



AGENDA REPORT

City Council Meeting

TODAY'S DATE: March 26, 2026

MEETING DATE: April 1, 2026

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Deb Ruehle, Council President

SUBJECT: Approve the City of Sandpoint Council-Staff Communication Policy

DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND:

This policy seeks to establish clear guidelines for communication and administrative direction between City Council members, City Directors, Legal Counsel, City Clerk, and the Mayor to ensure compliance with Idaho law and to promote efficient, transparent, and accountable governance.

This policy is being adopted under the authority of Idaho law, with particular reference to Idaho Code §§ 50-601 *et. seq.*, and 50-701 *et. seq.*, and the City's adopted mayor-council form of government. It is intended to clarify roles and does not expand, or limit authority granted by statute, charter, or ordinance.

The City Council acts only as a body through motions, resolutions, policies, or ordinances adopted at duly noticed public meetings. Individual Council Members have no independent authority to administer city staff or city operations. Day-to-day administration is the responsibility of the Mayor and City Directors, as provided by Idaho law. See Idaho Code § 50-602.

Directors and appointed officials serve the City by supporting both the legislative and executive branches of municipal government. While they operate with professional independence in carrying out their assigned duties, they do so within the framework of authority established by Idaho law and City Council policy.

Council Members have the right to information necessary to fulfill their responsibilities. Council Members, Directors, Legal Counsel and appointed staff may communicate directly, without notice to the Mayor, for purposes outlined in the policy. This communication is informational only.

This policy also addresses agenda items and the flow for promoting efficiency as well as providing a mechanism for comments by Directors and Legal Counsel that would be included in packet materials and would not require Mayor approval for the added comments. The intent of this is further outlined in attached policy but includes ensuring Council, Mayor, and staff are fully informed, more efficient Council meetings, and ensure transparency.

This policy also provides City personnel, including the Mayor, Council Members, Directors, appointed officials, employees, and board or committee members, the ability to contact Legal Counsel as necessary.

The policy also addresses the role of Council and includes prohibited or restricted communications and additionally provides information on the role of the Mayor and Director responsibilities. This policy provides for direct communication with Directors in cases of an imminent threat to public health or safety emergency.

Finally, this policy addresses procedures for requesting email and other electronic communications of current City employees, unrelated to an active personnel investigation, as well as other legitimate reasons as outlined in the policy.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends City Council consider approval of the City of Sandpoint Council – Staff Communication Policy.

ACTION:

City Council approval of the City of Sandpoint – Staff Communication Policy.

WILL THERE BE ANY FINANCIAL IMPACT? No HAS THIS ITEM BEEN BUDGETED? N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposed Resolution
2. Draft City of Sandpoint Council-Staff Communication Policy