

CITY OF LOGANVILLE, GEORGIA

CITY COUNCIL POLICY ON PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOLS

1. Purpose:

This City of Loganville, Georgia City Council Policy on Procedures and Protocols (“Policy”) is designed to assist the City Council, staff and others by memorializing appropriate policies, procedures and the general ways of conducting business as the City Council of the City of Loganville. Its purpose is also to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Council, staff and others. Administration of City business is greatly enhanced by the agreement of the City Council and staff to follow these procedures and protocols. This Policy should be viewed as an instructive source of guidance so that accepted practices are documented and expectations are clarified.

2. Government Structure, Procedure, and Communications:

The Mayor, Councilmembers, and the City Manager shall be familiar with Georgia law and the City’s Charter and Ordinances concerning the powers and authorities of each branch of the municipal government structure. City staff shall acknowledge the Council as the policymakers of the City, and the City Council shall acknowledge staff as the administrators of the City’s policies. City staff shall not interfere or otherwise hinder the Council from implementing policies for the City, and Councilmembers shall not interfere or otherwise obstruct the day-to-day operations of the City Staff.

Councilmembers shall not direct staff to initiate any action or prepare any report that would require more than two (2) hours of time to execute or prepare or initiate any project or study without the approval of a majority of the City Council or the appropriately related Council committee. Councilmembers may request additional information or reports from City staff but shall do so by and through the City Manager only.

The City Manager shall handle all correspondence for the Council and copies of appropriate correspondence should be disseminated to the entire City Council. All written information or material requested by an individual Councilmember shall be distributed by the City Manager or his/her designee to all Councilmembers with a notation indicating which Councilmember requested the information.

Councilmembers should confer with the City Manager not with City staff on issues of concern related to the City. The City Manager shall regularly provide written notice to the City Council on all matters of major impact to the City.

The City Manager with City staff shall provide the Council with operational reports for any department as requested by Council and the Council shall rely upon said reports for technical information regarding each department's status. City staff shall handle all labor negotiations. Council shall not attempt to coerce or influence staff in the making of appointments, the awarding of contracts, the selection of consultants, the processing of development or utility applications or the granting of licenses or permits. The Council shall not attempt to change or interfere with the operating policies, practices or personnel matters of any City department except only when taking official action by the requisite majority vote of the Council at a duly called Council meeting. The Council shall be cognizant of and respectful of staff's time including that of the City Manager and City Attorney so as to not impair their ability to perform their respective duties in a timely manner.

Recognizing that normally the time between the publication of meeting agendas and the meeting start times is limited, as much as possible councilmembers are expected to read staff reports and supporting information in their meeting agendas before the actual meeting and ask for any necessary clarification prior to meetings. Work sessions are held for the purpose of helping educate the Council on staff reports and offer an opportunity for staff to receive comments and direction. Staff may bring items back on a later agenda for possible action.

Councilmembers are regularly assigned to specific committees of the City Council by the Mayor. To increase efficiency of the operations of the Council, Councilmembers should concentrate their legislative efforts as much as possible on matters that relate directly to the committee they chair. Matters that affect a different committee should be forwarded to the chairperson of the appropriate committee by individual Councilmembers for handling in the normal ordinary course.

Mail that is addressed to the Mayor and City Council shall be included in each Councilmember's mailbox. Any communication requiring a response shall be answered or acknowledged as soon as practicable. Correspondence directed to the City Council or the City Manager relating to Council business is available to the public.

Emails sent between councilmembers, unless specifically exempted from disclosure by law, are available for review by the public under Georgia law. Councilmembers should remain cognizant of this fact. Nonetheless, in the interest of professional decorum, councilmembers should refrain from disseminating non-exempt email communications among themselves to the general public and allow City staff to properly handle any open records requests concerning the same.

3. Council Meeting Procedures:

The Council adopts *Robert's Rules of Order, 12th Edition*, as the general procedure and form guidelines for conducting its meetings. The adoption of *Robert's Rules of Order* does not require the Council to conform to the precise technical methodologies of *Robert's Rules of Order* during each and every meeting. For the general benefit and understanding of the City's citizens,

the Council is permitted and encouraged to hold meetings in a general governmental form that is more flexible and less parliamentary in manner; provided, however, that meetings must conform to and be consistent with Georgia law and all official action must be properly adopted and approved by the requisite majority of the Council. Council shall rely on the technical procedures of *Robert's Rules of Order* in the event of a procedural conflict. In the event of a procedural conflict during a meeting, the Mayor may refer to the City Attorney for guidance on the matter but the Mayor shall make the final decision as it relates to parliamentary procedure.

In order to reach the best possible solutions, information should be shared freely between Councilmembers during Council meetings. Councilmembers should treat each other, the public and staff with respect at all times. Councilmembers should show respect for differing opinions and deal with issues, not personalities. The Council should strive for consensus overall to the extent possible.

The Council is its own best resource for information and input. There are individual interests and areas of expertise of each Councilmember. This allows the Council to rely on one another for information and positive action.

The City Manager and City Attorney may from time to time give reports regarding matters of general interest to the Council. Council may take action as appropriate and as permitted by the City Charter and Code of Ordinances.

4. Confidential Information:

Councilmembers shall keep all written materials and verbal information provided to them on matters that are confidential under State Law in complete confidence to ensure that the City's position is not compromised. No mention of information concerning confidential matters should be made to anyone other than Councilmembers, the City Attorney or the City Manager.

5. Violations of Policy:

Any councilmember found to violate any provision of this policy may be subject to public reprimand and censure by a majority vote of the Mayor and Council.