

RESOLUTION _____

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF LAWRENCEVILLE FOR RULES OF MAYOR AND COUNCIL CONDUCT

WHEREAS, the City of Lawrenceville was recognized by the Georgia Municipal Association as a “City of Civility” on June 26, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the term Civility means more than just politeness. It is about disagreeing without disrespect, seeking common ground as a starting point for dialogue about differences, listening past one’s preconceptions and teaching others to do the same. Civility is the hard work of staying present even with those with whom we have deep-rooted and fierce disagreement; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of these Rules of Mayor and Council Conduct is to foster an environment of civility, to emphasize guidelines for Mayor and Council when speaking in public, and to establish the manner in which the Mayor and City Council should interact with city staff.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council of the City of Lawrenceville will adhere to the Rules of Mayor and Council Conduct listed below:

1. The Mayor or individual Councilmembers shall not direct employees of the City.

Basis: Responsibility for the day-to-day management of operations of the city and supervising all city employees rests with the City Manager under the Lawrenceville City Charter Section 3.01(c). Neither the City Council nor its members shall give orders or supervisory direction to any city officer or employee, either publicly or privately.

Examples of Violations:

- 1) Instructing a Code Enforcement officer to issue a citation.
- 2) Instructing a Police Officer to patrol a neighborhood.
- 3) Instructing a Sanitation Employee to pick up trash.
- 4) Instructing City staff through a question – “Could you do this for me?”
- 5) Directing City staff to make changes to an event agenda or schedule.
- 6) Directing staff to organize or attend a business, community, or citizen meeting.

Alternatives: *The Mayor or Councilmember may:*

- 1) *Forward citizen complaints or report violations of City ordinances to City Manager.*
- 2) *Ask the City Manager to direct staff to research questions.*
- 3) *Suggest to the City Manager action that staff could take.*
- 4) *Copy City Manager on any email communication with staff.*

2. The Mayor or individual Councilmembers shall not contact or direct vendors working on behalf of the City.

Basis: Responsibility for the day-to-day management of operations of the City rests with the City Manager under the Lawrenceville City Charter and Ordinances. Therefore, individual Elected Officials should not act in a supervisory manner and/or contact or instruct vendors working on behalf of the City.

Examples of Violations:

- 1) Contact vendor and provide unsolicited comments or direction.
- 2) Contact vendor for information on the work being performed.
- 3) Instructing a vendor through a question – “Could you do this for me?”
- 4) Directing a vendor to organize or attend a business, community, or citizen meeting.

Alternatives: *The Mayor or Councilmember may:*

- 1) *Provide comments to the City Manager that may be forwarded to the vendor*
- 2) *Request information through the City Manager on work being performed by the Vendor*
- 3) *Provide any feedback on performance of the vendor to the City Manager*

3. The Mayor and/or individual Council Members shall not reprimand, rebuke, reproof, or scold staff.

Basis: The City Manager shall be responsible to the City Council for the administration of all city affairs placed in the manager's charge by or under the City Charter Sec 3.01(b)(1)(2) including supervising departments and employees of the City. Therefore, individual Elected Officials should not interfere with the administrative functions of the City by reprimanding or sanctioning staff. Policy decisions should be made by official action of the City Council and the City Manager and City staff should implement policy decisions of the City Council.

Examples of Violations:

- 1) Scolding staff for issuing a report, giving an opinion, or taking a position.
- 2) Berating staff or belittling staff at public meetings or in digital forms such as email or texts.
- 3) Interfering with administrative disciplinary matters involving staff.

Alternatives: *This rule does not apply to an Elected Official criticizing a city policy or action in a public meeting or in private meetings. Disciplinary action against a staff member shall be governed by the personnel rules for the City of Lawrenceville. Nothing in this policy is intended to or shall be construed to prohibit or discourage an Elected Official from reporting suspected or reported improper or illegal behavior of a city officer or employee to the City Manager or other appropriate officials as provided by law.*

4. The Individual Elected Official shall not speak or represent themselves as speaking for the City unless authorized by the Council.

Basis: The City’s Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2, Sec 2-2, (4), k. *Commitments*. City Officials shall not act or create the appearance of acting on behalf of the City by promising to authorize or prevent any future official action of any nature, without proper authorization. Individual Elected Officials’ opinions or positions do not represent the opinion or position of the City Council.

Examples of Violations:

- 1) Representing that the City has or will take certain action unless that action has been approved by the City Council in accordance with law.
- 2) Negotiating contracts or other matters for the City without authorization of the Council.
- 3) Offering city staff services and/or city facilities for use by individuals or organizations without proper consultation and application through the appropriate City departmental process.
- 4) Create the appearance of a private event being endorsed and/or produced by the City unless the event has been authorized by the City Council.

Scope: *This rule does not apply to a Mayor or Council Member taking positions if they make it known that they are acting as an individual Council Member or as a private citizen not as a representative of the City.*

5. Complaints against Staff

Basis: Mayor and individual Council Members shall not complain about conduct of city staff except to the City Manager or in accordance with City of Lawrenceville Human Resources Policies and Procedures Manual. In the event an Elected Official makes a complaint in the proper manner about conduct of city staff, this complaint shall be investigated. Any violation of city policy by staff shall be dealt with according to the *City of Lawrenceville Human Resources Policies and Procedures Manual*.

IT IS SO RESOLVED this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

David R. Still, Mayor

ATTEST:

Karen Pierce, City Clerk