Administrator to see if a position has already been communicated. When corresponding with representatives of other governments or constituents remember to indicate if appropriate that the views you state are your own and may not represent those of the full City Council and/or board/commission.
- **Respect the competing demands for staff work**—Requests for information should be made through the City Administrator and/or staff liaison, according to the protocol for channeling communications. Any request which would require an inordinate amount of staff to research a problem or prepare a response may be referred to the full City Council and/or board/commission for direction to ensure that staff resources are allocated in accordance with overall priorities.
- **Support a respectful, positive and constructive workplace**—Members should support the maintenance of a respectful, positive and constructive workplace environment for City staff and for citizens and businesses dealing with the City.
- **Depend upon the staff to respond to citizen concerns and complaints**—It is the role of Council Members to pass on concerns and complaints on behalf of their constituents if the Council Member is not familiar with the current practice/policy/background. Board/commission members should also forward concerns and complaints to the staff liaison. It is not, however, appropriate to pressure staff to solve a problem in a particular way. Refer citizen complaints to

the City Administrator, department head, and/or staff liaison who will coordinate follow-up by the appropriate staff member(s). The City Administrator/department head should be copied on any request to senior staff or staff liaisons. Staff is responsible for making sure the Council Member and/or board/commission member knows how the matter was resolved. If the Council receives a message through their online email form, the Mayor will forward on to staff for response, as needed.

City Council Conduct with Boards and Commissions

The City has established several boards and commissions as a means for gathering more community input. Citizens who serve on boards and commissions become more involved in government and serve as advisors to the City Council. They are a valuable resource to the City's leadership and should be treated with appreciation and respect. Council Members are expected to represent the full Council in providing guidance to boards and commissions. In some instances, Council Members may attend board or commission meetings as individuals, and should follow these protocols:

- **If attending a board or commission meeting, identify your comments as personal views or opinions**—Council Members may attend any board or commission meeting, which are always open to any member of the public. Any public comments by a Council Member at a board or commission meeting should be clearly made as an individual opinion and not as a representation of the feelings of the entire City Council.
- **Remember that boards and commissions are advisory to the Council as a whole, not individual Council Members**—The City Council appoints individuals to serve on boards and commissions, and it is the responsibility of boards and commissions to follow policy established by the Council. Individual Council Members should not feel they have the power or right to unduly influence Board and Commission members in any way if they disagree about an issue. A Board or Commission appointment should not be used as a political “reward.”
- **Concerns about an individual Board or Commission member should be pursued with tact**—If a Council Member has a concern with the effectiveness of a particular board or commission member, the Council Member should consult with the Mayor and City Administrator.
- **Be respectful of diverse opinions**—A primary role of boards and commissions is to represent many points of view in the community and to provide the City Council with advice based on a full spectrum of concerns and perspectives. Council Members may have a close working relationship with some individuals serving on boards and commissions but must be fair to and respectful of all citizens serving on boards and commissions.
- **Keep political support away from public forums**—Board and commission members may offer political support to a Council Member, but not in a public forum while conducting official duties.

Conversely, Council Members may support board and commission members who are running for office, but not in an official forum in their capacity as Council Member.

Staff Conduct with City Council and Board/Commissions

- **Respond to City Council and/or board/commission questions as fully and as expeditiously as is practical**— Senior staff will strive to respond to Council Member and board/commission member inquiries as completely and quickly as practical. If a Council Member or board/commission member forwards a complaint or service request to the City Administrator, there will be follow through with the Council Member and/or board/commission member on the outcome, as deemed necessary.
- **Respect the role of Council Members and/or board/commission members**—Staff is expected to provide its best professional recommendations on issues. Staff should provide information about alternatives to staff recommendations as appropriate, as well as pros and cons for staff recommendations and alternatives.
 - Demonstrate professionalism and non-partisanship in all interactions with the community and in public meetings.
 - It is important for the staff to demonstrate respect for the City Council and/or board/commission at all times. All Council Members and/or board/commission **members should be treated equally.**

Other Procedural Issues

- Don't politicize procedural issues (e.g. minutes approval or agenda order) for strategic purposes.
- Respect the work of the City Council standing committees and boards/commissions.
- Commit to periodical review of procedural rules and guidelines and advise presiding officer of any issues or concerns—throughout the year, Council Members and/or board/commission members should routinely review these guidelines. Questions or unresolved issues should be brought to the Mayor/Chair for clarification or to schedule follow up with the full Council and/or board/commission at a future meeting.

Enforcement

Members have a primary responsibility to assure that these guidelines are understood and followed, so that the public can have full confidence in the integrity of their local government. These guidelines are intended to be self-enforcing thereby requiring an ongoing commitment by members to faithfully honor the trust and dignity bestowed upon them as leaders and community role models.