



City of St. Francis Code of Conduct for Members of City Council and City Commissions

Preamble

The residents and businesses of St. Francis are entitled to have fair, ethical and accountable local government, which has earned the public's full confidence for integrity. The effective functioning of democratic government therefore requires that:

- Public officials, both elected and appointed, comply with both the letter and spirit of the laws and politics affecting the operations of government.
- Public officials be independent, impartial and fair in their judgment and actions.
- Public office be used for the public good, not for personal gain; and
- Public deliberations and processes be conducted openly, unless legally confidential, in an atmosphere of respect and civility.

To this end, the St. Francis City Council has adopted a Code of Conduct for members of the City Council to assure public confidence in the integrity of local government and its effective and fair operation.

This Code of Conduct describes the manner in which Councilmembers should treat one another, city staff, constituents, and others with which they encounter in representing the City of St. Francis.

City of St. Francis Code of Conduct

1. Acts in the Public Interest

Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their primary concern, members will work for the common good of the people of St. Francis and not for any private or personal interest, and they will assure fair and equal treatment of all persons, claims and transactions coming before the City Council and the City's commissions.

2. Comply with the Law

Members shall comply with the applicable federal laws, state laws, and city ordinances in the performance of their public duties. In statutory cities, powers are granted to the Council as a whole, and not to individual members.

Mayoral Role

According to ***MN Statute 412.191*** the Mayor is a full member of the council in addition to:

- Act as presiding officer of meetings
- Represent the City ceremoniously

- Execute official documents

3. Open Meeting Law (OML)

Public deliberations and processes shall be conducted openly and in a transparent manner. The Minnesota Open Meeting Law (*Chapter 13D*) requires that meetings of governmental bodies generally be open to the public in order to:

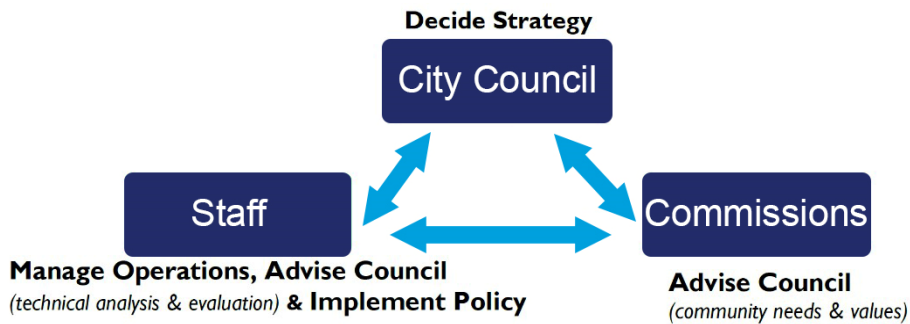
Prohibit actions being taken at a secret meeting where it is impossible for the interested public to become fully informed about a public board’s decisions or to detect improper influences

Assure the public’s right to be informed and observe public meetings:

The Minnesota Supreme Court has noted that meetings of less than a quorum of a public body held serially to avoid a public meeting or to fashion agreement on an issue of public business may violate the open meeting law.

4. Roles of Council, Staff and Commissions

We are all part of a team committed to the residents of St. Francis both today and in the future. To be effective we must come to meetings with an open mind, think strategically about City issues and delegate details of implementations to staff. We will strive to maintain a culture of trust, respect, and candor as a Council and when working with staff and Boards/Commissions.



City Council	City Administrator & Staff	Advisory Boards
Make policy level decisions	Provide best efforts and technical advice to Council	Provide community perspective
Approve: Budget & Long Term Plan, Contracts, Ordinances & Polices	Provide a full range of policy options and practicalities along with their recommendation and ground council discussions in the operational impacts of policy options.	Propose work -plan items
Approve: Development Proposals, Rezoning, variances, etc.	Implement policy decisions professionally even if they are not the staff recommendation.	Advise council on work plan items
Approve: Strategic Plan, goals, policies and action plan for council and staff (implement)	Carry out City Council directives	Hold hearings as required by council or law
Hire and supervise City Administrator	Manage operations, staff and work load	
Appoint Representatives of advisory commissions	Propose budget and polices	
	Deliver services	
	Enforce codes and policies	

Conduct at City Council meetings, work sessions and commissions meeting applies to City Council members, commission members, and staff unless noted otherwise:

- City Council will use (and has historically) Roberts Rules of Order as rules of order to govern meetings.
- We will refrain from private conversations while in the council chamber that interrupts the proceedings of the council
- We will practice professionalism by being respectful to all, and by being prepared for meetings.
- We will limit speech to subject of current debate
- We will encourage everyone to speak. Allow for discussions to be candid while also being diplomatic. Uphold and respect the dignity of all.
- Council Members will provide city staff sufficient time (24-hours is ideal) in advance of a meeting to answer questions you have about an agenda item. We will not intentionally surprise staff with questions or issues at the meeting.
- Council Members agree to let the city administrator know ahead of time if we want something pulled off the consent agenda. The city administrator will then inform the council in an appropriate manner.
- City staff will acknowledge the council as policymakers and the city council shall acknowledge staff as administering the council's policies
- City staff will strive to provide a full range of policy options and practicalities along with their recommendation and ground council discussions in the operational impacts of policy options.
- City staff will provide answers to council members questions as timely and thoroughly as possible
- City staff will provide staff reports on all agenda items with clear recommendation and options for council consideration.

5. Gifts and Favors

Members shall not take any special advantage of services or opportunities for personal gain, by virtue of their public office, which are not available to the public in general. They shall refrain from accepting any gifts, favors or promises of future benefits which might compromise their independence of judgment or action or give the appearance of being compromised.

6. Use of Public Resources

Members shall not use public resources that are not available to the public in general, such as City staff time, equipment, supplies or facilities, for private gain or personal purposes.

7. Representation of Private Interests

In keeping with their role as stewards of the public interest, members of the Council shall not appear on behalf of the private interests of third parties before the Council or any commissions or proceedings of the City, nor shall members of commissions appear before their own bodies or before the Council on behalf of the private interests of the third parties on matters related to the areas of service of their bodies.

8. Advocacy

Members shall represent the official policies of positions of the City Council or commissions to the best of their ability when designated as delegates. When presenting their individual opinions and positions, members shall explicitly state they do not represent their body or the City of St. Francis, nor will they allow the inference that they do.

9. Policy Role of Members

Members shall respect and adhere to the structure of city government as provided by state law and City Code. In this structure, the City Council determines the policies of the City with the advice, information and analysis provided by the public, commissions, and City Staff. Members therefore shall not interfere with the administrative functions of the City or the professional duties of the City Staff nor shall they impair the ability of staff to implement Council policy decisions. Members should refrain from:

- Disrupting staff from the conduct of their jobs
- Involvement in administrative functions
- Attending staff meetings unless requested by staff
- Audio or video tape conversations between staff and Councilmembers other than Council meetings.
- Establish and maintain relationships with City Staff that do not contribute to an open, honest and team-oriented environment and recognizes the appropriate chain of authority.

10. Positive Workplace Environment

Members shall support the maintenance of a positive and constructive workplace environment for City employees and for residents and businesses dealing with the City. Members shall recognize their special role in dealings with City employees to in no way create the perception of inappropriate direction to staff or exhibit behavior that is demeaning or threatening or behavior that is directly or indirectly meant to intimidate, belittle or otherwise create a hostile work environment.

11. Implementation & Enforcement

As an expression of the standards of conduct for members expected by the City, this Code of Conduct is intended to be self-enforcing. It, therefore, becomes most effective when members are thoroughly familiar with it and embrace its provisions.

For this reason, ethical standards shall be included in the regular orientation for candidates for City Council. Members entering office shall adopt, at the first meeting of the year, a statement affirming that they read and understand the City of St. Francis Code of Conduct.

This Code shall be reviewed annually by the City Council and City commissions at the first meeting of each year.

The St. Francis Code of Conduct expresses standards of ethical conduct expected for members of the City Council and commissions. Members themselves have the primary responsibility to assure that ethical standards are understood and met, and that the public can continue to have full confidence in the integrity of government.

The Council Members and the Mayor have the additional responsibility to intervene when actions of members that appear to be in violation of the Code of Conduct are brought to their attention.