



CITY COUNCIL: EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF

The purpose of this document is to provide staff with an understanding of City Council's expectations. In turn, it also demonstrates to Council actions they can take so staff are able to meet Council's expectations.

The City Manager and key management staff are responsible for ensuring these values are implemented at all levels of the organization.

CITY COUNCIL EXPECTS:

1. Effective Communications

Reports will be made in an understandable and non-bureaucratic manner. Public presentations will be created for a broad audience when possible. Both staff reports and presentations will include information comprehensive enough such that Council can make informed decisions.

Staff reports should include, where appropriate, equitable information on both pro and con arguments, as well as research explaining best practices at comparable agencies.

Presentation style should encourage open discussion and exchange of ideas. Presentations should summarize the information from the staff report rather than reviewing it verbatim and should be clear as to what the decision would mean to the public.

2. Objective Analysis

Reports and presentations will provide an objective analysis of the issues and not be oriented to the advantage of a particular point of view. Different alternatives or options should be presented.

3. Recommendation

In reports and presentations, there should be a clear staff recommendation on each major issue, with supporting evidence. This professional advice should be given in a forthright and candid manner, regardless of whether opposition is expected. In turn, Council members will not personally attack the staff member delivering a report or presentation, nor will they personalize opposition to a professional recommendation that does not agree with their own point of view.

When the staff recommendation differs from a Board or Commission decision, staff will present Council the Board/Commission's decision and reasoning for that decision in addition to staff's professional recommendation.

4. Faithful Compliance

Staff will enthusiastically and faithfully represent, defend and carry out the direction of the Council even when the final direction is contrary to the staff recommendation. Staff will ask for clarification and restatement of the final direction as needed to avoid confusion.

5. No Surprises

Staff will keep Council well informed as to relevant activity and discussion. Staff will make sure Council is made aware in advance as to potential problems or issues beyond the immediate horizon.

6. Play No Favorites

Staff will maintain open, cooperative, impartial, and supportive relationships with all members of the Council, regardless of any differences of opinion that might exist amongst the Council Members.

7. Availability

The City Manager, City Attorney, and Executive staff will be readily available and responsive to all five members of the Council.

8. Direction

Staff will take direction from the Council, as a body, and not from individual Council Members. Input from individual Council Members is appropriate, encouraged and appreciated. When Council Members provide input or ask questions, staff will not interpret those comments as direction and will follow up through normal procedures and practices.

9. Differences

If differences or discord among the Council and the City Manager, City Attorney, or Executive staff occur, both the Council and staff agree to raise concerns with all relevant parties present.

10. Ethics

Executive staff, as well as other key management staff, will disclose any conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest.

WHAT STAFF MAY EXPECT FROM COUNCIL:

In exchange, Council agrees to consider the following when interacting with staff:

1. Council members will set and remain focused on established Council goals and will understand that work toward these goals takes priority over additional Council requests.
2. Council members will make requests for staff to provide information or agenda items at the appropriate time during Council meetings and will not individually suggest work direction to a staff member.
3. Council members will conduct their dealings with staff via the City Manager, City Attorney and Executive team rather than directly to rank-and-file employees.
4. Council members will listen, ask thoughtful questions, provide input and express their opinions to staff respectfully.
5. Council members will treat the staff member delivering a report or presentation with appropriate courtesy and respect. They will not personalize opposition to a professional recommendation that does not agree with their own point of view.
6. Council members will welcome appropriate feedback from staff when differences occur.
7. Council members will respect the diversity, lived experiences and cultural backgrounds of all staff.