

# THE CITY OF LAKE FOREST

## Principles, Conduct and Procedures for Meetings and Activities

### of the Members of the Lake Forest City Council and Staff

August 22, 2018

The City Council, with the advice and recommendations of its appointed advisory Boards and Commissions, Lake Forest Citizens, and City Staff, is responsible for ordinances and regulatory oversight of the City government. The City Council is charged specifically with:

*The power to pass, publish, amend and repeal all ordinances, rules and police regulations, not contrary to the constitution of the United States or this state for the good government, peace, and order of the City.*

As prescribed in the City of Lake Forest charter:

*The Mayor and Aldermen shall constitute the City Council of the City.*

The City Council includes the Mayor and eight Aldermen, two from each of the City's four wards. The Mayor is elected bi-annually for a two-year term and receives a token salary of \$10 per year. Aldermen are elected to staggered two-year terms, with one Alderman elected from each ward annually. Aldermen receive no compensation.

The City operates under the Council-Manager form of government and is a recognized Home Rule community under Illinois State Statutes. The City also operates under a City Charter. The City Manager is appointed by the Mayor with the consent of the City Council. The City Manager is the Chief Administrative Officer of the City and is responsible for the efficient administration of all departments.

#### **I. Core Values**

City Council members and City Staff must adhere to the following Core Values of the organization and apply them at all times and in every interaction with Council members, City Staff and the public:

- a. Respect and Fairness
- b. Integrity
- c. Excellence in Performance of Duties
- d. Honesty
- e. Empathy
- f. Trust

## **II. Principles**

- a. All persons will be treated fairly and with respect.
- b. The long-term goal of the entire community outweighs any individual opinion or any private or specific interest.
- c. City Council members and City Staff will represent their constituents with truthfulness, dignity and professionalism.
- d. City Council members are expected to be independent, impartial and fair in their judgment and actions.
- e. All officials, whether elected or appointed, and City Staff, will comply with the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, the State of Illinois and the Code, ordinances and policies of the City of Lake Forest in the performance of their duties.
- f. All persons will demonstrate respect for and facilitate an open, deliberate decision-making process. City Council members and City Staff will respect the fact-finding and deliberations of the Boards and Commissions of the City and accord them due deference in the deliberative process, without abdicating the Council's ultimate responsibility as the sole legislative body of the City in that regard.
- g. City Council members and City Staff will represent the official policies and positions of the City. When presenting their personal opinions or positions, they should state that they do not represent the City Council or the City.
- h. All officials, whether elected or appointed, and City Staff, will act in a way that will enhance public confidence in the integrity of local government.
- i. Funding decisions should support effectiveness and economy in providing services and programs, while mindful of the number of citizens benefitting from such expenditures. As such, new initiatives should be quantified, qualified, and evaluated for their long-term merit and overall fiscal impact and other consequences to the community.

- j. City Council members and City Staff will maintain a productive working relationship by adhering to the following expectations and responsibilities inherent to the Council-Manager form of government:

*CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS' EXPECTATIONS OF AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO CITY STAFF*

- Responsiveness to citizenry
- Respect for persons in elective and appointed office
- Availability to discuss issues with respect to input and dialogue
- Clear direction of objectives and priorities
- Honesty in handling of public resources
- Honest feedback on policy decisions and administration
- Adherence to Council policy direction
- Service delivery in the most effective and efficient manner
- Up-to-date information to avoid “surprises”
- Creativity in finding solutions
- Adherence to the established Core Values of Respect, Integrity, Excellence, Honesty, Empathy and Trust
- Necessary resources to complete tasks
- Adequate preparation for City Council meetings
- Safe work environment that encourages productivity and creativity and is free of harassment, intimidation or retribution
- Fair compensation and recognition of performance

*CITY STAFF EXPECTATIONS OF AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS*

- Exhibit respect for administrative and legal processes

- Understand, appreciate and respect the past vision, goals, City policies and plans for the community
- Respect the vision, goals and plans associated with that vision
- Show mutual respect for City Staff members and their professionalism, other City Council members and the public
- Civility in all public discourse, both to and from City Council members, City Staff, and the public, and show zero tolerance for abusive conduct or personal attacks upon the character or motives of public officials, City Staff or members of the public
- Honesty and integrity in interaction with City Staff and the public
- Avoid micromanagement
- Unbiased administration of policy decisions and adherence to established policies
- Options and solutions for solving difficult problems
- Creativity for constant improvement and maintaining best practices for service delivery
- Preparation, engagement and knowledgeable of the issues before the City Council
- Up-to-date information to avoid “surprises”
- Attention to detail

*CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS’ AND CITY STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE PUBLIC*

- Every member of the public should be accorded an ample opportunity to be heard and to have grievances redressed by his or her City government
- Every member of the public should be accorded dignity both in public and private discourse related to City business
- Every member of the public deserves to have his or her concerns replied to by their City government

- Every member of the public has the right to expect his or her taxpayer dollars to be spent fairly, judiciously and only for the improvement of the civic welfare of the community following due public deliberations
- Every member of the public should expect his or her government to treat them equitably and fairly

### **III. City Council Meetings**

Meetings of the City Council bring together individuals with a variety of backgrounds, personalities, values, and opinions for a shared purpose: To effectively promote and protect the health, safety and general welfare of the citizens of Lake Forest for the long-term common good.

City Council meetings are intended to make decisions that formally set municipal programs in motion, enact ordinances, adopt policy, and authorize the expenditure of city funds. This section discusses the conduct of meetings, preparation for meetings, rules of procedure, and encouragement of citizen participation.

#### **a. Meeting Participation**

In addition to the Mayor, who presides over City Council meetings, and the Aldermen, The City of Lake Forest Council meetings will typically include the City Clerk, the City Manager, and the City Attorney. Their specific meeting roles are:

##### **1) Presiding Officer**

The Mayor is the presiding officer of the City Council, and is responsible for ensuring that meetings are orderly, conducted in conformity with the rules of procedure, and progress at an appropriate pace. The presiding officer is responsible for ensuring that council members and citizens have ample opportunity to express their views. The Mayor will recommend one of the Council members to act as presiding officer and to serve in the Mayor's absence.

The Mayor may vote only on matters in cases of a tie vote, or when ½ of the Aldermen have voted in favor of an ordinance, resolution or motion even though there is no tie, or when a vote greater than a majority of the Corporate Authorities is required by statute. The Mayor may veto ordinances passed by the City Council, who, in turn, may override his or her veto by a majority vote of all Aldermen holding office in accordance with the City Charter and City Code.

2) The City Council as a Whole

The City Council will adhere to the City of Lake Forest “Decision-Making Parameters for City Council and Appointed Boards and Commissions” document, adopted by the City Council on June 18, 2018.

3) City Clerk

The City Clerk is the official record keeper. The Clerk is responsible for keeping the official minutes of council meetings. The Clerk’s duties also include preparing and distributing the meeting agenda and minutes, keeping other records, preparing and processing correspondence and reports, and managing the City Council office. The Clerk will typically make certain that all meetings are advertised in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

4) City Manager and City Attorney

The City Manager and the City Attorney serve as resources at City Council meetings, whose responsibilities are set forth in the City Code.

**IV. General Council Standards of Decorum and Conduct**

The City of Lake Forest protocols and procedures for Council meetings have been established to promote that purpose by creating an efficient, effective forum and a positive and professional atmosphere within which the business of the City can be conducted. This shared purpose is acknowledged and affirmed, despite the possible divergent opinions of the individual members of the City Council. Civil discourse is only fostered if it is modeled by how City Council members and City Staff behave toward one another and toward members of the public.

**a. Mayor:**

The Mayor has the responsibility and authority to manage the order of the meeting. All members must respect the decisions of the Mayor, who will respectfully manage public comment.

**b. Civility:**

City Council members should always be respectful of each other, of City Staff, and of the public. All oral discourse should be polite and civil. Members should never be belligerent, impertinent, threatening or disparaging and when

appropriate, should use titles when addressing others. Comments of a personal nature should be avoided. Opinions and positions are more persuasive when expressed civilly.

**c. Preparation for Meetings:**

City Council members are to prepare for meetings in advance. When possible, background and informational questions should be addressed with City Staff members during working hours rather than during City Council meetings, unless the answers to such questions will have an educational value of broad and general applicability. Thorough preparation improves focus on policy matters and fosters effective, efficient meetings.

**d. Focus on Business:**

City Council members should keep focus on the matters of business before them, keeping in mind the principal role of the City Council is executory as policy makers rather than administrators. Discussion of matters not relevant to pending business should be avoided. Members should be respectful of the roles of others and should be good stewards of the time spent during City Council meetings.

**e. Respect for City Staff:**

City Council members should be respectful in every contact and communication with City Staff, recognizing the scope and weight of the City Staff's duties and responsibilities. Positive interactions with others promote greater achievement.

**f. Respect for Speakers:**

City Council members should be fair, patient, and respectful of all individuals who speak before, or make presentations to, the City Council at public meetings or public hearings. No signs of partiality, prejudice or disrespect should ever be evident on the part of any individual City Council member. Full attention should be given to speaker/presenters and side conversations should be kept to a minimum or not held at all. The City Council members should always be mindful that facial expressions and body language can be just as disrespectful as words. Making the public feel welcomed and heard is an important part of the democratic process.

**g. Use of Electronic Technology during Meetings:**

Electronic technology devices should be used by City Council members and Staff judiciously and only for purposes related to the meeting at hand. The use of

such devices for personal/family situations is understood and should be handled in a manner which is not disruptive to the conduct of business.

## **V. Meeting Rules and Procedures**

### **a. Parliamentary Procedure:**

Meetings will be conducted following these rules of Protocols and Procedures. For all matters not governed by these rules, matters of the City Council will be governed by the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order. In the case of an inconsistency or conflict between these rules and Robert's Rules of Order, these rules will apply and control. If a matter is not covered by these rules, then Robert's Rules of Order will apply and control.

### **b. Questions of Order, Decisions:**

All questions of order will be addressed to, and decided by, the Mayor. The Mayor will decide all questions of parliamentary procedure without debate. The decision of the Mayor may be appealed to the City Council by motion stating the question be appealed.

### **c. Agenda Items or New Initiatives:**

If a City Council member is interested in having the Council consider a new initiative (which may or may not require the expenditure of staff time), the matter should first be presented at a regular City Council meeting under "Comments from Council Members" following written notification to the Mayor and City Manager.

- Aldermen should contact the Mayor first to seek approval to discuss a topic at a future City Council meeting under "Comments from City Council Members" agenda item.
- When an Alderman raises a topic at the City Council meeting, the Mayor may choose to discuss it and general next steps or just acknowledge the request and take it under advisement for a future agenda item.
- There is no need to create a process for how an agenda item is added to an agenda for a City Council meeting, as it is at the discretion of the Mayor.

### **d. The Floor:**

A City Council member will not speak until recognized by the Mayor, who will decide who has the floor. City Council members always should act to ensure the



meeting is conducted in a smooth and orderly manner. City Council members will address all comments and discussions through the Mayor. All remarks should be addressed to the merits of the pending matter. Council members should not feel obligated to respond to any question or comment offered through public comment. City Staff will follow up with the speaker within the next few business days.

**e. Roll Call Votes:**

A roll call vote of “ayes” and “nays” will be taken and recorded in the minutes of proceedings for all ordinances and for all resolutions or motions that create any liability against or obligation on the part of the City, or for the expenditure or appropriation of City money, and in all other instances where requests therefore are made by any City Council member.

**f. Subsidiary Motions:**

When a motion is pending before the City Council, no other motion will be considered except one of the following motions:

- 1) To adjourn
- 2) To lay on the table
- 3) To call the previous question, which, if seconded and approved by a 2/3 vote, will end debate on a topic
- 4) To postpone indefinitely
- 5) To postpone to a definite time
- 6) To amend the motion
- 7) To Adjourn: A motion to adjourn is always in order except when:
  - (i) A member is in possession of the floor
  - (ii) A motion on the main question is pending
  - (iii) A motion to reconsider is pending

**g. Confidentiality:**

City Council members will keep confidential all matters and documents discussed in Executive Session or otherwise designated as confidential. That confidentiality will be kept until the City Council has officially declared the matter or document no longer is confidential. To this end, minutes of Executive Sessions should be reviewed regularly to determine if they should be released to the public.

**h. Public Participation**

1) Public Comments:

Comments from petitioners, residents, neighboring jurisdictions, the media and guests may be made only when the applicable matter is on the agenda, or during the time on the agenda reserved for public comment, or with the recognition of the Mayor, and in accordance with any applicable rules on public comment established by the City Council. Upon recognition by the Mayor, Council members may ask clarifying questions but should refrain from debate and argument.

2) Public Hearings:

During public hearings conducted by the City Council, members of the public will be permitted a reasonable opportunity to present relevant testimony and evidence during the public hearing. Interested parties will also be permitted the right to cross-examine witnesses upon request to the Mayor, in writing (on a form provided by the City) prior to the beginning of the hearing.

3) Rules Governing the Scope and Length of Comments:

The City Council may, from time to time, adopt specific rules governing public comment on those matters, provided that such rules are fairly and equally applied to all. Such rules may include, without limitation, requirements for time limits, rules of decorum, and the use of audio or video recording equipment; provided, however, that the use of audio or video recording equipment will not be prohibited. Further, the City Council may set an overall limit at any meeting on the time for public comments, unless waived by the City Council. Individual comments will be limited to one opportunity per person and to not more than three minutes. The Mayor may also request that speakers not repeat or reiterate what a previous speaker said.

4) Decorum:

Speakers are asked to refrain from belligerent, threatening, disparaging, or otherwise uncivil comments. The Mayor may limit the comments of any person who engages in such conduct. No person may continue to speak after the Mayor has taken the floor from that person.

5) Questions and Statements from the Floor:

All questions or statements by a speaker should be directed to the Mayor. The City Council has no obligation to answer questions during public

comment and may refer to staff to follow up with the speaker after the meeting.

6) **No Interruption of Speakers:**

No City Council member should interrupt a speaker during a presentation. The Mayor has the right to interrupt a speaker in order to enforce these or other applicable rules.

7) **Interruptions and Other Disturbances:**

No person should interrupt the proceedings of a City Council meeting, or public meeting, or cause any other form of disturbance or disruption. The Mayor reserves the right to close public comment if, after issuing a warning, audience members persist in cheering, booing or otherwise being disruptive.

8) **Enforcement:**

Any person violating the standards of process and decorum set forth in these rules may be removed from the City Council chamber and City Hall at the order of the Mayor.

## **VI. General Rules for City Council Member Conduct**

a. **Other Activities as City Representative:**

City Council members may not act as or represent the official spokesperson or representative of the City at any meeting, event, or forum unless and except when authorized in advance to do so by the City Council or the Mayor. This rule does not limit a City Council member from participating in informal or unofficial meetings so long as it is clear that the City Council member is participating individually and not directly on behalf of the City. City Council members are discouraged from attending any City Board or Commission meeting to advocate in favor of or in opposition to an issue, or on behalf of petitioners unless expressly disclosed to the City Council or unless the matter before the City Board or Commission relates to the City Council member's property or business. This type of activity can serve to preempt, and otherwise undermine, the work of the Board or Commission and its citizen volunteer members. Every statement and activity related to City business should be considered carefully, for all of them may have an impact on the City.

**b. Ex-parte Contacts:**

City Council members should avoid situations that could give rise to claims of partiality, or would otherwise mitigate the position of the City.

City Council members are discouraged from engaging in communications outside of a public meeting on matters currently before the City Council or City Boards and Commissions, and should disclose any such communications to the City Manager or Mayor. The City Council should be mindful of its Core Values and rights of due process.

**c. Improper Influence:**

City Council members should refrain from using their positions to improperly influence the deliberations or decisions of City Staff, Boards, Commissions, or non-City Council subcommittees of the City.

**d. Commitment of City Resources:**

No City Council member should commit the use of City Staff or other City resource without first coordinating with the City Manager. City resources are limited, and the City Manager is best able to determine the proper allocation of City Staff time and other resources.

**e. City Staff:**

City Council members should not direct City Staff in the conduct of the duties performed by City Staff. If a City Council member wishes to discuss an operational or administrative matter, it should be discussed with a Department Head or the City Manager.

**f. Employee Performance:**

Any concerns by City Council members regarding the behavior or performance of City Staff will be directed to the City Manager privately and not shared with anyone other than the City Manager, Mayor or City Attorney.

## **VII. General Rules for City Staff Conduct**

**a. Respect for City Council:**

City Staff should give the proper respect for the functions and membership of the City Council, recognizing the fiduciary duties and stewardship responsibilities borne by its members. City Staff should be open and forthright with the City

Council about pending matters of policy and City administration. City Council members rely on the faithful counsel of the City Staff.

**b. Informed City Council:**

The office of the City Manager and all other City Departments, as appropriate, should keep the City Council informed on a timely basis regarding pending matters of policy and City administration. For each matter on which the City Council must act following a hearing before a Board or Commission of the City, the City Council will be provided with thorough information of the proceedings of that Board or Commission and any recommendation thereon. The report should include minority opinions, reports, and recommendations, if any. Good decision-making results from correct and timely information.

**c. Impartiality:**

Information that is provided to a member of the City Council in response to a request regarding pending matters of policy and administration should be made available to all members of the City Council so that all have equal access to relevant information.

**d. Responsiveness to City Council:**

City Staff should be prompt and thorough in following directions of the City Council and implementing policy decisions of the City Council. City Staff should act on such matters irrespective of personal opinions. The City Council relies on the City Staff to faithfully carry out City policy.

*The City of Lake Forest's Principles, Conduct and Procedures for Meetings and Activities of the Members of the Lake Forest City Council and Staff shall be reviewed by the City Council on an annual basis.*

*This document is intended to serve as a set of guiding principles and recommended procedures for City Council meetings and legislative functions. Nothing in this document is intended to create a legal entitlement for City Staff or enforceable performance standards beyond what already exists in the City's Employee Handbook and individual department work rules. The City Council and Mayor are responsible for determining how best to interpret and implement these Protocols, which can be modified at any time without advance notice.*