

City of Turlock



Elected and Appointed City Officials' Handbook

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PART I: ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES

Chapter 1: Introduction & Overview

A. Purpose of Turlock Procedures Manual

The City of Turlock (the “City”) has prepared this City Officials’ Handbook (the “Handbook”) to assist Councilmembers and other appointed City Officials (collectively, “City Officials”) by documenting accepted practices and clarifying expectations. This Handbook should serve as a reference on adopted practices and procedures pertaining to Turlock City Council (“Council”) meetings, meetings of City boards and commissions; a summary and overview of City operations; a description of Council powers, responsibilities, expected behavior and decorum from Councilmembers and other elected or appointed officials; and related matters.

The Handbook will serve as a point of reference in the event questions arise and supersedes any previously approved handbooks governing the Council, boards, or commissions. Unless specified otherwise, the provisions in this Handbook that apply to the Council also applies to members of City boards and commissions.

B. Overview of Basic Documents

This Handbook is a summary of important aspects of Council activities. However, it cannot incorporate all materials and information necessary for understanding the business of the Council. Many other laws, plans, and documents exist which bind the Council to certain courses of action and practices. A summary of some of the most notable documents which establish Council direction is provided below.

Turlock Municipal Code The Turlock Municipal Code (“T.M.C.”) contains local laws and regulations adopted by ordinances. Title 2 Administration, of the T.M.C. addresses the role and relationship of the Council, Mayor and Vice Mayor. It also describes the organization of Council meetings and responsibilities and appointment of certain City staff positions and advisory commissions. In addition to these administrative matters, the T.M.C. contains a variety of laws including, but not limited to, zoning standards, traffic/speed regulations, and local tax standards.

1. **California Government Code** The California Government Code contains many requirements for the operation of city government and administration of meetings of city councils throughout the state. Many of these requirements, such as open meeting laws, are also replicated within the T.M.C. to ensure there is broad awareness of such requirements. The City is a “general law” city, which means it is organized in accordance with provisions of the Government Code and it is bound by the state’s general law.
2. Also described within the Government Code is the council-city manager form of government, which is the form of government utilized in the City. This form of

government prescribes that a city council's role is to establish policies and priorities, while the role of the city manager is to administer the affairs of the city government.

3. **Annual Budget** The City's annual budget provides a description of City services and the resources used to provide services. The document contains a broad overview of the budget as well as descriptions of programs offered within each division of the organization. The City's fiscal year begins on July 1, for a period of twelve (12) calendar months and ends on June 30 of the following calendar year.
4. **General Plan** Often referred to as a City's development constitution, a state mandated general plan addresses adopted future land development plans and policies.
5. **Emergency Operations Plan:** The City maintains an Emergency Operations Plan, which describes actions to be taken in periods of extreme emergency. The Council may be called upon during an emergency to establish policies related to the specific incident.

C. Orientation of New Councilmembers

It is important that Councilmembers of the Council gain an understanding of the full range of services and programs provided by the organization. As new Councilmembers join the Council, department heads are instructed to provide invitations for members to tour facilities and meet with key staff. At any time, if there are facilities or programs about which you would like more information, arrangements will be made to increase your awareness of these operations.

D. Basic Definitions

1. **Chair/Presiding Officer** is the individual authorized by law, the T.M.C or City policy to oversee, direct and preside over the public meeting of the City Council, Planning Commission, or any other City board or commission.
2. **City Council** is the governing body of the City, comprised of four (4) Councilmembers and one (1) Mayor.
3. **City Official** is any elected or appointed member of the City Council, Turlock Planning Commission, or any other City board or commission established by ordinance or City Council policy.

E. Effective Governance

Whether in Council chambers, out in the community or at home, City Officials are always stewards of the City. The integrity of the City is dependent upon the responsible and professional manner in which each City Official, and governing bodies collectively, fulfills

governance roles and responsibilities. The demeanor of City Officials sends an important message to City employees and to the residents of the City.

This Handbook attempts to provide guidelines and policies in order to aid City Officials in the most efficient, effective, and seamless governance.

There are four fundamental characteristics of City Officials

1. Mindfulness—an important characteristic of a City Official is the development of a governance mindset. Knowing how to think about governance, and always applying that knowledge and understanding to City operations, is an essential characteristic for a City Official. Governance mindfulness is understanding the role and responsibilities of the governing board and how individual members can enhance their positive, value-added impact.
2. Focus—mindful City Officials always maintain a strategic focus in their City Official work. They understand that they are not a City Official to administer the City, but rather to govern it. City Officials understand governance requires a board, systemic view of the City, and to approach their City Official responsibilities with a clear sense of focus on achieving strategic outcomes and how to effect policy change as a team rather than as an individual.
3. Manner—mindful City Officials are always respectful of others’ opinions. Working toward a common goal with other independently elected individuals in a collaborative setting requires patience, understanding, respect, and common courtesy. City Officials must model the civic behavior they expect the employees of the City to exhibit.
4. Preparation—mindful City Officials are always prepared. They are committed to doing the hard work of being a City Official and leading on behalf of the community they serve. City Officials are committed to making decisions based on quality information, evidence, and data.

Chapter 2: General Powers and Responsibilities

A. Council Functions

The Council is the legislative body of the City; its members are the community's decision makers. Power is centralized in the elected Council collectively, and not in individual members of the Council. The Council approves the budget and determines the public services to be provided and the taxes, fees, and assessments to pay for these public services. It focuses on the community's goals, major projects and such long-term considerations as community growth, General Plan and land use, development standards, capital improvements, financing and strategic planning. The Council appoints a professional City Manager to carry out the administrative responsibilities and supervises the City Manager's performance.

It is important to note that the Council acts as a body. No member has any extraordinary powers beyond those of other members. While the Mayor and Vice Mayor have some additional ceremonial and administrative responsibilities as described below, in the establishment of policies all Councilmembers are equal. While individual members may disagree with decisions of the majority, a decision of the majority binds the Council to a course of action. In turn, it is staff's responsibility to ensure the policy of the Council is implemented.

B. Mayor and Vice Mayor Functions

1. **Mayor:** The Mayor is to preside at all meetings of the Council and perform such other duties consistent with the office as may be imposed by the Council or by vote of the people. At Council meetings, the Mayor assists the Council in focusing on the agenda, discussions and deliberations. The Mayor does not possess any power of veto. As presiding officer of the Council, the Mayor is to faithfully communicate the will of the Council majority in matters of policy. The Mayor is also recognized as the official head of the City for all ceremonial purposes.
2. **Vice Mayor:** The Vice Mayor shall perform the duties of the Mayor during the Mayor's absence or disability. In the event of the absence of the Mayor, the Vice Mayor shall sign adopted ordinances on the Mayor's behalf. The Vice Mayor shall serve in this capacity at the pleasure of the Council.

C. Appointment of City Manager and City Attorney

The Council appoints two positions within the City organization: City Manager and City Attorney. Both positions serve at the will of the Council.

1. **City Managerⁱ:** The City Manager is appointed by the Council on the basis of his or her administrative and executive ability and qualifications.ⁱⁱ The City Manager is an employee of the City and has an employment agreement, which specifies terms

of employment including an annual evaluation by the Council. The City Manager is responsible for all other personnel appointments within the City.

2. **City Attorney:** City Attorney services will be provided by contract. The City Attorney attends all Council meetings as well as other meetings at the request of the Council as deemed necessary. The City Attorney is appointed and serves at the pleasure of the Council.

D. Role in Emergency

The Council has some extraordinary powers for the protection of persons and property within the City in the event of an emergency. The T.M.C. defines “emergency” to mean conditions of disaster or of extreme peril caused by conditions such as air pollution, fire, flood, storm, epidemic, riots or earthquakes.ⁱⁱⁱ The T.M.C. establishes the Turlock Disaster Council consisting of the following^{iv}:

- The City Manager, who shall be chairman;
- The Assistant Director of Emergency Services;
- Such chiefs of emergency services as are provided for in a current emergency plan of this City; and
- Such representatives of civic, business, labor, veterans, professional, or other organizations having an official emergency responsibility as may be appointed by the Director with advice and consent of the City Council.^v

The Disaster Council is responsible for the development and recommendation of emergency and mutual aid plans and agreements and such ordinances, resolutions, rules, and regulations as are necessary to implement such plans and agreements.^{vi}

The Disaster Council shall meet upon the call of the chair or, in his or her absence from the City or inability to call such meeting, upon the call of the vice-chair.

E. Appointment of Boards and Commissions

The City currently has two (2) standing commissions and boards: Parks, Art, and Recreation Commission and Planning Commission. In addition, special purpose citizens committees and task forces are often appointed by the Council to address issues of interest. The following procedures reflect the policy of the Council regarding the appointment of volunteer citizens to the various advisory bodies of the City.

1. **Parks, Arts & Recreation Commission:** Seven members.

Qualifications: Must be a resident of the City, appointed by the Mayor with approval from the City Council.

Meeting Time: 2nd Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall in the Yosemite Community Room.

2. Planning Commission: Seven members.

Qualifications: Must be a resident of the City, appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council.

Meeting Time: 1st Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall in the Yosemite Community Room.

Chapter 3: Administrative Support Provided to City Officials

A. Mail, Deliveries

City Officials receive mail and other materials from the public, private interests, and staff. The City Clerk maintains mailboxes for each member.

B. E-mail/Voicemail

City Officials will be offered the use of a City e-mail, and other communication services such as voice mail accounts based on City resources. These technologies facilitate efficient communication by Councilmembers. However, their use also raises important legal issues to which Councilmembers must pay special attention.

First, the Brown Act prohibits members from using “technological devices” to develop a concurrence by a majority regarding an action to be taken by the Council.^{vii} “Technological devices” under the Brown Act include phones, faxes, computer e-mail, public access cable TV and video. Councilmembers should not use e-mail, faxes, or phones for communicating with other Councilmembers in order to develop a majority position on any particular issue that may come before the full Council.

Second, be aware that any e-mails sent by City Officials addressing substantive City business, either from their City account or personal email, whether on a City-issued device or personal device, are public records under the Public Records Act.^{viii} Even if an e-mail is not printed, the information in the e-mail is stored on the computer network until deleted, and it may continue to exist on the network’s back-up systems even after being deleted. As a result, e-mails can become records of the City maintained in the course of business, and thus available for public disclosure under the Public Records Act. Any correspondence sent from a City Official’s personal cell phone is also subject to public disclosure under the Public Records Act.

For those reasons, City Officials *should only* use City-issued e-mail addresses to conduct City business.

C. Councilmember Offices.

There are offices and conference rooms at City Hall available for Councilmembers to use should the need arise. Councilmembers requesting use of any conference room should schedule its use with the City Manager or the City Clerk’s office.

D. Inappropriate Actions or Requests By A City Official

The City Manager has the responsibility to discuss any perceived or inappropriate action, request, or misuse of the City’s administrative support by a City Official. The City Manager will discuss the inappropriate action or request with the City Official and suggest a more appropriate process or procedure to follow. Alternatively, the City Manager may request that the City Attorney speak with the City Official in question. After this discussion, if further inappropriate action continues, the City Manager will report the concern to the full Council with potential action taken against that Councilmember as outlined in Chapter 7, “Ethics and Civility”, of this Handbook.

Chapter 4: City Finances

A. City Official Compensation.

State law provides for modest compensation or stipend to members of the Council.^{ix} Councilmembers may waive their monthly salaries. Members of City boards and commissions do not receive any stipend or compensation, but may be reimbursed for City-related expenses in accordance with the City's reimbursement policies.

B. Expenditure Allowance.

The annual City budget also includes an expenditure allowance for expenses necessary for members to undertake official City business. Eligible expenses include membership in professional associations, attendance at conferences or educational seminars, and purchase of publications and annual subscriptions. In addition, travel expenses including meals for Councilmembers and mileage reimbursement are made for City business. A copy of the City's Travel Policy is attached as **Appendix A**. Donations to organizations are not eligible nor are meals for individuals other than Councilmembers.

C. Expenditure Guidelines.

Any expense must be related to City affairs. Public property and funds may not be used for any private or personal purpose. For example, reimbursement is not allowed to pay for meals at a meeting to discuss political or campaign strategies. It is also inappropriate for City funds to pay for a meal or other expenses of a private citizen or spouse attending a meeting.

City budgetary practices and accounting controls apply to expenditures within the Council budget. Councilmembers should plan expenditures that will allow them to remain within the annual allocation. When exceptional circumstances require that additional amounts be allocated, the request must be made to the City Manager, and Council action may be necessary. Reimbursement requests should be made through the City Manager's office with itemized receipts. Expenditure records are public information.

Chapter 5: Communications

A. Overview

Perhaps the most fundamental role of a Councilmember is communication; communication with the public to assess community options and needs and communication with staff to provide policy directions and to gain an understanding of various policy alternatives. Because the Council performs as a body (that is, acting based on the will of the majority as opposed to individuals), it is important that general guidelines be understood when speaking “for” the Council. Equally important, when members are expressing personal views and not those of the Council, the public should be so advised.

B. Speaking “for the City”

When members are requested to speak to groups or are asked the Council’s position on an issue, the response should reflect the position of the Council as a whole. Of course, a member may clarify their vote on a matter by stating “While I voted against X, the Council voted in support of it.” When representing the City at meetings or other venues, it is important that those in attendance gain an understanding of the Council’s position rather than that of an individual member.

C. Correspondence from Councilmembers

1. Members of the Council will often be called upon to write letters to citizens, businesses or other public agencies. Typically, the Mayor will be charged with transmitting the City’s position on policy matters to outside agencies on behalf of the Council. Individual members of Council will often prepare letters for constituents in response to inquiries or to provide requested information.
2. The following is the policy of the Turlock Council relative to official and non-official correspondence by members of the Council.
 - a. Councilmembers shall not write or send letters on City stationary without Council approval.
 - b. The Mayor is authorized to send thank you and acknowledgement letters as they directly pertain to the City in its usual course of business. Said correspondence shall not represent or include City endorsements, positions, etc. In addition, the Mayor may sign correspondence drafted by the City Manager which the City Manager believes is more appropriately signed by the City’s chief elected official. Such correspondence may include public notices, invitations, information, etc. All correspondence signed by the Mayor shall have a copy forwarded to each Councilmember.

- c. Councilmembers may endorse political candidates, initiatives, legislation or positions using their own stationary. They may identify themselves by City position and title, but in no case shall said endorsements infer that the City or Council supports said position or candidate. Members are encouraged to notify or send copies of said endorsement to the full Council.
- d. The Council policy is that it will not support individual political candidates but may vote to support or take stands on initiatives, measures (i.e. school bonds) or other legislation as appropriate and permissible under state law. The Mayor shall be authorized to sign letters stating the Council’s position.

D. Confidential Issues and Attorney-Client Communications

Confidential issues and attorney-client communications, including anything that has been discussed in a closed session, shall not be disclosed to any member of the public, including the press.

E. Local Ballot Measures

At times, ballot measures may be placed on the ballot that affect Council policy. By law there are restrictions regarding what actions Council or individual members may take on ballot measures.

F. State Legislation, Propositions

The Council is frequently requested to take action on pending state legislation. The Council has adopted a practice of requiring analysis of bills prior to taking any official position. The analysis is to include a summary of the legislation’s purpose and a listing of those entities both in support and against the proposed legislation. Any member requesting support or opposition to legislation should request that the analysis be placed on the Council agenda for consideration.

G. Proclamations

Ceremonial proclamations are often requested of the City in recognition of an event or individual. Proclamations are not statements of policy, but a manner in which the City can make special recognition of an event (e.g. Recycling Week). As part of his or her ceremonial responsibilities, the Mayor is charged with administration of Proclamations. Individual Councilmembers do not issue proclamations, but may request that the Mayor issue a proclamation.

Chapter 6: City Officials—Conflicts & Liability

A. Conflict of Interest

State laws are in place which attempt to eliminate any action by a Councilmember which may reflect a conflict of interest. The purpose of such laws and regulations is to ensure that all actions are taken in the public interest.

Newly elected officials are required to file a Statement of Economic Interest (Form 700) within thirty (30) days of being sworn into office. Thereafter, elected officials are required to file an annual Form 700. The City Clerk's Department will notify you of your filing requirements. Links to the most current Statement of Economic Interests (Form 700) and Campaign Disclosure Statements (Form 460 or 470) are posted on the City's website. Written permission must be obtained before posting elected officials' home addresses or telephone numbers on the Internet.

At any time if a member believes that a potential for conflict of interest exists, he or she is encouraged to consult with the City Attorney or private legal counsel for advice. Staff may also request an opinion from the City Attorney regarding a member's potential conflict. Laws which regulate conflicts are very complicated. Violations may result in significant penalties or fines, including criminal prosecution. While not inclusive, a general summary of conflict rules has been prepared and appears below.

There are several laws that govern conflicts of interest for public officials in California: the Political Reform Act, Government Code section 1090, and Government Code section 87105. The City also has adopted a conflict of interest code identifying City officials, employees, and consultants regarding what financial interests they must disclose on their Form 700s.

In general terms: the Political Reform Act prohibits a public official from having a financial interest in a decision before the official; Government Code section 1090 prohibits a public official from being interested in government contracts; and Government Code section 87105 requires a public official who has a conflict of interest to publicly announce the conflict, recuse himself or herself, and leave the room until after the discussion and voting on the matter is complete.

B. Political Reform Act

The Political Reform Act prohibits public officials from making, participating in, or in any way attempting to use their official position to influence a governmental decision in which they know, or have reason to know, that they have a disqualifying conflict of interest. Therefore, if a public official has a conflict of interest, the official must disqualify himself or herself from acting on or participating in the decision before the City. During that discussion, the official must leave the Council Chambers or where the discussion is taking place.

An official has a financial interest if "it is reasonably foreseeable that the decision will have a material financial effect, distinguishable from the effect on the public generally..."

or on one or more of the economic interests of the official or a member of the official's immediate family.

As of 2017, economic interests include interests in businesses worth \$2,000 or more, interests in real property, both ownership and leases, worth \$2,000 or more, a source of income in an amount of \$500 or more, and gifts of \$470 or more provided to or received within one year of the decision. These dollar amounts are subject to annual increases. Please check with the City Attorney to verify the current dollar amounts.

Often the economic interest involved is real property owned or leased by the Councilmember. In these cases, a public official is presumed to have a conflict of interest if he or she has a direct or indirect interest worth two thousand dollars (\$2,000) or more in fair market value.^x If a Councilmember has a pro rata share interest in real property, in which the Councilmember or immediate family member owns, and has a ten percent (10%) or greater interest in the property, then that is also a conflict of interest.^{xi}

Determining whether a Councilmember has a disqualifying conflict of interest is very complicated and fact specific. Please contact the City Attorney if you suspect that you may have a conflict of interest so that a formal four-step analysis of the potential conflict can be provided.

Government Code section 87105 states that a Council or commission member who has a conflict of interest must recuse himself or herself and leave the room, unless the matter is on the Consent Calendar.^{xii} After it has been determined that a conflict of interest exists under the Political Reform Act, the following steps must take place:

1. **Publicly identify the financial interest.** This must be done in enough detail for the public to understand the economic interest that creates the conflict of interest. Residential street addresses do not have to be disclosed.
2. **Recuse yourself from both the discussion and the vote on the matter.** Recusal applies to all proceedings related to the matter.
3. **Leave the room until the matter has been completed.** The matter is considered complete when there is no further discussion, vote, or any other action.^{xiii}

Exceptions: if the matter is on the portion of the agenda reserved for uncontested matters, such as the consent calendar, the individual with the conflict is not required to leave the room while the item is voted on.^{xiv} Additionally, if the individual with the conflict wants to speak during public comment, he or she may do so as a private citizen; however, this is the only time he or she may be in the room while the matter is being considered.

The Fair Political Practices Commission ("FPPC") has published lengthy regulations and opinions on conflicts of interest that are useful in determining whether a particular financial interest or decision could give rise to disqualification based on a potential

conflict of interest. The FPPC also puts out informational pamphlets to assist public officials in determining what types of situations may give rise to prohibited conflicts of interest.

C. Government Code Section 1090

Government Code section 1090 is similar to the Political Reform Act, but it applies only to City contracts in which a public official has a financial interest. The financial interests covered by section 1090 are different than those in the Political Reform Act. Having an interest in a contract may preclude the City from entering into the contract at all. In addition, the penalties for violating section 1090 are severe. If a Councilmember believes that he or she may have any financial interest in a contract that will be before the Council, the member should immediately seek advice from the City Attorney or the Councilmember's personal attorney.

There are a number of other restrictions placed on Council actions, which are highlighted in the League of California Cities Handbook. Such restrictions include prohibitions on secrecy and discrimination as well as assurance that all City funds are spent for public purposes. Violations of these restrictions may result in a personal liability for individual Councilmembers.

D. Publication of City Attorney's Conflict Advice

Advice provided to members of the Council or commissions regarding potential conflicts of interest are public information and should be circulated to all members of the Council. The rationale for this policy is that the City Attorney is employed by the entire Council utilizing taxpayer funds. The findings of the City Attorney, therefore, should be made public. Members may seek a private attorney to receive advice on potential conflicts. In such cases, no disclosure policy would apply, as the opinion rendered would be paid for by the Councilmember using his or her own funds.

It is critical to note that while the City Attorney can render advice on the interpretation of state laws and regulations on conflict matters, such advice is solely an interpretation of the law. The only authority that can provide binding interpretations on such matters is the FPPC. Councilmembers or the Council as a whole may also solicit opinions on such matters directly from the FPPC, however, such opinions often take time to develop and may not readily respond to urgent matters. Members of the Planning Commission may also wish to seek opinions and advice on potential conflicts of interest.

The City Attorney has an affirmative duty to protect the City and Council from conflicts of interest wherever possible.

E. Conflict of Interest Forms

Annual disclosure statements are required of all Councilmembers, designated commissioners, and senior staff. These disclosure statements indicate potential conflicts of interest including sources of income, ownership of property and receipt of loans and

gifts. Councilmembers often serve on the governing board of other local agencies as a result of appointment or delegation through the Council. These agencies will also require submittal of disclosure forms. These forms require information including income, loans, receipt of gifts, and interest in real property among other items.

F. Ex Parte Communications

All Councilmembers may have “ex parte” communications – meaning communications outside the meeting forum; however, such communication should not be encouraged, made, or accepted when such communication is designed to influence the official decision or conduct of the official or other officials in order to obtain a more favored treatment or special consideration to advance the personal or private interests of himself or herself or others. This guarantees that all interested parties to any matter shall have equal opportunity to express and represent their interests. The applicable California law, the Brown Act, is discussed in Chapter 11 of this handbook, provides more detail as to Councilmembers obligations under California state law.

G. Liability

The City is a large institution offering a variety of services and may often find itself subject to legal actions through lawsuits. The City must always approach its responsibilities in a manner, which reduces risk to all involved, however, with such a wide variety of high-profile services (e.g. police, fire) risk cannot be eliminated.

The City belongs to an agency with other cities in the Central Valley to manage insurance and risk activities. When claims are filed against the City, they are sent to the City’s claims examiner to review and make recommendations. Unless there is a clear liability on the part of the City, the claim will normally be recommended for rejection. The Claim is placed on the Council agenda for rejection but will only be discussed in closed session if Council desires. Council should be careful discussing details of a claim or lawsuit outside of closed session.

It is important to note that violations of certain laws and regulations by individual members of the Council may result in that member being personally liable for damages which would not be covered by the City’s insurance. Examples may include discrimination, harassment, or fraud.

Chapter 7: Code of Ethics and Civility

A. Code of Ethics Policy

Councilmembers should be familiar with the International City/County Management Association's ("ICMA") Code of Ethics Policy attached to this Handbook as **Appendix B**.

1. AB 1234—Ethics Training for Public Officials

State law requires the City to advise local officials, subject to California's ethics education requirements about available training at least once a year.^{xv} The City will ensure that all local officials will be provided the AB 1234 Ethics Training.

This training covers subjects such as personal financial gain, personal advantages and perks, government transparency, fair process, and when to seek advice from agency counsel. The training will cover in detail the laws that are briefly presented above. Please contact the City Clerk for training opportunities.

B. Ethics of City Officials

The citizens and businesses of the City are entitled to have fair, ethical, and accountable local government, which has earned the public's full confidence for integrity. In keeping with the City's commitment to excellence, the effective functioning of democratic government therefore requires that:

- Public officials, both elected and appointed, comply with both the letter and spirit of the laws and policies affecting the operations of government;
- Public officials be independent, impartial and fair in their judgment and actions;
- Public office be used for the public good and not for personal gain; and
- Public deliberations and process conducted openly, unless legally confidential, in an atmosphere of respect and civility.

As such, the City has adopted a Code of Ethics and Conduct for members of the Council and of the City's boards and commissions to assure public confidence in the integrity of local government and its effective and fair operation. This section provides guidance on ethical issues and questions of right and wrong.

- 1. Act in the Public Interest.** Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their primary concern, members will work for the common good of the people of the City and not for any private or personal interest, and they will assure fair and equal treatment of all persons, claims and transactions before the Council, boards, and commissions.
- 2. Comply with both the spirit and the letter of the Law and City Policy.** Members shall comply with the laws of the United States, the State of California, and the City of Turlock in the performance of their public duties. These laws include but are not limited to: the United States and California Constitutions; the City's Municipal

Code; laws pertaining to conflicts of interest, election campaigns, financial disclosures, employer responsibilities, and open processes of government; and City ordinances and policies, including the City's Anti-Harassment Policy further discussed in Chapter 8 of this Handbook.

3. **Conduct of Members.** The professional and personal conduct of members must be above reproach and avoid even the appearance of impropriety. Members shall refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other members of the Council, boards and commissions, the staff, or public.
4. **No Interference in City Business.** Members shall not interfere in day-to-day City business. For example, a Member shall not interfere during an arrest made by a Turlock Police Department police officer.
5. **Respect for Process.** Members shall perform their duties in accordance with the processes and rules of order established by the council and board and commissions governing the deliberation of public policy issues, meaningful involvement of the public, and implementation of policy decisions of the Council by City staff.
6. **Conduct of Public Meetings.** Members shall prepare themselves for public issues; listen courteously and attentively to all public discussions before the body; and focus on the business at hand. They shall refrain from interrupting other speakers; making personal comments not germane to the business of the body; or otherwise interfering with the orderly conduct of meetings.
7. **Decisions Based on Merit.** Members shall base their decisions on the merits and substance of the matter at hand, rather than on unrelated considerations.
8. **Communication.** Members shall publicly disclose substantive information that is relevant to a matter under consideration by the Council or boards and commissions, which they may have received from sources outside of the public decision-making process.
9. **Conflict of Interest.** In order to assure their independence and impartiality on behalf of the common good, members shall not use their official positions to influence government decisions in which they have a material financial interest, or where they have an organizational responsibility or personal relationship, which may give the appearance of a conflict of interest. Please refer to Chapter 6 of this Handbook for more details regarding Conflict of Interests.

- 10. Gifts and Favors.** Members shall not take any special advantage of services or opportunities for personal gain, by virtue of their public office that are not available to the public in general. They shall refrain from accepting any gifts, favors or promises of future benefits which might compromise their independence of judgment or action or give the appearance of being compromised. City Officials should pay careful attention to not confuse their duty to avoid accepting gifts that could compromise their independent judgment with the FPPC reporting requirements for gifts (see Chapter 6: City Officials – Conflicts & Liability). When in doubt, consult the City Attorney’s office for additional information.
- 11. Confidential Information.** Members shall respect the confidentiality of information concerning the property, personnel, or affairs of the City. They shall neither disclose confidential information without proper legal authorization, nor use such information to advance their personal, financial, or other private interests.
- 12. Use of Public Resources.** Members shall not use public resources not available to the public in general, such as City staff time, equipment, supplies or facilities, for private gain or personal purposes.
- 13. Representation of Private Interests.** In keeping with their role as stewards of the public interest, members of Council shall not appear on behalf of the private interests of third parties before the Council or any board, commission, or proceeding of the City, nor shall members of boards and commissions appear before their own bodies or before the Council on behalf of the private interests of third parties on matters related to the areas of service of their bodies.
- 14. Advocacy.** Members shall represent the official policies or positions of the Council, board, or commission to the best of their ability when designated as delegates for this purpose. When presenting their individual opinions and positions, members shall explicitly state they do not represent their body of the City, nor will they allow the inference that they do. Councilmembers and board and commission members have the right to endorse candidates for all Council seats or other elected offices. It is inappropriate to mention or display endorsements during Council meetings, board and commission meetings, or other official City meetings.
- 15. Policy Role of Members.** Members shall respect and adhere to the council-manager structure of the City’s government. Except as provided by the T.M.C., Councilmembers shall not interfere with the administrative functions of the City or the professional duties of the City Staff, nor shall they impair the ability of staff

to implement Council policy decisions. The council-manager form of government is defined in more detailed in Chapter 9, Section B of this Handbook.

16. Independence of Boards and Commissions. Because of the value of the independent advice of boards and commissions to the public decision-making process, Councilmembers shall refrain from using their position to unduly influence the deliberations or outcomes of board and commission proceedings.

C. Rules of Civility

1. During a council, board, or commission meeting, all present shall:

- a. Preserve safety and order;
- b. Not block the audience or camera from viewing the proceedings;
- c. Not engage in disruptive behavior, including but not limited to; heckling, whistling, yelling, and other similar demonstrations;
- d. Not willfully disrupt peace and order of the meeting;
- e. Listen to others respectfully and not interrupt those whom are speaking;
- f. Refrain from making comments that personally attack an individual in a way that disrupts, disturbs, or otherwise impedes orderly conduct, including but not limited to: name calling, insults, and unrelated statements or accusations about an individual's personal life;
- g. Avoid use of profanity, obscene language, and threats that disrupt, disturb, or otherwise impede orderly conduct;
- h. Not use unlawful physical force. Physical force includes but is not limited to: grabbing, pushing, slapping, punching, kicking, or otherwise striking the body of another or an object attached to another's body;
- i. Not harass any other person in any way, including but not limited to types of harassment described in Chapter 7 of this handbook;
- j. Avoid obscene gestures or motions that could be viewed as threatening or an effort to intimidate. Unacceptable gestures include but are not limited to: those of a sexual nature, finger pointing and fist shaking in an overly aggressive or accusatory manner, miming the use of weapons or other violent acts, and other movements that could be seen as threatening;

- k. Avoid raising voices beyond what is necessary to be heard by the audience;
 - l. Shall act in accordance with all provisions of this chapter.
2. If a member of the public, audience, or Councilmember disrupts the Council meeting or violates the Code of Civility described in this chapter, the City has the following recourse:
- a. The Presiding Officer can call the meeting to order;
 - b. A Councilmember may move to require the Presiding Officer to enforce the rules and, upon majority vote, the Presiding Officer shall be required to do so;
 - c. The Presiding Officer may instruct the Sergeant-at-Arms to enforce the rules in accordance with the City's Civility Code and subject to all applicable local and state laws and regulations;
 - d. The Sergeant-at-Arms may order an individual to sit, refrain from addressing the Council, or remove the disruptive person from the meeting, in accordance with the City's Civility Code and subject to all applicable local and state laws and regulations.

D. Inappropriate Actions By A City Official

The City Manager has the responsibility to discuss, on behalf of the full Council, any perceived violation of the ethical obligations or rules of civility set forth in this chapter by a Councilmember, or a member of a City board or commission. The City Manager, in consultation with the City Attorney, will address the action in question with the City Official and suggest a more appropriate action or procedure to follow. Alternatively, the City Manager may request that the City Attorney speak with the City Official in question. After this discussion, if further inappropriate action continues, the City Manager will report the concern to the full Council with potential action taken against that City Official as outlined in this Chapter 7.

E. Enforcement of Misconduct

When a City Official violates this chapter, this Handbook, state or federal law, or any part of the T.M.C., they are subject to disciplinary measures including, but not limited to admonishment, reprimand, or censure.

1. Rules Committee

Through a majority vote, the Council will select from among its members three (3) Councilmembers to serve as the Rules Committee. A Councilmember who is under

review for violations of this chapter may not serve on the Rules Committee during the evaluation of the alleged violation. If a Councilmember is under review, he or she shall be automatically removed from the Rules Committee for the duration of the review. In the event that a member of the Rules Committee is recused, the Mayor shall appoint another member of the Council to act pro tempore. If more than one member of the Rules Committee is the subject of the review, then the investigation will automatically advance to a five (5) member ad hoc committee appointed by the Mayor. The Council may replace a member of the Rules Committee at any time through majority vote.

2. Admonishment

- a. Definition. An admonishment is appropriate for allegations of a violation of law or City policy. An admonishment serves as a formal reminder of the rules and is not disciplinary in nature.
- b. Procedure. Any Councilmember may submit a written request for admonishment to the Council through the City Clerk's department with the specific language of the proposed admonition. An admonishment need not be directed at an individual councilmember. By a majority vote of the Council, it may elect to approve the admonishment.

3. Reprimand

- a. Definition. A reprimand is appropriate when the Council finds that a Councilmember, or member of a board or commission, has committed misconduct, but determines that the misconduct does not rise to the level of requiring censure.
- b. Procedure.
 - i. Any Councilmember may submit a written request to reprimand a Councilmember, or member of a board or commission, to the Council through the City Clerk's department. The request should contain specific allegations of conduct that, if true, violate this chapter, the Handbook, state or federal law, or any other part of the T.M.C.
 1. The City Clerk's department shall personally serve the written request upon the accused City Official at least seventy-two (72) hours before the Rules Committee meeting where the request will be evaluated. The City Clerk's department shall also serve the accused City Official with notice of the time, place, and date of the Rules Committee meeting and the accused City Official's right to submit oral or written evidence.

- ii. The accused City Official will have the opportunity to respond to the accusations at the Rules Committee meeting. After the meeting, the Rules Committee shall make one of the following findings:
 - 1. The matter should be investigated further and set for a separate public hearing by the Council;
 - 2. No further investigation is required and the matter should be dismissed.
- iii. The Rules Committee shall deliver its report to the Council and the accused within ten (10) days of the Rules Committee meeting on the matter.
- iv. If the Rules Committee decides to recommend action by the Council, the matter shall be set for hearing at the next regularly scheduled Council meeting that is at least thirty (30) days after the date the Rules Committee report is sent to the accused.
- v. At the Council meeting, the accused City Official shall have an opportunity to respond to the findings of the report.
- vi. Based on the report and the comments by the accused, the Council will vote. A reprimand action must be approved by a majority vote.

4. Censure

- a. Definition. A censure is a formal resolution to reprimand an individual for misconduct and is a disciplinary action.
- b. Procedure.
 - i. Any Councilmember may submit a written request to censure a Councilmember, or member of a board or commission, to the City Council through the City Clerk's department. The request should contain specific allegations of conduct that, if true, violate this chapter, the Handbook, state or federal law, or any other part of the T.M.C.
 - ii. The City Clerk's department shall personally serve the written request upon the accused City Official at least seventy-two (72) hours before the Rules Committee meeting where the request will be evaluated. The City Clerk's department shall also serve the

accused City Official with notice of the time, place, and date of the Rules Committee meeting and the accused City Official's right to submit oral or written evidence.

- iii. The accused City Official will have the opportunity to respond to the accusations at the Rules Committee meeting. After the meeting, the Rules Committee shall make one of the following findings:
 1. The matter should be investigated further and set for a separate public hearing by the Council;
 2. No further investigation is required, and the matter should be dismissed.
- iv. The Rules Committee shall serve the accused, the Mayor, and the Council, through the City Clerk's department, with a copy of the report within ten (10) days of the meeting.
- v. If the Rules Committee recommends the matter be dismissed, no further action will be taken unless the Council directs that an additional investigation is necessary at the next regularly scheduled Council meeting after receiving the report.
- vi. If the Rules Committee recommends further investigation, the Mayor shall appoint a five (5) member *ad hoc committee* to determine if there is substantial evidence that the conduct occurred. If the Mayor is the party accused of misconduct, the Council shall appoint an ad hoc committee. The ad hoc committee may be comprised of City administrative staff and City Officials.
 1. The ad hoc committee, being advised by the City Attorney, will investigate the matter and issue a public report based on its findings within thirty (30) days.
 2. The ad hoc committee report shall be served upon the accused, through the City Clerk's department, with a notice of the hearing that will take place at the next regularly scheduled Council meeting that is no less than twenty (20) days after the notice and report are sent.
- vii. The Council will hold a public hearing where it will consider all evidence, including the ad hoc committee report.

- viii. At the hearing, the accused City Official shall be allowed to make an opening and closing statement and shall be allowed to question the accuser(s). The accused City Official may be represented by an attorney. At the hearing, the Council shall vote on whether to adopt a resolution approving the censure.
- ix. At the hearing, in order to approve a censure, at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Council must vote to adopt a resolution censuring the accused City Official.
- x. If the Council decides to dismiss the complaint, no further action will be taken.
- xi. If the Council determines that an admonishment or reprimand is sufficient, it may issue an admonishment or reprimand at the same hearing with a majority vote.

5. Mayor's Misconduct

The procedure for disciplining the Mayor shall be the same as the procedure set forth regarding Councilmembers in Chapter 7, Section E of this Handbook.

Chapter 8: Anti-Harassment Policy

A. Anti-Harassment Training—AB 1661

Assembly Bill 1661 requires all local agency officials to receive sexual harassment prevention training within the first six (6) months of taking office and every two (2) years thereafter. Councilmembers and all City Officials are required to take this training.

B. The City's Anti-Harassment Policy

It is the City's policy to promote and maintain an environment free of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. The City does not tolerate or condone discrimination or harassment. All City employees and City Officials are responsible for maintaining a harassment-free environment and are held fully accountable for complying with the City's anti-harassment policy and for taking appropriate measures to ensure that such conduct does not occur.

The City has adopted several individual policies that apply to all City employees and applicants for employment. These policies, the Sexual Harassment Policy; the Hostile Work Environment Workplace Violence Policy; the Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation Policy; and the Bullying Policy (collectively, the "Anti-Harassment Policy") are attached to this Handbook as **Appendix C**. City Officials must also abide by and follow the Anti-Harassment Policy.

C. Identifying Harassment

Harassment includes any conduct which would be "unwelcome" to an individual of the recipient's same protected classification and which is taken because of the recipient's protected classification.

It is not a defense that the recipient appears to have voluntarily "consented" to the conduct at issue. A recipient may not protest for any legitimate reason, including the need to avoid being insubordinate or to avoid being ostracized.

Simply because no one has complained about a joke, gesture, picture, physical contact, or comment does not mean that the conduct is welcome. Harassment can evolve over time. Small isolated incidents might be tolerated up to a point. The fact that no one is complaining now does not preclude anyone from complaining if the conduct is repeated in the future.

Visual, verbal, or physical conduct between two (2) City Officials who appear to welcome it can constitute harassment of a third applicant, officer, official, employee, contractor, or appointee who observes the conduct or learns about the conduct later. Conduct can constitute harassment even if it is not explicitly or specifically directed at an individual.

Conduct can constitute harassment in violation of this policy even if the individual engaging in the conduct has no intention to harass. The Council recognizes that it is

legitimate for those in protected classifications to have heightened sensitivities to harassment as a result of their life experiences. Even well-intentioned conduct can violate this policy if the conduct is directed at or implicates a protected classification, and if an individual of the recipient's same protected classification would find it offensive (e.g. gifts, over attention, endearing nicknames).

The conduct of an individual other than a City Official, with respect to harassment of employees, applicants, or persons providing services pursuant to a contract in the workplace, may violate this policy if the City or its agents or supervisors know or should have known of the conduct and fail to take immediate and appropriate corrective action.

A single act can violate this policy and provide grounds for appropriate sanctions including, but not limited to, censure. Therefore, if in doubt as to whether any particular conduct may violate this policy, do not engage in the conduct and seek guidance from the City Manager's Office or the City's Human Resources Department.

D. Complaint Procedure

An individual who believes he or she has been harassed or retaliated against by a City Official in violation of this policy should report the conduct immediately and according to the following procedure so that the complaints can be resolved quickly and fairly. The Council encourages prompt reporting of harassment or retaliation so that an investigation can be commenced and if necessary immediate and effective remedial action can be taken to stop such conduct.

1. **Reporting to the Offending Individual:** The Council strongly encourages any individual who feels that he or she has been harassed in violation of this policy to let the offending person know immediately and firmly that the conduct at issue is unwelcome, offensive, in poor taste, or inappropriate and must stop.
2. **Reporting to the City Manager:** If an individual who has been harassed by a City Official prefers not to confront the offending person, he or she need not do so. Instead, the Council strongly encourages said individual to immediately report the conduct, verbally or in writing, to the City Manager. The City encourages the report to be made in writing. The individual should provide all details of the incident or incidents, names of individuals involved, and the names of any witnesses.
3. **Confidentiality:** The Council recognizes that confidentiality is important to all parties involved in a harassment and retaliation investigation. Complete confidentiality cannot occur, however, due to the need to fully investigate and the duty to take effective remedial action. As a result, confidentiality will be maintained to the extent consistent with the Council's legal obligations.

4. **Duty to Maintain Confidentiality of an Interview:** An individual who is interviewed during the course of an investigation is prohibited from discussing the substance of the interview, except for discussing it with his or her representative.

E. Responses to Complaint

1. **Interim Relief:** Upon receipt of a harassment or retaliation complaint by a City Official against another City Official, the Mayor (or if the complaint is against the Mayor then the Vice Mayor), with the assistance of the City Manager, may take immediate and appropriate remedial action to stop the conduct at issue or to diffuse any volatile circumstances associated with the conduct.

2. Investigation:

- a. Complaint against an elected City Official or the Mayor: The Council shall designate the City Manager to be the investigator of a harassment or retaliation complaint against an elected City Official.

- i. *City Manager's Responsibilities:* The City Manager at his or her discretion, may retain an experienced private attorney, consultant, investigator, or other specialist, who is not an official employee of the City, to conduct the investigation.

- ii. *Commencing the Investigation:* The investigation shall be commenced as soon as practicable, and the specialist shall be responsible for completing a report on his or her investigation, to include findings.

- iii. *Investigation Procedure:* The investigation will normally include interviews of the reporting individual, the accused, and any other individuals who are believed to have relevant knowledge concerning the allegations. The investigator will remind all witnesses to maintain the confidentiality of the content of their interviews and admonish them that retaliation against those who report alleged harassment or who participate in the complaint procedure is prohibited. The investigation shall also include, but not be limited to, the retrieval and review of documents or evidence such as work schedules, letters, computer records, telephone messages, personnel files, gifts, or cards.

- b. Complaint against appointed City Officials: Upon receipt of a complaint against an appointed City Official, the Mayor shall refer the complaint to the City Manager for investigation. The City Manager shall have the discretion to use City staff or an outside investigator to conduct the

investigation. Such investigation shall be conducted consistent with the investigation guidelines set forth in Section E(2)(a)(iii) above.

3. **Investigation of Unreported Potential Violations:** The Council takes a proactive approach to the problem of harassment, and the City Manager will initiate an investigation consistent with the City's Anti-Harassment Policy if he or she becomes aware that harassment may be occurring, regardless of whether the recipient or a third party reports a potential violation.

F. Action

1. **Council or Mayor:** If the investigator's report concludes that harassment or retaliation in violation of the Council policy against harassment and retaliation has occurred, the City Manager shall present the report to the Council for further action, if any, consistent with its legal obligations. Such action for an elected City Official may include, but not be limited to, censure.
2. **Appointed City Officials:** Upon completion of his or her report, the City Manager shall forward the report along with a recommendation to the Mayor and the Council. Possible action for an appointee includes, but is not limited to, dismissal from his or her appointment.

G. Option to Report to Outside Administrative Agencies

Individuals also have the option to report harassment or retaliation to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC") or the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing ("DFEH"). These governmental agencies offer legal remedies and a complaint process.

H. Mutually Accepted Social Relationships

This policy is not construed, nor is it intended to prohibit mutually welcome, social relationships freely entered into between two (2) consenting adults.

I. Individual Responsibilities

1. A City Official is required to:
 - a. Conduct himself or herself consistently with the City's Anti-Harassment Policy attached to this Handbook as **Appendix C**; and
 - b. Report any act which he or she believes in good faith constitutes harassment, as defined herein, to the City Manager; and
 - c. Maintain the confidentiality of any investigation conducted by the Mayor or his or her specialist pursuant to this policy by not disclosing the

substance of any investigatory interview, except for discussing it with his or her representative; and

- d. Cooperate fully with such investigation into alleged violations of this policy by responding fully and truthfully to all questions posed during the investigation; and
- e. Be familiar with this policy and modeling behavior that is consistent with it; and
- f. Report any potential violations of this policy of which he or she becomes aware.

Chapter 9: Staff Duties and Interaction between Staff and City Officials

A. Overview

Council policy is implemented through professional staff. Therefore, it is critical that the relationship between the Council and staff be well understood by all parties, so policies and programs may be implemented successfully. The City has a long tradition of positive relationships between members of the Council and staff. To maintain these effective relationships, it is important that roles are clearly recognized.

B. Council-Manager Form of Government

The City governs under a Council-City Manager form of government. This structure reflects that it is the Council's role to establish City policies and priorities. The Council appoints a City Manager to implement this policy and undertake the administration of the organization. The Council is to work through the City Manager in dealing with City staff. Councilmembers should work through the City Manager unless simply requesting information from other staff members.

C. City Manager Duties and Responsibilities

The City Manager is appointed by the Council to enforce its laws, to direct the daily operations of City government, to prepare and monitor the municipal budget, and to implement the policies and programs initiated by the Council. The City Manager is responsible to the entire Council rather than to individual Councilmembers and directs and coordinates the various departments.

As the chief administrative executive in the City, the City Manager is responsible for the efficient administration of all the affairs of the City which are under his or her control. Subject to the powers set forth in the T.M.C., the City Manager exercises a range of powers and duties, including, but not limited to, the following^{xvi}:

1. The power and duty to implement policies established by the Council;
2. The appointment, discipline, and removal of all City employees, subject to all applicable personnel rules;
3. The duty to investigate the affairs of the City or any department or contract of the City to ensure proper performance of any obligation due by the City;
4. The duty and authority to recommend resolutions and ordinances for adoption;
5. The duty and power to enforce all ordinances and laws within the jurisdiction;

6. The duty to prepare an annual budget and to keep the Council informed as to financial matters;
7. The authority to consult with and receive legal counsel from the City Attorney in carrying out the City Manager's duties and responsibilities; and
8. The duty to perform all other duties as the Council may require by a majority vote, resolution, or ordinance.

D. City Clerk Duties and Responsibilities

The City Clerk is an appointed position and is responsible a range of duties, including but not limited to, the following:

1. Attend all regular and special meetings of the Council, Successor Agency to the Turlock Redevelopment Agency, and Public Financing Authority, and keep an accurate record of the proceedings of each;
2. Ensure agenda preparation, agenda posting, public hearing notifications and publication of all legal notices pertaining to the Council, Successor Agency to the Turlock Redevelopment Agency, and Public Financing Authority;
3. Maintain a record of all ordinances of the City and of all written resolutions adopted by the Council;
4. Act as the custodian of records for the City;
5. Maintain custody of the seal of the City;
6. Maintain the Turlock Municipal Code;
7. Maintain rosters for Boards, Commissions, and Committees;
8. Administer oaths or affirmations and execute affidavits in connection with or pertaining to City affairs or business; and certify copies of official records of the Clerk's office;
9. Supervise the conduct of City elections;
10. Serve as Filing Officer of Campaign Financial Disclosure Statements and Statements of Economic Interests, as required by State law;
11. Receive and process claims against the City; and

12. Receive and process Public Records Requests.

In the absence of the City Clerk, the Deputy City Clerk shall be responsible for fulfilling the City Clerk's duties.

E. City Manager Code of Ethics

The City Manager is subject to a professional code of ethics from his or her professional association. These standards appear in **Appendix B** of this Handbook. It should be noted that this code of ethics binds the City Manager to certain practices, which are designed to ensure actions support the City's best interests. Violations of such standards can result in censure by the professional association.

F. Council-City Manager Relationship

1. **Employment relationship between the Council and City Manager:** This relationship honors the fact that the City Manager is the chief executive officer of the City. The Council should avoid situations that can result in City staff being directed, intentionally or unintentionally, by one or more members of the Council. Regular communication between the Council and City Manager is important in maintaining open communications. All dealings with the City Manager, whether in public or private, should respect the authority of the City Manager in administrative matters. Disagreements should be expressed in policy terms, rather than in terms that question satisfaction with or support of the City Manager.
2. **Evaluation:** The Council is to evaluate the City Manager on an annual basis and pursuant to the terms of the City Manager's contract with the City.
3. **Open Communication:** As in any professional relationship, it is important that the City Manager keep the Council informed. The City Manager respects and is sensitive to the political responsibility of the Council and acknowledges that the final responsibility for establishing the policy direction of the City is held by the Council. The City Manager encourages regular one-on-one meetings with Councilmembers to provide information on various issues before the Council.
4. **Staff roles:** The Council recognizes the primary functions of staff as executing Council policy and actions taken by the Council and in keeping the Council informed. Staff is obligated to take guidance and direction only from the Council as a whole through the City Manager or from the appropriate management supervisors. Staff is directed to reject any attempts by individual Councilmembers to unduly direct or otherwise pressure them into making, changing, or otherwise influencing recommendations.

City staff will make every effort to respond in a timely and professional manner to all requests made by individual City Officials for information or assistance, provided that, in the judgment of the City Manager, the request is not of a magnitude, either in terms of workload or policy, which would require that it would be more appropriately assigned to staff through the direction of the full Council.

G. City Attorney Duties and Responsibilities

The City Attorney is the legal advisor to the Council, City Manager, and department heads. The general legal responsibilities of the City Attorney are to:

1. Provide legal assistance as necessary for the formulation and implementation of legislative policies and projects;
2. Represent the City's interest, as determined by the Council, in litigation, administrative hearings, negotiations, and similar proceedings;
3. Prepare ordinances, resolutions, contracts, and other legal documents to best reflect and implement the purposes for which they are prepared;
4. Provide legal counsel to the City Manager in evaluating potential risks and legal liabilities as part of the implementation of the City's policies and projects;
5. Oversee and carry out any internal investigations into potential breaches of state or local rules, laws, and regulations, such as Brown Act violations, as the City Attorney determines is necessary, subject to the City Manager's procurement authority in hiring outside counsel or investigators;
6. Attend all Council meetings and serve as the Council's advisory parliamentarian, providing advice and counsel to the Mayor or Chair, as the case may be, in resolving any procedural disputes and ensuring the Council and members of the public follow the applicable rules and procedures at public meetings; and
7. To keep Council and staff apprised of court rulings and legislation affecting the legal interest of the City.

H. Council-City Attorney Relationship

The City Attorney does not represent individual Councilmembers, but the Council as a whole. Accordingly, with the exception of conflict of interest inquiries, in questions involving pending or upcoming matters, or protocol and procedure, the City Attorney's services are engaged and directed through the majority of the Council. Individual Councilmembers may seek advice or assistance from the City Attorney on other City-

related matters while exercising their judgment on the most efficient and appropriate use of the City Attorney's resources. Additionally, the confidentiality of information exchanged between a Councilmember and the City Attorney is not guaranteed. Depending on the circumstances, the City Attorney may have a legal obligation to act on information from Councilmembers for the protection of the City's legal interests.

I. City Manager-City Attorney Relationship

The City Attorney provides legal support and advice to the City Manager to assist him or her in implementing Council policies and exercising his or her authority as the chief executive officer of the City. Since the City Attorney is the only other officer who reports directly to the Council, the City Attorney and City Manager share an interest in reaching decisions that will be approved by the Council. Accordingly, there is an incentive to resolve differences before a matter moves forward to the Council for final action. The City Attorney may share confidential information obtained from the City Manager with the Council if necessary to protect the best interests of the City, and vice versa.

J. Access to Information and Communications Flow

- 1. Objectives:** It is the responsibility of staff to ensure City Officials have access to information from the City and to ensure such information is communicated completely and with candor to those making the request. However, City Officials must avoid intrusion into those areas that are the responsibility of the staff. Individual City Officials may not intervene in staff decision-making, the development of staff recommendations, scheduling of work, and executing department priorities without the prior knowledge and approval of the Council as a whole. This is necessary to protect staff from undue influence and pressure from individual City Officials, and to allow staff to execute priorities given by management and the Council as a whole, without fear of reprisal.
- 2. Council Roles:** Individual Councilmembers should not make attempts to pressure or influence staff decisions, recommendations, workloads, schedules, or department priorities. If a Councilmember wishes to influence the actions, decisions, recommendations, workloads, work schedule, and priorities of staff, that member must prevail upon the Council to do so as a matter of Council policy.

Councilmembers also have a responsibility of information flow. It is critical that they make extensive use of staff and commission reports and commission minutes. Councilmembers should come to meetings prepared—having read the council agenda packet materials and supporting documents, as well as any additional information or memoranda provided on City projects or evolving issues. Additional information may be requested from staff, if necessary.

- 3. Access to Information:** Individual Councilmembers, as well as the Council as a whole, are permitted complete freedom of access to any information requested of

staff and shall receive the full cooperation and candor of staff in being provided with any requested information. Appropriate personnel will pass critical information to all Councilmembers. Council will always be informed by the City Manager or appropriate staff when a critical or unusual event occurs about which the public would be concerned.

There are limited restrictions when information cannot be provided. Draft documents (e.g. staff reports in progress, administrative draft EIRs) are under review and not available for release until complete and after review by City management. In addition, there are legal restrictions on the City's ability to release certain personnel information even to Councilmembers. Certain aspects of police department affairs (access to restricted or confidential information related to crimes) may not be available to Councilmembers. There are also restrictions on the ability to release confidential personnel information. Any concerns Councilmembers may have regarding the release of information, or the refusal of staff to release information, should be discussed with the City Attorney for clarification.

K. Dissemination of Information

In cases where a staff response to an individual City Official's request involves written materials that may be of interest to other City Officials, the City Manager will provide copies of the material to all other City Officials. In making this judgment, the City Manager will consider whether the information is significant, new, otherwise not available to the Council, or of interest to the Council.

L. Staff Relationship with Advisory Bodies

Staff support and assistance may be provided to commissions and task forces, but advisory bodies do not have supervisory authority over City employees. While staff may work closely with advisory bodies, staff members remain responsible to their immediate supervisors and ultimately the City Manager and Council. The members of the commission or committee are responsible for the functions of the advisory body, and the Presiding Officer is responsible for committee compliance with the policies outlined in the T.M.C.

Staff support includes preparation of a summary agenda and preparation of reports providing a brief background of the issue, a list of alternatives, recommendations, and appropriate backup materials, if necessary. Advisory body members should have sufficient information to reach decisions based upon a clear explanation of the issues. The assigned staff person serves as secretary, taking minutes as needed.

It is important that advisory bodies wishing to communicate recommendations to the Council do so through adopted or approved Council agenda procedures. In addition, when a commission wishes to correspond with an outside agency, correspondence should be reviewed and approved by the Council. Individuals who would like a

commission to review a particular issue must also gain approval for such a request from the full Council. Staff members are to assist the advisory body presiding officer to ensure appropriate compliance with state and local laws and regulations.

M. Restrictions on Political Involvement by Staff

Local governments are non-partisan entities. Professional staff, as reflected within the principles of Council-City Manager form of government, formulate recommendations in compliance with Council policy, and for the good of the community, and are not influenced by political factors. For this reason, it is very important to understand the restrictions of staff in any level of political involvement through campaigns, fund-raisers, or other means.

1. **Staff Members:** By working for the City, staff members do not surrender rights to be involved in local elections. Indeed, laws are in place to preserve those rights. However, there are limitations to such involvement. Different restrictions apply to management and general employees.
2. **Management Staff:** In an effort to maintain neutrality, the City discourages any involvement in local campaigns. Such involvement erodes the tenet that staff are to provide an equal level of service to all members of the Council. However, City employees do not surrender rights to be involved in local elections.

City employees have no restrictions while off the job; however, no participation in campaigns or other activities may take place while on the job. No City resources may be used by staff in support of any campaign. Even while off the job, no employee may participate in campaigns or other political activities while in City uniform. For example, posing for a promotional photograph for a candidate for local office while in uniform is inappropriate. The support of the Council in these matters is requested. A City Official asking staff to sign petitions or similar items can create an awkward, uncomfortable, and potentially illegal situation.

Chapter 10: Leaving Office

A. Filling Council Vacancies

Generally, if a vacancy occurs on the Council during a member's term (e.g., resignation), the Council must either appoint an individual to serve the remaining term or call for a special election within sixty (60) days from the commencement of the vacancy.^{xvii}

1. **Special Election:** The special election must be held on the next regularly established election date not less than one hundred and fourteen (114) days from the call of the special election.^{xviii}
2. **Appointment:** If the Council fills the vacancy by appointment, the person appointed shall hold office pursuant to one of the following:
 - a. If the vacancy occurs in the first half of a term of office and at least one hundred and thirty (130) days prior to the next general municipal election, the person appointed to fill the vacancy shall hold office until the next general municipal election that is scheduled one hundred and thirty (130) or more days after the date the Council is notified of the vacancy, and thereafter until the person who is elected at that election to fill the vacancy has been qualified^{xix}; or
 - b. If the vacancy occurs in the first half of a term of office, but less than one hundred and thirty (130) days prior to the next general municipal election, or if the vacancy occurs in the second half of a term of office, the person appointed to fill the vacancy shall hold office for the unexpired term of the former incumbent.^{xx}

B. Conflicts of Interest While Leaving Office

A public official may not use his or her official position to influence prospective employment. California Government Code section 87406.3 prohibits elected officials, who held a position with the agency, from lobbying the agency to take any action within one year of the official's departure from office or employment. However, the individual may appear before the agency with which the official worked if the official is appearing on behalf of another public agency.

PART II: MEETING PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

Chapter 11: Open Meetings—Brown Act

A. Policy

The Council, and all commissions and boards that advise the Council, shall comply with the provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act, the Open and Public Meeting Law (the “Brown Act”). Staff cannot promote actions which would violate the Brown Act.

B. Meetings

1. **General.** All meetings shall be open and public. A meeting takes place whenever a quorum of the legislative body is present (example: 3 or more Councilmembers for purposes of a meeting of the Council) and information about the business of the body is received. Discussions qualify as a meeting. Social functions do not fall under the Brown Act unless City business is discussed.
2. **Serial Meetings.** Serial meetings cannot take place. A series of private meetings (known as serial meetings) in which a majority of the members of a legislative body commit to a decision or engage in collective deliberation concerning public business violates the Brown Act’s open meeting requirements. Correspondence that merely takes a position on an issue is acceptable.
 - a. **Daisy-chain serial meeting:** A daisy-chain meeting occurs when one member calls another to discuss public business and the second member calls a third to discuss and continue the discussion, and so on, until a quorum of the legislative body has discussed and deliberated on the same subject.
 - b. **“Hub-spoke” serial meeting:** A hub-spoke meeting is analogous to a wheel. One individual acts as the hub, or the center of the wheel and feeds and receives information to and from other individuals. When a person acts as the hub of a wheel (member A) and communicates individually with the various spokes to reach a quorum (members B and C, for example for a five-person legislative body), a serial meeting has occurred. A hub-spoke serial meeting can occur when the “hub” is a staff member, if the “spokes” constitute a quorum of the legislative body.

C. Confidential Closed Session Information

Any person, including a Councilmember, may not disclose confidential information to a person not entitled to receive it, unless the Council votes and authorizes the disclosure of that confidential information.^{xxi} The Council is the legislative body of a city and therefore is the holder of any privilege, such as the attorney-client privilege, and of all confidential information conveyed to the Council as a whole. No individual

councilmember may disclose confidential information without express authorization of the entire Council. The Brown Act defines confidential information as a communication made in a closed session that is specifically related to the underlying basis for the closed session.^{xxii}

D. Penalties

The intent of the Brown Act is to ensure that deliberation and actions of local public agencies are conducted in open and public at meetings.

The law provides for misdemeanor penalties for members of a body who violate the Brown Act.^{xxiii} Violations are also subject to civil action.^{xxiv} Improper disclosure of confidential information is subject to injunctive relief, disciplinary action against employees, and referral to the Civil Grand Jury.^{xxv}

E. Agenda Posting Procedures

1. The following procedure shall be followed:

- a. Posting the Agenda: Agendas for regular meetings must be posted seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the meeting, or twenty-four (24) hours in advance of a special meeting, and must include the following:
 - i. *Time and location of the meeting.*
 - ii. *Description of the agenda items.* The description should be reasonably calculated to adequately inform the public, and it should include the contemplated Council action.
 - iii. *Public Comments Section.* A section providing an opportunity for members of the public to address the Council. (The public comments portion of the agenda meets this requirement.)

2. **Affidavit of Posting.** Immediately after posting the agenda, the City Clerk will prepare and sign an affidavit of posting, declaring the date and place where the agenda was posted. These affidavits will be filed in the City Clerk's office for public reference.

F. Actions

No action can be taken on any item not appearing on the posted agenda.

G. Ex Parte Communication

All Councilmembers may have "ex parte" communications – meaning communications outside the meeting forum; however, such communication should not be encouraged,

made, or accepted when such communication is designed to influence the official decision or conduct of the official or other officials in order to obtain a more favored treatment or special consideration to advance the personal or private interests of himself or herself or others. This guarantees that all interested parties to any matter shall have equal opportunity to express and represent their interests. Councilmembers should be aware that ex parte communications can be difficult to navigate and seemingly innocuous conversations about matters before the Council may be intended to improperly influence the member.

Councilmembers who have ex parte communications with a party that appears before them at the meeting, should disclose that he or she had ex parte communication with the party. This can be done by stating that the Councilmember had ex parte communication with a party at a time in the meeting when the item is discussed.

Any written ex parte communication received by a City Official for matters where all interested parties should have an equal opportunity for a hearing, shall be made a part of the record by the recipient.

Chapter 12: Council Meetings

A. Council Meetings

1. **Regular Meetings.** Consistent with the T.M.C., regular meetings of the Council shall be held the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month, commencing at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Turlock Civic Center, 750 Bellevue Road, Turlock, California.^{xxvi}
 - a. **Other Locations.** The Council may, from time to time, elect to meet at other locations within the City and upon such election shall give public notice of the change of location in accordance with provisions of the Government Code.^{xxvii}
 - b. **Location during Local Emergency.** If, by reason of fire, flood, or other emergency, it shall be unsafe to meet in the Civic Center, the meetings may be held for the duration of the emergency at such other place as may be designated by the Mayor, or if the Mayor does not so designate, by the Vice Mayor or City Manager.^{xxviii}
 - c. **Holidays.** When the day for any regular meeting falls on a legal holiday, the regularly scheduled meeting for that day shall automatically be held on the third Tuesday of the month in which the holiday falls.^{xxix}
2. **Special Meetings & Emergency Meetings.** Special meetings and emergency meetings of the Council may be called and held from time to time consistent with and pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Government Code.^{xxx}
3. **Adjourned Meetings.** The Council may adjourn any regular, adjourned regular, special or adjourned special meeting to a time and place specified in the order of adjournment pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Government Code.^{xxxi}
4. **Closed Session.** The Council may hold closed sessions before, during, or after any agenda items in regular or special meetings, or any time otherwise authorized by law, to consider or hear any matter authorized by State law to be heard in closed session. The general subject matter for consideration shall be expressed in open meeting before such session is held.^{xxxii}
5. **Cancellation of Regular Meetings.** Any meeting of the Council may be canceled in advance by a majority of the Council, if feasible. The City manager may cancel a meeting for the lack of items for an agenda or lack of a quorum.
6. **Quorum.** A majority of the Council constitutes a quorum for transaction of

business. Less than a majority may adjourn from time to time, and compel attendance of absent members in the manner and under the penalties prescribed by ordinance.^{xxxiii} If all Councilmembers are absent from any regular meeting, the City Clerk shall declare the meeting adjourned to a stated day and hour. The City Clerk shall cause a written notice of the adjournment to be delivered personally to each Councilmember at least three (3) hours before the adjourned meeting.^{xxxiv}

7. **Presiding Officer.** The Mayor shall preside over all Council meetings. The Mayor shall have the authority to preserve order at all Council meetings, to call for the removal of any person or persons from any meeting of the Council for disorderly conduct, to interpret and enforce the procedural guidelines of the Council, with assistance from the City Attorney, and to determine the order of business under the guidelines of the Council.^{xxxv}
 - a. Absence of Mayor - The Vice Mayor shall act as Mayor in the absence or disability of the Mayor.^{xxxvi}
 - b. Mayor & Vice Mayor Absence - When the Mayor and Vice Mayor are absent from any meeting of the Council, the City Clerk may call the meeting to order and the Councilmembers present may choose another member to act as Vice Mayor, and that person shall, during that meeting, have the duties of the Mayor.^{xxxvii}
8. **Attendance by the Public.** Except as specifically provided by law for closed sessions,^{xxxviii} all meetings of the Council shall be open to the public in accordance with the terms, provisions, and exceptions consistent with State law.^{xxxix}
9. **Action Minutes.** The City Clerk or his or her designee will maintain a written record and attest to the proceedings of the Council in the form of action minutes (final motions with votes of the Council). Expanded action minutes (if necessary) will include final motions with votes of the Council, reflect the names of public speakers and paraphrase Council and staff discussion and public comments.^{xl}
10. **Recordings of Meetings.** Video recordings of proceedings, if such recordings are created at the direction of the City, shall be maintained by the City Clerk for a period of no less than ninety (90) days. Audio recordings of proceedings shall be made and shall be maintained by the City Clerk for a period of no less than two (2) years.^{xli}

Chapter 13: Order of Business

A. General Order:

The Council establishes the general order of Council, board and commission meetings. This section summarizes each meeting component.

At all regular and special meetings, public comments must be permitted before or during consideration of an agenda item. Public comment is appropriate on any matter within the jurisdiction of each legislative body.

2. CLOSED SESSION (if necessary)

- a. The Council meets from time to time in closed sessions which are duly held meetings or a portion thereof, at which certain actions may be taken and are not open to public and news media. The release of certain information can compromise the City's position and may lead to an increased potential for legal exposure, which ultimately will cost the City more money. The topics that can be discussed in closed session include:
 - i. Closed sessions held at such times pursuant to Government Code section 54957.6 where the Council meets with its designated representatives prior to and during consultation and discussions with representatives of employee organizations;
 - ii. Security or emergencies;
 - iii. Personnel sessions; and
 - iv. Closed sessions to consider potential or pending litigation in which the City or an officer or employee is or could be a party.
- b. Matters discussed in closed sessions are considered confidential.
 - i. *Labor Relations:* As a matter of policy, the Council acknowledges that the City and its taxpayers are best served if positions authorized during such sessions are presented as those of the Council as a whole. Members of the Council agree that positions and agreements shall not be divulged.
 - ii. *Personnel Sessions:* Matters discussed and reviewed in personnel sessions shall remain confidential in order to protect employees' rights to privacy.

- iii. *Security:* Arrangements made to address threats to the City or its property must be kept confidential.
- iv. *Litigation:* discussion of probable or pending litigation could waive attorney-client privilege to the detriment of the City's position.

3. A. CALL TO ORDER

B. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

C. ROLL CALL

D. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AS POSTED OR AS AMENDED (This is the time for the Council to remove items from the agenda or to change the order of the agenda. Matters may be taken up out of order of the established agenda by the four-fifths vote of the Council.)

5. PROCLAMATIONS, RECOGNITIONS, APPOINTMENTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, PRESENTATIONS, AND BRIEFINGS

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- a. Comments From The Public: Individuals desiring to speak are to address the Council from the speaker podium after giving their name and address. Note, speakers are not required to provide this information if they do not wish to do so.

Comments should focus on a specific matter within the Council's jurisdiction with reasons for the position taken. Written comments are encouraged during the public comments section or during public hearings. When materials are presented during public hearings, they should be submitted before the public hearing is closed on the item. Comments may be limited so that all have an opportunity to address the Council.

Groups or applicant representatives desiring to speak shall address the Council from the speaker podium after giving the name of the group, its purpose if necessary, and the representative's name.

After public hearings are closed, no member of the public shall be permitted to address the Council or the staff from the audience, except at the discretion of the presiding officer.

7. MOTION WAIVING READING OF ALL ORDINANCES ON THE AGENDA, EXCEPT BY TITLE LANGUAGE (Language only needed if an Ordinance is on the agenda—Public Hearing or Final Reading.)

8. CONSENT CALENDAR

- a. Generally: Those items on the Council agenda, which are considered to be of a routine and non-controversial nature by the City Manager, are placed on the “Consent Calendar”. These items shall be approved, adopted, accepted, etc., by one motion of the Council. For example, final reading and adoption of ordinances, various resolutions approving agreements, minor budgetary items, status reports, and routine City operations.
- b. Consent Calendar Categories: Subject to necessary revisions or omissions, the following categories can be included as part of the Consent Calendar:
 - i. Warrants
 - ii. Minutes
 - iii. Resolutions
 - iv. Agreements (Agreements approved by the Council, either on consent or as part of an item on the regular agenda, shall be approved by resolution.)
 - v. Ordinances (Ordinances may only be adopted as part of the consent calendar, at a regular meeting on second reading.)
 - vi. Informational Items Only (No action required.)
- c. Removal from Consent Calendar: Councilmembers may request that any item listed under “Consent Calendar” be removed from the Consent Calendar, and Council will then take action separately on this item. A member of the public may request that an item listed under “Consent Calendar” be removed and Council action taken separately on the item; however, the Council must concur in such a request. Items, which are removed (“pulled”) by members of the Council for discussion, will typically be heard after all other Consent Calendar items are approved unless the majority of Council chooses an earlier or later time.
- d. Minor questions: A Councilmember may ask questions on any item on the consent calendar. When a Councilmember has a minor question for clarification concerning a consent item, which will not involve extended discussion, the item may be pulled for clarification and the questions will be addressed along with the rest of the Consent Calendar. Councilmembers are encouraged to seek clarifications prior to the meeting, if possible.

- e. No vote: When a Councilmember wishes to pull an item simply to register a dissenting vote, Councilmember shall inform the Mayor that they wish to register a dissenting vote without discussion. These items will be handled along with the rest of the Consent Calendar, and the City Clerk will register a “no” vote in the minutes.

9. FINAL READINGS

10. PUBLIC HEARINGS (Items under Public Hearings require advance publication of a notice of public hearing.)

11. ACTION ITEMS

12. CITY MANAGER REPORTS/UPDATES

13. COUNCIL ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

14. COUNCILMEMBER QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

15. CLOSED SESSION (Continuation of Closed Session if necessary)

16. REPORTS FROM CLOSED SESSION

17. ADJOURNMENT

B. Public Hearings:

1. Generally, public hearings, other than those of a quasi-judicial nature (quasi-judicial matters are those matters where the Council is interpreting and applying regulations, such as consideration on use permits or zoning issues), shall be conducted in the following order:
 - a. staff review
 - b. questions of staff by the Council
 - c. hearing opened by Mayor
 - d. if desired, hearing closed by Mayor
 - e. questions by the Council
 - f. discussion by the Council
 - g. action by the Council
2. Questions and comments from the public shall be limited to the subject under

consideration. Depending on the extent of the agenda, and the number of persons desiring to speak on an issue, the Mayor may, at the beginning of the hearing, limit testimony to three (3) minutes per individual. Any person may speak for a longer period of time, by majority vote of the Council. This may be deemed necessary if a person is speaking as a representative of a group or has a slide presentation requiring more time.

3. Councilmembers should not speak to an issue until the public hearing has been closed. Councilmembers are encouraged to gather as much information as possible prior to a meeting. This sometimes involves meeting with a proponent or developer to become more educated on a project. If a Councilmember has met with a proponent or developer or opponent of subject hearing, he or she should consider acknowledging such meeting prior to opening of the hearing at the Council meeting, but it is not required.

Once a hearing is closed, it is inappropriate for the public to speak except to answer an inquiry of Councilmembers addressed through the Presiding Officer.

4. Regular items are shown on the agenda include public hearings, adoption of resolutions and ordinances and other matters that require council action. Typically, public hearings are scheduled as near the beginning of the agenda as possible.

C. Resolutions

1. **Definitions:** A resolution is generally adopted by the Council to deal with temporary or special matters, such as when the Council makes only a factual determination or certification that certain necessary conditions or requirements set by statute or ordinance have been met. Resolutions can also express opinions of the legislative body or set temporary standards (i.e., amount of permit processing fees that may be changed again by future resolutions). Resolutions are recorded and kept on file with the City Clerk.^{xliii} A resolution is less formal than an ordinance because it does not become part of the municipal code.
2. **Recording Resolutions:** In addition to being referenced in the minutes, resolutions will be recorded by a separate document, numbered in sequence and preserved by the City Clerk. Such resolutions are used for various reasons, such as when specifically required by law, when needed as a separate evidentiary document to be transmitted to another governmental agency, or where the frequency of future reference back to its contents warrants a separate document to facilitate such future reference and research.
3. **Motion (recorded by minute entry).** The “motion” (assuming it was one which passed) is a council action, which is recorded simply by an item entry in the

minutes of the meeting at which it was accomplished, and no separate document is made to memorialize it. Procedural actions (such as a motion to continue a hearing) are always done by motion, and, in addition, many administrative matters (such as directing the City Manager to furnish a report) are done by motion.

D. Ordinances - Requirements of Ordinances

1. **Definition:** An ordinance is a law that the Council adopts and in most cases is codified into formal law by means of the published municipal code. An ordinance is the most binding and permanent type of Council action and usually may only be repealed or amended by a subsequent ordinance. Ordinances must be publicly read aloud at two (2) Council meetings, introduced at one (1) meeting, and adopted at the subsequent meeting (most often at the next meeting). Ordinances may not be passed within five (5) days of introduction unless they are urgency ordinances.^{xiii} A public hearing notice must be published at least ten (10) days prior to the first reading of the ordinance.^{xiv}
2. **Adoption:** Except as hereafter provided, no ordinance shall be adopted by the Council on the day of its introduction, nor within one week thereafter, nor at any time other than at a duly assembled meeting. If an ordinance is altered after its introduction (except for the correction of typographical or clerical errors), it shall be adopted at a meeting held at least one week after the date of such alteration.

At the time of introduction or adoption of an ordinance the title need only be read, unless reading of the ordinance in full is requested by any member of the City Council.

3. **Emergency Ordinances:** Any ordinance declared by the Council to be necessary as an emergency measure for preserving the public peace, health or safety and containing a statement of the reasons for its urgency, may be introduced and adopted at the same meeting if passed by at least three affirmative votes.
4. **Effective Date of Ordinance:** No ordinance shall become effective until thirty (30) days from and after the date of its adoption, except as provided by law.

E. Method of Action - Ordinances and Resolutions

1. **Legislative action** shall be taken by the Council only by means of an ordinance or resolution.

2. **Voting:** Any Councilmember present at a meeting when a question comes up for a vote should vote for or against the measure unless he or she is disqualified from voting and abstains because of such disqualification. All votes shall be roll call votes.
3. **Adoption of Resolutions:** Resolutions are prepared in advance and contain a brief title which indicates the subject and purpose. The procedure for adoption is a brief explanation by staff, motion, second, discussion and vote. It shall not be necessary to read a resolution in full or by title except to identify it. Any Councilmember may require that the resolution be read in full.
4. **Ordinances and resolutions** are equally as legally effective and binding; they vary in the formality of respective memorialization. The more formal is referred to as “ordinance”.
5. **Publishing.** The rates of taxes to be levied or the amount of revenue required to be raised by taxation may be fixed either by ordinance or resolution. Where the tax rate or the amount of revenue required to be raised by taxation is fixed by resolution, such resolution shall be published in the same manner and within the same time as ordinances are required to be published.^{xlv} Within fifteen (15) days after the ordinance passes, the City Clerk shall cause each ordinance to be published at least once, with the names of those Councilmembers voting for and against the ordinance, in a newspaper of general circulation circulated in the City of Turlock.^{xlvi} Ordinances shall not be published in a newspaper if the charge exceeds the customary rate charged by the newspaper for publication of private legal notices, but these ordinances shall be posted in the manner and at the time required by the Government Code.^{xlvii} Except as provided in Section 36937 of the Government Code, an ordinance shall not take effect or be valid unless it is published or posted pursuant to Government Code section 36933 and not until thirty (30) days after the final passage of an ordinance. The publication and posting of ordinances may be satisfied by the actions prescribed in Government Code sections 36933(c)(1) and 36933(c)(2).

a. Exceptions to Publishing Requirement. An ordinance takes effect immediately if it is an ordinance:

- i. relating to an election;
- ii. for the immediate preservation of public peace, health or safety, containing a declaration of the facts constituting the urgency, and is passed by a four-fifths vote of the Council;
- iii. relating to street improvement proceedings;

- iv. relating to taxes for the usual and current expense of the City; or
- v. covered by particular provisions of law prescribing the manner of its passage and adoption.^{xlviii}

F. Action on Agenda Items:

In accordance with the Brown Act, the Council may not take action on any item that did not appear on the posted Council agenda seventy-two (72) hours prior to the Council meeting unless an exception is made by the Government Code.^{xlix}

G. Items Placed on Written Agenda

Items of business shall be placed upon the written agenda prior to the deadline announced or observed for the preparation thereof, at the request of the City Manager or the City Attorney. The City Clerk's deadline is 5:00 p.m. on the Wednesday prior to a Tuesday City Council meeting for all final written materials.

Any member of the City Council may place an item on a future agenda by making a written request, on a City-approved form, by electronic mail or personal delivery to the City Manager, the City Clerk, and the City Attorney. The City Manager is responsible for putting together (or delegating, as necessary) a staff report as needed and shall ensure the item is included on the next available Council agenda, but no later than three (3) meetings from the time the request was first made. There may be some situations where the timing is tight, and the City Manager will need to streamline the process.

Chapter 14: Guidelines of Meeting Conduct

A. General Procedures

It is the policy of the Council not to become involved in the protracted discussion over parliamentary procedure. Consistent with any City ordinance, statute or other legal requirement, any issue of procedure relating to conduct of a meeting or hearing not otherwise provided for herein may be determined by the Presiding Officer, in consultation with the City Attorney, subject to appeal to the full Council.

B. Presiding Officer

The Mayor is the presiding officer and acts as presiding officer at Council meetings. In the absence or incapacity of the Mayor, the Vice Mayor serves as presiding officer.

C. Seating Arrangement of the Council

The Mayor, with the approval of individual Councilmembers, shall establish seating arrangements for Council meetings.

D. Authority of the Presiding Officer

Subject to appeal to the full Council, the presiding officer shall have the authority to prevent the misuses of motions, or the abuse of any privilege, or obstruction of the business of the Council by ruling any such matter out of order. In so ruling, the presiding officer shall be courteous and fair and should presume that the moving party is acting in good faith.

E. Discussion Rules

- 1. Obtaining the Floor:** A member of the Council or staff shall first address the Mayor and gain recognition. Comments and questions should be limited to the issue before the Council. Disruptive and prolonged cross-exchange between Councilmembers and the public will not be tolerated.
- 2. Questions to Staff:** A Councilmember shall, after recognition by the Mayor, address questions to the designated staff member.
- 3. Interruptions:** Once recognized, a Councilmember should not be interrupted while speaking, except to make a point of order or personal privilege. If a Councilmember is called to order while speaking, the individual shall cease speaking until the question order is determined. Upon being recognized by the Mayor, members of the staff shall hold the floor until completion of their remarks or until recognition is withdrawn by the Mayor.
- 4. Discussion Limit:** A Councilmember should not speak more than once on a particular subject until every other Councilmember has had the opportunity to

speaking. Councilmembers are encouraged to discuss items during the decision-making process.

5. **Tabling Procedures:** Immediately stops discussion and causes a vote to postpone the matter indefinitely or to a specific time and date.
6. **Right of Protest:** A Councilmember is never required to state reasons for a dissenting vote.

F. Motions:

Motions may be made by any member of the Council, including the Mayor, providing that before a motion is offered by the Mayor, the opportunity for making a motion is offered to the other Councilmembers. Any member of the Council, other than the person offering the motion, may second the motion.

1. **Procedure for Motions:** before a motion can be considered or debated, it must be seconded. Once the motion has been properly made and seconded, the Mayor shall open the matter for discussion offering the first opportunity to the moving party and, thereafter, to any Councilmember properly recognized by the Mayor. Once the matter has been fully discussed and the vote is called for, no further discussion will be allowed; however, Councilmembers may be allowed to explain their vote.
2. **Precedence of Motions:** when a motion is on the floor, no other motion shall be entertained except the following, which shall have precedence in the following order:
 - a. Motion to Adjourn the Meeting (not debatable). A motion to adjourn shall be in order at any time, except as follows:
 - i. When repeated after defeat without any intervening business or discussion.
 - ii. When made as an interruption of a Councilmember who is speaking.
 - iii. While a vote is being taken.

A motion to adjourn "to another time" shall be debatable only as to the time which the meeting is adjourned.

- b. Motion to Fix Hour of Adjournment. Such motion shall be set to a definite time at which to adjourn and shall be undebatable and unamendable except to the time set. Notice of the adjournment and the date of the

subsequent meeting shall be conspicuously posted on or near where the meeting was held within twenty-four (24) hours of the adjournment. ⁱ

If the subsequent meeting occurs within five (5) days of the original meeting, the Council may consider matters placed on the original meeting agenda without posting a new agenda. If the subsequent meeting occurs more than five (5) days from the original meeting, a new agenda must be prepared and posted. ⁱⁱ

- c. Motion to Table. A motion to table shall be used to temporarily bypass the subject. A motion to table shall be undebatable and shall preclude all amendments or debate of the subject under consideration. The tabled item may be “taken from the table” at any time by a motion made prior to the end of the meeting. If the item is not taken from the table prior to the end of the meeting, it shall be placed on a future agenda as a new matter.
- d. Motion to Amend. A motion to amend can be made after a motion is introduced and seconded. A motion to amend shall be debatable only as to the amendment. A motion to amend an amendment shall be an order but a motion to amend an amendment to an amendment shall not be an order. An amendment modifying the intention of a motion shall be an order, but an amendment relating to a different matter shall not be an order. A motion to amend shall be voted on first, followed by a vote on the original motion, as amended or as originally stated, depending on whether the motion to amend carries.
- e. Motion to Substitute. A motion to substitute can be made after a motion is introduced and seconded. A substitute motion on the same subject shall be acceptable. Motions to amend and motions to substitute are often confused. A motion to amend seeks to retain the basic motion on the floor, but modify it in some way. A substitute motion seeks to throw out the basic motion on the floor and substitute a new and different motion for it.
- f. Motion to Continue. Motions to continue to a definite time shall be amendable and debatable as to the propriety of postponement and time set. If desired, the Councilmember who initiates the motion to continue may also move to reopen the hearing to receive further testimony.

- 3. **Motions Introducing Ordinances.**ⁱⁱⁱ Ordinances shall not be passed within five (5) days of their introduction unless they are emergency ordinances, in compliance with state law. Ordinances may only be passed at a regular meeting and must be read in full at the time of introduction and passage except when, after reading the title, further reading is waived. Motions introducing ordinances for adoption

at a future meeting are deemed to include a waiver by the Council of the full reading of the text and title of the proposed ordinance unless the motion otherwise specifically so provided. When ordinances, other than emergency ordinances, are altered after introduction, they shall be passed only at a regular meeting held at least five (5) days after alteration. Corrections of typographical or clerical errors are not considered alterations for purposes of this paragraph.

G. Voting Procedures:

No ordinance, resolution, or motion shall be passed or become effective without an affirmative vote. A conflict of interest shall be declared whenever appropriate and in compliance with state law. The affected Councilmember will step down from the dais, remove themselves from the room, and not participate in the discussion or vote on the item. A roll call vote will be taken and recorded.

1. **Abstention:** An abstention does not count as a vote for or against a matter. If a Councilmember abstains, he or she is counted as present for quorum purposes, but is not deemed to be "voting" for purposes of determining whether there has been a "majority vote of those members present and voting." If a Councilmember abstains from voting on the grounds that he or she has or may have a conflict of interest, that abstention shall be made either at the beginning of the Council consideration of the matter or as soon as the Councilmember recognizes that he or she may have such a conflict or potential conflict. In addition, the Councilmember shall state for the record the precise nature of the interest, which he or she may have that creates the conflict or potential conflict and shall leave the Council Chamber during discussion of the item when required to do so by the Political Reform Act.
2. **Tie Votes:** A tie vote results in a lost motion. In such an instance, any member of the Council may offer a motion for further action. If there is no action by an affirmative vote, the result is no action. If the matter involves an appeal, and an affirmative vote does not occur, the result is that the decision appealed stands as decided by the decision-making person or body from which the appeal was taken.
3. **Motion for Reconsideration^{liii}:** A tenet of parliamentary procedure is finality. After vigorous discussion, debate and a vote, there must be some closure to the issue. And so, after a vote is taken, the matter is deemed closed, subject only to reopening if a proper motion to consider is made and passed.

A motion to reconsider requires a majority vote to pass like other motions, but there are two special rules that apply only to the motion to reconsider. First, is the matter of timing. A motion to reconsider must be made at the meeting where the item was first voted upon. A motion to reconsider made at a later time is untimely.

(The body, however, can always vote to suspend the rules and, by a two-thirds majority, allow a motion to reconsider to be made at another time.) Second, a motion to reconsider may be made only by certain members of the body. Accordingly, a motion to reconsider may be made only by a member who voted in the majority on the original motion. If such a member has a change of heart, he or she may make the motion to reconsider (any other member of the body — including a member who voted in the minority on the original motion — may second the motion). If a member who voted in the minority seeks to make the motion to reconsider, it must be ruled out of order. The purpose of this rule is finality. If a member of minority could make a motion to reconsider, then the item could be brought back to the body again and again, which would defeat the purpose of finality. If the motion to reconsider passes, then the original matter is back before the body, and a new original motion is in order.

H. Non-Observance of Guidelines:

The guidelines are adopted to expedite and facilitate the transaction of the business of the Council in an orderly fashion and shall be deemed to be procedural only. Failure to strictly observe the guidelines shall not affect the jurisdiction of, or invalidate any action taken by the Council.^{liv}

I. Non-Exclusive Guidelines:

These guidelines are not exclusive and do not limit the inherent power and general legal authority of the Council, or of its presiding officer, to govern the conduct of Council meetings as may be considered appropriate from time to time or in particular circumstances for purposes of orderly and effective conduct of the affairs of the City.

Chapter 15: Addressing the Council

A. General Oral Presentations by Members of the Public

The rules governing oral presentations by members of the public at Council meetings are as follows:

1. Prior to the meeting, or during the meeting prior to a matter being reached, persons wishing to address the Council are requested to fill out a speaker card and submit it to the City Clerk.
2. When called upon, the person is requested to come to the podium, state his or her name and address for the record, and, if speaking for an organization or other group, identify the organization or group represented.
3. All remarks should be addressed to the Council as a whole, not to individual members thereof.
4. Questions, if any, should be directed to the Presiding Officer who will determine whether, or in what manner, an answer will be provided.

B. Public Comment for Non-Agenda Items

Public Comment is that period set aside at Council meetings for members of the public to address the Council on items of City business other than scheduled agenda items. The Public Comment portion of the Council meeting is the opportunity for members of the public to address the Council in compliance with the Government Code.

1. **Timing.** Public Comment is generally accommodated as specified on the Council agenda, with each speaker given no more than three (3) minutes. The Mayor/Chair or a majority of the Council may authorize more than three (3) minutes.
2. **City Matters.** Presentations under Public Comment are limited to items within the subject matter jurisdiction of the City.

C. Agendized Items

Any member of the public wishing to verbally address the Council on City business matters appearing on the Council agenda may do so when that item is taken up by the Council, or as otherwise specified by the Council or its presiding officer.

1. **Time Limit.** Oral presentations are limited to three (3) minutes per speaker unless otherwise provided. The Mayor/Chair or a majority of the Council may authorize more than three (3) minutes.
2. **Limit on Addressing the Council.** Individuals or individuals representing a group may make one (1) comment on each topic on the agenda about which the Council may be addressed. Individuals may be allowed to make additional comments on the same topic by a majority vote of the Council.
3. **Presentations Submitted in Writing.** Persons who anticipate oral presentations exceeding three (3) minutes are encouraged to submit comments in writing, in advance, care of the City Clerk, for prior distribution to the Council and other interested parties. Submission of comments in writing is encouraged in lieu of possible lengthy oral presentations which may not be permitted.
4. **Written Comments of a Third Party.** Persons wishing to read the written comments of another person shall be limited to one (1) minute. Should the written communication require more time to be heard, it shall be received and filed by the City Clerk. Additional time may be allowed by a majority vote of the Council.

D. Comments in Writing Encouraged

Members of the public may submit, and are encouraged to submit, comments in writing to the Council, care of the City Clerk, relating to any items of City business, whether on the Council agenda or otherwise. Such comments will be distributed to members of the Council and considered and acted upon, or not acted upon, as the Council, in its judgment, may deem appropriate.

1. **Comment Cards.** Comment cards may be used by members of the public in attendance at the meeting who do not wish to or cannot verbally address the Council during a meeting. A person may indicate his or her brief comments on the card and his or her opposition or support for an item on a comment card. During the public testimony on the item, the Mayor indicates that the Council has received comment cards from (name of person) in support of the project or issue and comment cards from (name of person) in opposition of the project or issue.
2. **Repetitious Comments Prohibited.** Speakers shall not present the same or substantially the same items or arguments to the Council repeatedly or be repetitious in presenting their oral comments. If a matter has been presented orally before the Council, whether the Council has taken action, or determined to take no action, the same or substantially the same matter may not be

presented orally by the same person any further. Nothing in the foregoing precludes submission of comments to the Council in writing for such action or non-action as the Council, in its discretion, may deem appropriate.

E. Speaker Time Limits for An Agenda Item

In order to expedite matters and to avoid repetitious presentations, whenever any group of persons wishes to address the Council on the same subject matter, the presiding officer may request that a spokesperson be chosen by the group, and in case additional matters are to be presented by any other member of the group, that there be a limit on the number of such persons addressing the Council. A specific time limit may also be set for the total presentation. No group shall arrange themselves so as to use individual speakers' times in sequential order to circumvent the time limits.

F. Waiver of Guidelines

Any of the foregoing guidelines may be waived by majority vote of the Councilmembers present when it is deemed that there is good cause to do so based upon the particular facts and circumstances involved.

G. Decorum

Unruly conduct such as undue noise, hissing, profanity, inappropriate applause, insults or physical disturbance shall not be permitted. Any person making personal, impertinent, or derogatory remarks or who shall become boisterous while addressing the Council, shall be barred from further audience before the Council at said meeting by the presiding officer unless permission to continue is granted by a majority of the Council.^{lv} Members of the public must not block the audience or the City's recording of the proceedings and may only take photographs or record the meeting from the public seating section. Members of the public may not approach the Council or City staff beyond the lectern where public comment is made, unless so recognized and authorized by a majority vote of the Council.

Appendix A
Travel Policy

Appendix B
ICMA Code of Ethics

ICMA Code of Ethics

The mission of ICMA is to create excellence in local governance by developing and fostering professional local government management worldwide. To further this mission, certain principles, as enforced by the Rules of Procedure, shall govern the conduct of every member of ICMA, who shall:

Tenet 1

Be dedicated to the concepts of effective and democratic local government by responsible elected officials and believe that professional general management is essential to the achievement of this objective.

Tenet 2

Affirm the dignity and worth of the services rendered by government and maintain a constructive, creative, and practical attitude toward local government affairs and a deep sense of social responsibility as a trusted public servant.

Tenet 3

Be dedicated to the highest ideals of honor and integrity in all public and personal relationships in order that the member may merit the respect and confidence of the elected officials, of other officials and employees, and of the public.

Tenet 4

Recognize that the chief function of local government at all times is to serve the best interests of all people.

Tenet 5

Submit policy proposals to elected officials; provide them with facts and advice on matters of policy as a basis for making decisions and setting community goals; and uphold and implement local government policies adopted by elected officials.

Tenet 6

Recognize that elected representatives of the people are entitled to the credit for the establishment of local government policies; responsibility for policy execution rests with the members.

Tenet 7

Refrain from all political activities which undermine public confidence in professional administrators. Refrain from participation in the election of the members of the employing legislative body.

Tenet 8

Make it a duty continually to improve the member's professional ability and to develop the competence of associates in the use of management techniques.

Tenet 9

Keep the community informed on local government affairs; encourage communication between the citizens and all local government officers; emphasize friendly and courteous service to the public; and seek to improve the quality and image of public service.

Tenet 10

Resist any encroachment on professional responsibilities, believing the member should be free to carry out official policies without interference, and handle each problem without discrimination on the basis of principle and justice.

Tenet 11

Handle all matters of personnel on the basis of merit so that fairness and impartiality govern a member's decisions, pertaining to appointments, pay adjustments, promotions, and discipline.

Tenet 12

Seek no favor; believe that personal aggrandizement or profit secured by confidential information or by misuse of public time is dishonest.

Appendix C

Anti-Harassment Policy

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- ⁱ T.M.C. § 2-4-102.
- ⁱⁱ T.M.C. § 2-4-201.
- ⁱⁱⁱ T.M.C. § 4-2-102.
- ^{iv} T.M.C. § 4-2.
- ^v T.M.C. § 4-2-103.
- ^{vi} T.M.C. § 4-2-104.
- ^{vii} Gov. Code § 54952.2.
- ^{viii} Gov. Code § 6252, subd. (g); *City of San Jose v. Superior Court* (2017) 398 P.3d 848.
- ^{ix} Gov. Code § 36516.
- ^x Gov. Code § 82033.
- ^{xi} *Id.*
- ^{xii} Gov. Code § 87105.
- ^{xiii} Gov. Code § 87105, subd. (a)(1)-(3).
- ^{xiv} Gov. Code § 87105, subd. (a)(3).
- ^{xv} Gov. Code § 53235, subd. (f).
- ^{xvi} T.M.C. § 2-4-207.
- ^{xvii} Gov. Code § 36512, subd. (b).
- ^{xviii} *Id.*
- ^{xix} Gov. Code § 36512, subd. (b)(2)(A).
- ^{xx} Gov. Code § 36512, subd. (b)(2)(B).
- ^{xxi} Gov. Code, § 54963, subd. (a).
- ^{xxii} Gov. Code, § 54963, subd. (b).
- ^{xxiii} Gov. Code § 54959.
- ^{xxiv} Gov. Code § 54960.
- ^{xxv} Gov. Code § 54963.
- ^{xxvi} T.M.C. §§ 2-1-01, 2-1-02; Gov. Code §§ 36805, 54954, subd. (a).
- ^{xxvii} Gov. Code § 54954, subd. (b).
- ^{xxviii} Gov. Code § 54954, subd. (e).
- ^{xxix} T.M.C. § 2-1-02.
- ^{xxx} Gov. Code §§ 54956, 54956.5. Special meetings and emergency meetings, respectively.
- ^{xxxi} Gov. Code §§ 36805, 36809, 54955, 54956.
- ^{xxxii} Gov. Code § 54954.5.
- ^{xxxiii} Gov. Code § 36810.
- ^{xxxiv} Gov. Code § 36811.
- ^{xxxv} Gov. Code §§ 36802, 36813, 54957.9.
- ^{xxxvi} Gov. Code § 36802.
- ^{xxxvii} *Id.*
- ^{xxxviii} Gov. Code § 54954.5.
- ^{xxxix} Gov. Code § 54953.
- ^{xl} Gov. Code § 36814.
- ^{xli} Gov. Code § 54953.5. The statute only requires maintenance of the audio or visual recording for thirty (30) days where there are other records of the meeting that are retained according to Gov. Code § 6250 et seq.
- ^{xlii} Gov. Code § 36936.
- ^{xliiii} Gov. Code § 36934.
- ^{xliv} Gov. Code § 65090.
- ^{xlv} Gov. Code § 36936.1.
- ^{xlvi} Gov. § 36933, subd. (c).
- ^{xlvii} Gov. Code § 36933, subd. (a).
- ^{xlviii} Gov. Code § 36937.
- ^{xlix} Gov. Code § 54954.
- ^l Gov. Code § 54955.
- ^{li} Gov. Code § 54954.2, subd. (b)(3).
- ^{lii} Gov. Code § 36934. The requirements for introducing an ordinance or urgency ordinance are provided in this section of the Government Code and establish the information that follows in this paragraph.

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- liii *Rosenberg's Rules of Order: Simple Parliamentary Procedures for the 21st Century*, Revised 2011, pg. 6.
liv *City of Pasadena v. Paine* (1954) 126 Cal.App.2d 93.
lv Gov. Code §§ 36813, 54957.9.