

Columbia Heights City Council and Staff Norms

While we are accountable to each other for these norms, the Mayor and City Manager will help us adhere to them with respectful reminders and reinforcement as needed.

Behavioral Norms

1. We will assume others best intentions.
2. We will exercise humility.
3. We will praise publicly and criticize privately.
4. We will focus on the policy and not personalities.
5. We will do our best to de-escalate contentious interactions.
6. We will provide reasonable notice to the Mayor and City Manager of any changes or additions we wish to make at a Council meeting so that the Mayor is prepared to manage the meeting.
7. We will show respect for one another by:
 - a. Paying attention to others when they are speaking.
 - b. Not interrupting others.
 - c. Listening to understand others, not simply to respond to them.
 - d. Honoring each other in public and protecting one another in their absence.
 - e. Not bullying others.

Operational Norms

1. Council members and staff will respect the Mayor's role to chair our meetings by:
 - a. Waiting to be called on before speaking so that others can consider our contributions.
 - b. The Mayor and City Manager will bring closure to policy discussions, public comment, and other similar "final word" situations.
2. Once a decision has been made by the Council, we will support the implementation of that decision even if we did not support the decision itself.
3. If Council has a request of staff, they will direct their request to the City Manager and the Division Director for coordination with staff unless the City Manager decides otherwise.
4. If Council has a question about a staff member, they will raise that with the City Manager privately before raising it publicly.
5. When Council is considering a topic, it is incumbent upon Council members to ask sufficient questions to ensure they are making informed decisions.
6. Council and staff will address each other by their titles when engaging each other in any official capacity and will use first names in informal settings.