Preamble for Expenditures (With Exemption for Routine Bills)

Submitted by Councilmember Pat Rice – For Inclusion Under Item 10c

Purpose

To ensure the City Council can responsibly review vouchers and expenditure requests without micromanaging staff or creating unnecessary workload. This procedure improves transparency and allows Councilmembers adequate time to understand what they are being asked to approve.

Policy

1. Advance Delivery of Vouchers

- Vouchers should be included in the Council packet whenever possible.

- If timing prevents this, vouchers should be sent electronically to the Council no later than noon on the day of the meeting, with a brief note explaining the timing.

2. Standard Summary ("Preamble")

A short summary page should accompany each voucher batch, identifying:

- The categories of expenses included (e.g., utilities, payroll-related items, supplies, professional services).

- Whether the listed expenses are routine and within the adopted budget.

- Any non-routine or unusual expenditures requiring Council attention.

3. Routine Expenses Do NOT Require Explanation

The following recurring or standard items require no individual explanation beyond inclusion in the voucher list:

- Utility bills

- Payroll expense transfers

- Regular monthly service contracts (e.g., copier lease, software subscriptions)

- Fuel charges

- Recurring vendor invoices that appear monthly

4. Non-Routine Expenses Should Include a Brief Note

For non-routine, one-time, or unusual expenditures, please include a short explanatory note (1–2 sentences), such as:

- "Emergency pump replacement following equipment failure on 10/12."

- "Annual renewal of required liability insurance policy."

- "Consulting cost for water rate study update."

5. Role of the Council

This preamble is intended solely to ensure Council has sufficient context to make informed decisions about expenditures. It does not expand or alter Council oversight responsibilities, nor does it require staff to generate lengthy reports. It is a transparency and good-governance measure only.