



CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP

CITY OF FAIR OAKS RANCH, TEXAS

AGENDA TOPIC: Personnel Policies Manual Revisions
DATE: February 20, 2025
DEPARTMENT: Administration
PRESENTED BY: Jim Williams, MBA, ICMA-CM, Assistant City Manager

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND:

Administration seeks the City Council's direction updating and overhauling the City's Personnel Policies Manual.

The City Council adopted the current Personnel Policies Manual in April 2006—nearly 19 years ago. Since then, substantial changes to federal, state, and local laws have increased the urgency for an update. Recognizing this need, the City Council prioritized an Employee Handbook/Personnel Policies update in the Strategic Action Plan and allocated \$10,000 in the FY 2024-25 Strategic and Capital Projects Fund to support the initiative.

Staff has begun work on the update. The City's governance structure and administrative capabilities have evolved since 2006 including the change from a general law city to a home-rule city with a council-manager form of government. Several key questions have emerged regarding duty responsibilities and approval processes. The answers to these questions will shape the scope and timeline of the project, potentially enabling more frequent and efficient updates in the future. Staff respectfully seeks the City Council's direction on the following:

- **Policy Approval Authority:** Which policies does the City Council wish to approve? City Charter Section 5.01.C states that the City Manager is "responsible for implementing the ordinances and policies adopted by City Council." Should this be interpreted to mean that the City Manager may develop and implement policies independently, as long as they align with Council-adopted policies? Or does the City Council wish to review and approve **all** personnel policies directly?
- **Approach to the Update:** The regulatory landscape, governance structure, daily operations, and staff capabilities have changed significantly since 2006. The update will require extensive revisions to every section of the manual and likely the addition of new sections. Would the City Council prefer a single, comprehensive work session or multiple sessions? Should the manual be approved as a whole, or would the City Council prefer a phased approach, reviewing and approving sections over time? Additionally, how would the City Council like to manage future updates?
- **Addressing Immediate Needs:** Some sections of the 2006 manual require urgent updates. How would the City Council like to address these immediate needs in conjunction with the broader overhaul?

To proceed effectively, staff has identified three potential courses of action for the City Council's consideration:

- 1. Comprehensive Update and Single Presentation:** Staff would present a fully updated Personnel Policies Manual for City Council approval in a single session. Critical sections requiring immediate action would be brought forward sooner.
- 2. Section-by-Section Review:** Staff would present updates in phases over multiple City Council meetings and work sessions, prioritizing the most urgent sections first.
- 3. Delegation of Policy Development to the City Manager:** In alignment with the Home-Rule Charter, the City Council could delegate authority to the City Manager to develop and maintain personnel policies, ensuring compliance with federal, state, and local regulations, as well as City Council directives. The City Council could adopt broad policy statements via resolution, while staff would handle detailed policy development. The City Council would retain the ability to review all personnel policies per the City Charter. However, Administration could implement updates immediately pending review or ratification by the City Council. To formalize this approach, the City Council would adopt a resolution defining the delegation of this responsibility.

Given the need for a timely update and a sustainable framework for future revisions, staff recommends **Option 3** as the most effective path forward.

POLICY ANALYSIS/BENEFIT(S) TO CITIZENS:

The Personnel Policies Manual update initiative is aligned with Strategic Action Plan Priority 5.1.2 Evaluate and Update Employee Handbook

LONGTERM FINANCIAL & BUDGETARY IMPACT:

None.