



Council Relations Policies

Amended on March 19, 2009
Amended on November 20, 2008
Amended on February 19, 2008
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City of Hutto Council Relations Policy

The City Council for the City of Hutto is dedicated to providing democracy to America's doorstep. Opportunities must be created to allow citizens to have a say in their representative government, and this policy addresses the responsibilities the Council has to provide those openings. The City of Hutto Council Relations Policy is designed to make public meetings and the process of governance run more smoothly.

The integrity of the City of Hutto is built on the interaction between elected officials, City employees, and the citizens. The Council Relations Policy is intended to maintain a high level of integrity by providing a protocol for how Council members treat one another, City staff, constituents, and others they come into contact with in representing the City of Hutto. The Council Relations Policy reflects the intentions of the Hutto City Council in defining the behaviors, manners, and courtesies that are suitable for various occasions. It is also designed to make public meetings and the process of governance run more smoothly.

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The constant and consistent theme through all of the conduct guidelines is “respect.”

Council members experience huge workloads and tremendous stress in making decisions that could impact thousands of lives.

Despite these pressures, elected officials are called upon to exhibit appropriate behavior at all times.

Demonstrating respect for each individual through words and actions is the compass that can help guide Council members to do the right thing in even the most difficult situations.

Overview of Roles and Responsibilities

Other resources that are helpful in defining the roles and responsibilities of elected officials can be found in the Hutto City Charter and in the Handbook for Mayors and Council members (Home Rule Cities) published by the Texas Municipal League.

Mayor's Responsibilities

- Acts as the official head of the City for all ceremonial purposes
- Chairs Council meetings
- Recognizes comments from citizens at public meetings
- Calls for special meetings
- Selects substitute for City representation when Mayor cannot attend
- Makes judgment calls on proclamations, special presentations, etc.
- Recommends subcommittees as appropriate for Council approval
- Serves as the liaison between the Council and the City Manager and City Attorney in regards to employee relations
- Leads the Council into an effective, cohesive working team
- Signs documents on behalf of the City
- Works with City Manager to prepare Council agenda

Mayor Pro Tem's Responsibilities

- Serves at the pleasure of the Council
- Performs the duties of Mayor if the Mayor is absent or disabled
- Chairs Council meetings at the request of the Mayor
- Represents the City at ceremonial functions at the request of the Mayor

Council Members' Responsibilities

All members of the City Council, including those serving as Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem, have equal votes. No Council member has more power than any other Council member, and all should be treated with equal respect.

All Council members should:

- Fully participate in City Council meetings and other public forums while demonstrating respect, kindness, consideration, and courtesy to others.
- Prepare in advance of Council meetings and be familiar with issues on the agenda.
- Represent the City at ceremonial functions at the request of the Mayor.
- Be respectful of other people's time. Stay focused and act efficiently during public meetings.
- Serve as a model of leadership and civility to the community.
- Inspire public confidence in Hutto government.
- Provide contact information to the City Manager's Office in case an emergency or urgent situation arises while a Council member is out of town.
(Added by Resolution No. 2007-04-01 on February 19, 2008)
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity in every action and statement
- Participate in scheduled activities to increase team effectiveness and review Council procedures, such as this Council Relations Policy

Meeting Chair's Responsibilities

The Mayor will chair official meetings of the City Council, unless the Mayor Pro Tem or another Council member is designated as Chair of a specific meeting.

- Maintains order, decorum, and the fair and equitable treatment of all speakers
- Keeps discussion and questions focused on the specific agenda item under consideration

Policies and Protocol Related to Conduct

Reflecting Council Opinions

Council members should remember they speak only for themselves and not other Council members.

Ceremonial Events

Requests for a City representative at ceremonial events will be handled by City staff. The Mayor will serve as the designated City representative. If the Mayor is unavailable, then City staff will determine if event organizers would like another representative from the Council. If yes, then the Mayor will recommend which Council member should be asked to serve as a substitute. Invitations received at City Hall are presumed to be for unofficial, personal consideration.

E-Mail Guidelines

E-mail has become a familiar form of communication between the public and its elected officials. It is important to remember that e-mails held by elected officials regarding their position are a form of public record and must be maintained as per the Open Records Act. When a Council member receives a personalized e-mail, the Council member should acknowledge the receipt of the e-mail and concern voiced through a reply e-mail. The response should be polite and careful in regard to any personal opinions expressed on the issue. If a reply is sent, the City Manager and/or City Secretary should be copied if there is any further action and/or official response needed in regard to the e-mail.

Correspondence Signatures

Council members do not need to acknowledge the receipt of correspondence, or copies of correspondence, during Council meetings. City staff will prepare official letters in response to public inquiries and concerns. These letters will carry the signature of the Mayor unless the Mayor requests that they be signed by another Council member or City staff. If correspondence is addressed only to one Council member, that Council member should check with staff on the best way to respond to the sender.

Endorsement of Candidates

Council members have the right to endorse candidates for all Council seats or other elected offices. It is inappropriate to mention endorsements during Council meetings or other official City meetings.

Public Hearing Protocol

The applicant or appellant shall have the right to speak first. The Chair will determine the length of time allowed for this presentation. Speakers representing either pro or con points of view will be allowed to follow. The Chair will determine how much time will be allowed for each speaker, with 3 to 5 minutes the standard time granted. The applicant or appellant will be allowed to make closing comments. The Chair has the responsibility to run an efficient public meeting and has the discretion to modify the public hearing process in order to make the meeting run smoothly.

Council members will not express opinions during the public hearing portion of the meeting except to ask pertinent questions of the speaker and staff. "I think" and "I feel" comments by Council members are not appropriate until after the close of the public hearing. Council members should refrain from arguing or debating with the public during a public hearing and shall always show respect for different points of view.

Main motions may be followed by amendments, followed by substitute motions. Any Councilmember can call for a point of order. Only Council members who voted on the prevailing side may make motions to reconsider.

Agenda Development Participation

Any Council member can request an item be placed on the agenda.

The request should be made to the Mayor, by noon, one week before the Council meeting.

The Mayor will discuss the item with the Council member and the City Manager to determine the appropriate placement on the agenda and the appropriate date for the item to be brought before Council not to exceed two consecutive meetings.

The Mayor will have the final authority on when a requested item will be placed on an agenda.

If the Mayor is unavailable, the Mayor Pro Tem will be the designated contact.

(Added by Resolution No. 2007-024-01a on November 20, 2008)

Fiscal and Reimbursements

I. Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish uniform procedures that shall apply to all related expenditures for professional development, legislative, and other necessary expenses incurred by members of the Hutto, Texas City Council while performing their official duties. These meetings are helpful to Councilmembers in fulfilling their responsibility to the citizens, important in fostering legislation favorable to the City and in representing the fiscal and operation posture of the City to outside agencies.

This policy shall be consistent with the City policies defined in the City of Hutto, Texas Employee Handbook adopted by the Hutto City Council on November 6, 2006.

II. General Procedures

A. Budget Review

The City Council and the City Manager shall work together through the budget process to determine what general fund monies will be annually allocated for the professional development and City business-related travel. Each City Councilmember will annually draft a training and development plan following the May elections to identify conferences and classes. The Mayor shall annually consider available funding and approve plans.

Each month, a detailed City Council budget report will be provided to the City Council. The City Manager and Mayor (or designee) shall meet to determine if a budget amendment is needed to fund increased appropriations if it is determined that sufficient funds are not available to cover expenses for any necessary yet unscheduled travel. This is subject to funding availability and economic conditions.

The Mayor and/or the Mayor Pro tem shall meet with any Councilmember who incurs any excessive or unapproved expenses. Councilmembers retain the right to oversee the adherence to council policies and procedures of fellow councilmembers.

Late or questioned expense reports and unpaid reimbursement expenses shall be referred to the Mayor.

III. Travel

A. Authorization

Each City Councilmember will be entitled to attend meetings that are budgeted per their approved council training and development plan. All travel and training requirements that are not specified in the approved budget, including unscheduled and unanticipated trips, must be approved by the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem and require the following:

- 1) a proposed budget for expenses related to the unscheduled training and/or trip must be submitted to the Mayor or designee in a timely manner prior to departure date, if possible; and,
- 2) verification of funding by the Mayor and City Manager before the training and/or trip is taken.

Councilmembers are encouraged to attend in-state training opportunities. Out-of-state training opportunities, however, may arise. Any out-of-state training not included in a Councilmember's training and development plan shall require City Council approval. The following is a list of suggested events and/or meetings that any member of the City Council may participate in as a group or on an individual basis, subject to availability of funds:

- ✓ Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG)
- ✓ National League of Cities
- ✓ Annual Institute of Mayors and Council members/Commission members
- ✓ Texas Municipal League Annual Conference
- ✓ Texas Municipal League Association of Mayors, Councilmembers and Commissioners
- ✓ Texas Municipal League Newly Elected Officials Conference
- ✓ US Conference of Mayors
- ✓ Related policy committees and task forces of these organizations
- ✓ Appropriate State and Federal agencies and legislative sessions

B. Request for Reimbursement and Return of Unexpended Funds

Upon return to the City, a complete accounting of all expenditures of City funds is to be filed within five (5) calendar days on the City's Travel Expense Reimbursement form. Receipts for all expenses, including hotel bills and registration fees, must be attached to the statement. All unexpended advance funds must be returned with the statement. Authorized expenses in excess of advance funds received will be reimbursed with proper approval.

Councilmembers shall notify the City Secretary's office as far in advance as possible to provide greatest flexibility in obtaining advantageous airfares and lodging rates.

In the event, a Councilmember is unable to attend a scheduled trip, he or she should notify the City Secretary's office as soon as possible to ensure that notification can be made to airlines or hotels for reimbursement of deposits in a timely manner and additional costs are not incurred. In such situations, the Council member unable to attend the scheduled event is responsible for contacting another Councilmember to see if they would be available to attend.

A Councilmember may be responsible for costs incurred to the City if cancellation is not due to an emergency.

Expenses not received by the City Secretary within thirty (30) days after conclusion of event shall not be reimbursed for expenses.

Travel expenses for spouse to conferences or meetings shall be paid for by the Councilmember.

C. Allowable Expenses

The following shall be allowable for travel.

1) Cash Advances

Cash advances may be issued to a Councilmember for expenses relating to authorized meetings in an amount sufficient to cover costs for lodging, daily per diem, ground transportation and parking.

Cash advances may be issued if council members have no other convenient means of processing these expenses. The request for a cash advance shall be made by the councilmember to the City Secretary who will in turn process the travel advances.

2) Lodging

The City will pay training class/seminar, conference, and meeting related out-of-town lodging costs at a single occupancy rate. The City will pay for the cost of the room and City of Hutto related telephone calls only. Council members may, at their own expense, upgrade their lodging. Additionally, Council members are responsible for payment of non-reimbursable expenses as indicated.

3) Meals

A Councilmember will have meals paid for up to fifty dollars (\$50) per day. This includes, but not limited to meetings with local, state or federal officials, dignitaries, business representatives, other local government officials, or meals at professional organization functions. The business purpose and individuals who participated in the meal must be noted on the receipt.

Expenses for meals shall either be reimbursed at actual cost as supported by receipts or by per diem allowance. If a Councilmember requests to be reimbursed for actual costs, a detailed receipt (a credit card receipt listing the total amount due is not considered a detailed receipt) must accompany the request for reimbursement. In lieu of itemized receipts for meals, a per diem allowance of \$50 per day is authorized based on \$10 for breakfast, \$15 for lunch, and \$25 for dinner. Even if supported by a receipt, reimbursement shall not exceed \$10 for breakfast, \$15 for lunch, and \$25 for dinner. If

seminar or training event includes the provision for a meal, the appropriate deduction will be made from your per diem or reimbursement. Alcoholic beverages are not covered by the City of Hutto.

Meals outside eligible for reimbursement include:

- a) If you depart City of Hutto before 7:00 a.m. and return after 9:00 a.m., breakfast is allowed.
- b) If you depart City of Hutto before 11:00 a.m. and return after 1:00 p.m., lunch is allowed.
- c) If you depart City of Hutto before 5:00 p.m. and return after 7:00 p.m., dinner is allowed.

4) Transportation

The City will pay all reasonable and necessary transportation costs incurred for non-local required travel relating to the performance of official duties or professional development as indicated in the City of Hutto Employee policy.

a) Travel by Air

If air travel is selected, payment will be made for the commercial coach fare rate only. If a discounted fare and/or airline special require the councilmember to leave or stay over an extra day, the City will pay for the lodging and meals for the extra day(s) provided the costs do not exceed the savings on the airfare.

b) Travel by Personal Vehicle

If a personal vehicle is used, the Mayor and councilmembers shall be reimbursed mileage at the Texas State Comptroller rate per mile for travel from City Hall to business-related meetings, luncheons, and ceremonial functions. The reimbursed amount is expected to cover all of the personal vehicle related expenses for meetings.

D. NON-ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

Expenses or charges for the following will normally not be reimbursed and must be paid for by the city councilmember:

1. In-hotel pay television and movies
2. Dry cleaning and laundry;
3. Health club and spas;
4. Expenses of a spouse;
5. Alcoholic beverages;
6. Personal long distance telephone calls; and
7. Other items of a personal nature.

It is recognized that the duration of travel and involved days of the week can affect the price of airfare and by modifying schedules that may incur additional lodging and/or other related expenses, a net savings can still be realized. Such schedule arrangements are authorized when personal schedules allow and the economic benefits to the City are warranted.

(added by Resolution No. 2009-015-00 on March 19, 2009)

TECHNOLOGY AND CITY EQUIPMENT USE

I. Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish uniform procedures that shall apply to all city issued technology and other related equipment that a City Councilmember may use in execution of his or her official duties as a member of the Hutto, Texas City Council.

This Policy is based on and shall be consistent with the City policies defined in the City of Hutto, Texas Employee Handbook adopted by the Hutto City Council on November 6, 2006.

II. CITY PROPERTY/EQUIPMENT USE

City Council members may be issued telephones, computers and computer related equipment, and other pieces of equipment to enable them to better serve the citizens of Hutto. Council members are responsible for items formally issued to them by the City, as well as for items otherwise in their possession or control or used by them in the performance of their duties.

City issued telephones, computers and computer related equipment will be assigned per Council position and not to an individual Council person. After each election, the City Secretary will work with the IT Director to assign and/or collect this equipment. At the time of issuance, Council members may be required to sign certain forms or other documentation evidencing their receipt of property and/or equipment.

Council members should notify the City Secretary immediately if any equipment appears to be damaged, defective, or is in need of repair. The City Manager will refer the issue to the responsible individual for appropriate action.

A. Personal Use Prohibited - City property, materials, supplies, tools, equipment or vehicles may not be used for personal business.

B. Use of City Vehicles - City-owned or leased vehicles may only be used for official City business. City owned or leased vehicles may only be driven by authorized Council members. Council members must comply with the following:

1. Drivers must have a valid State of Texas driver's license appropriate for the vehicle operated and must maintain a satisfactory driving record.
2. Always observe all posted laws and speed limits.
3. Always wear seat belts when the vehicle is in operation.
4. No passengers other than City Council members, employees or others on City business may ride in a City vehicle.
5. Report any broken, missing, or worn parts, tires, etc., or any needed maintenance of City vehicles immediately.
6. All drivers must be eligible for coverage under the City's insurance policy.
7. Drivers covered by Department of Transportation regulations must comply with them at all times.
8. At no time may a City Councilmember under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs drive a City vehicle or a personal vehicle while conducting City business.
9. Council members involved in an accident while operating a City vehicle, or while operating a personal vehicle on City business, must immediately notify the proper law enforcement agency (if applicable) and the City Manager. Accident reports, along with any law enforcement report, must be filed with the City Manager.

III. ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AND SYSTEMS ACCESS USE

The City provides access to a computer network, Internet service, email, telephones, pagers, cameras, voice mail and fax communication systems, and other electronic equipment for use by City Council members in the performance of their duties. These communication devices are referred to collectively in this policy as “electronic communications systems” or “systems.” These electronic communications systems are designed to support and enhance the communication, research and information capabilities of City Council members and to encourage city-related communication and sharing of informational resources within the City. This policy governs user behavior pertaining to access and usage of the City’s electronic communications systems. This policy applies to all users of the City’s electronic communications systems. The City’s electronic communications systems access must be used in a professional, responsible, efficient, ethical and legal manner.

A. Internet and Email Access – City Council members are provided a City Email address to conduct official business of the City. Email access should only be used in an acceptable and professional manner.

B. Acceptable Use - Acceptable uses of the City’s electronic communication systems are limited to those activities that support reference, research, internal/external communication and conducting City business in line with the user’s job responsibilities. Network users are encouraged to develop uses which meet their individual needs and which take advantage of the City’s internal network function. The City prohibits connection to sites or forwarding of information that contain materials that may be offensive to others including, but not limited to, sites or information containing sexually explicit material.

Users must understand that use of any City-provided, publicly accessible computer network such as the Internet and email is a privilege. No personal use of the Internet or email and other electronic communications systems is allowed under this policy. Information that is created and/or distributed on the City’s electronic communication system is considered a public record and must adhere to the guidelines set forth in the Public Information Act and any other stipulations set forth. The City is not responsible for personal communications sent on its electronic communications systems.

C. Unacceptable Uses of Electronic Communications Systems include:

- Using profanity, obscenity or other language which may be offensive or harassing to other coworkers or third parties.
- Accessing, displaying, downloading or distributing sexually explicit material.
- Accessing, displaying, downloading or distributing profane, obscene, harassing, offensive or unprofessional messages or content.
- Copying or downloading any commercial software is strictly prohibited.
- Using the systems for financial gain or for any commercial activity unrelated to City business.
- Using the systems in such a manner as to create a security breach of the City network.
- Accessing any site, or creating or forwarding messages with derogatory, inflammatory, or otherwise unwelcome remarks or content regarding race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, physical attributes or sexual preferences.
- Using the electronic communication systems for any illegal purpose or in any way that violates City policy or is contrary to the City’s best interest.

D. Filtering - The City uses software to filter inappropriate Internet sites.

E. Responsibility - The person in whose name a City–provided Internet, email or other electronic communications system account is issued is responsible at all times for its proper use, regardless of the user’s location. Exchanges that occur in the course of conducting City business on the City’s electronic communications systems will be considered a communication of the City and held to the same standards as formal letters.

F. No Right of Privacy/Monitoring. Users of City electronic communications systems may not assume they are provided any degree of anonymity and employees have no right to privacy with regard to such systems. Personal passwords are not an assurance of confidentiality. The Internet itself is not secure.

G. Restrictions – No software can be downloaded into the City’s electronic communications system unless authorized by the appropriate City representative (IT Division representative, Assistant City Manager and/or City Manager) and approved by the City’s IT Division as to be compliant with any copyright restrictions, annual licensing and maintenance agreements and compatibility to the City’s operating systems. Under no circumstances will the City allow any software or other material relating to music, entertainment software or games to be downloaded.

(Added by Resolution No. 2009-014-00 on March 19, 2009)

Council Relations with One Another

Councils are composed of individuals with a wide variety of backgrounds, personalities, values, opinions, and goals. Despite this diversity, all have chosen to serve in public office in order to preserve and protect the present and the future of the community. In all cases, this common goal should be acknowledged even as Council members may “agree to disagree” on contentious issues.

IN PUBLIC MEETINGS

Practice civility and decorum in discussions and debate

Difficult questions, tough challenges to a particular point of view, and criticism of ideas and information are legitimate elements of a free democracy in action. This does not allow, however, Council members to make belligerent, personal, impertinent, slanderous, threatening, abusive, or disparaging comments. No shouting or physical actions that could be construed as threatening will be tolerated.

Honor the role of the Chair in maintaining order

It is the responsibility of the Chair to keep the comments of Council members on track during public meetings. Council members should honor efforts by the Chair to focus discussion on current agenda items. If there is disagreement about the agenda or the Chair’s actions, those objections should be voiced politely and with reason, following procedures outline in parliamentary procedure.

Avoid personal comments that could offend other Council members

If a Council member is personally offended by the remarks of another Council member, the offended Council member should make notes of the actual words used and call for a “point of personal privilege” that challenges the other Council member to justify or apologize for the language used. The Chair will maintain control of this discussion.

Demonstrate effective problem-solving approaches

Council members have a public stage to show how individuals with disparate points of view can find common ground and seek a compromise that benefits the community as a whole.

IN PRIVATE ENCOUNTERS

Continue respectful behavior in private

The same level of respect and consideration of differing points of view that is deemed appropriate for public discussions should be maintained in private conversations.

Be aware of the insecurity of written notes, voicemail messages, and e-mail

Technology allows words written or said without much forethought to be distributed wide and far. Council members should take into consideration that anything sent out via fax, voicemail, e-mails, or correspondence could be distributed to the media and citizens. Written notes, voicemail messages and e-mail should be treated as potentially “public” communication.

Even private conversations can have a public presence

Elected officials are always on display – their actions, mannerisms, and language are monitored by people around them that they may not know. Lunch table conversations will be eavesdropped upon, parking lot debates will be watched, and casual comments between individuals before and after public meetings noted.

Council Relations with City Staff

Governance of a City relies on the cooperative efforts of elected officials, who set policy, and City staff, who implement and administer the Council's policies. Woodrow Wilson called this the politics-administration dichotomy, but governance of a municipality is in reality a team effort. Cooperation and mutual respect are essential from each individual for the good of the community.

Treat all staff as professionals

Clear, honest communication that respects the abilities, experience, and dignity of each individual is expected. Poor behavior towards staff is not acceptable.

Limit contact to specific City staff

Questions of City staff and/or requests for additional background information should be directed only to the City Manager, City Attorney, City Secretary, or Department Directors. The City Manager's Office should be copied on any request, except those to the City Attorney.

Requests for follow-up or directions to staff should be made only through the City Manager or the City Attorney when appropriate. When in doubt about what staff contact is appropriate, Council members should ask the City Manager for assistance. Materials supplied to a Council member in response to a request will be made available to all members of the Council so that all have equal access to information.

The Council should not entertain or respond to any staff complaints. Any discussions of this nature should be referred directly to the City Manager. The Council should never speak critically to a member of City staff about other City staff, other Council members, and/or Council decisions.

Do not disrupt City staff from their jobs

Council members should not disrupt City staff while they are in meetings, on the phone, or engrossed in performing their job functions in order to have their individual needs met.

Never publicly criticize an individual employee

Council should never express concerns about the performance of a City employee in public, to the employee directly, or to the employee's manager. Comments about staff performance should only be made to the City Manager through private correspondence or conversation.

Do not get involved in administrative functions

Council members must not attempt to influence City staff on the making of appointments, awarding of contracts, selecting of consultants, or granting of City licenses and permits. The Hutto City Charter, Section 3.08 (b) and (c), also addresses the role of the City Council in regard to administrative functions.

Check with City staff on correspondence before taking action

Before sending correspondence, Council members should check with City staff to see if an official City response has already been sent or is in progress.

Do not attend meetings with City staff unless requested by staff

Even if the Council member does not say anything, the Council member's presence implies support, shows partiality, intimidates staff, and hampers staff's ability to do their job objectively.

Do not solicit political support from staff

Council members should not solicit any type of political support (financial contributions, display of posters or lawn signs, name on support list, etc.) from City staff. City staff may, as private citizens with constitutional rights, support political candidates but all such activities must be done away from the workplace.

Council Relations with the Citizens

IN PUBLIC MEETINGS

The Hutto City Council welcomes requests, suggestions, and viewpoints of residents of the City and considers the responsible presentation of these viewpoints as vital to effective municipal government. Council members also recognize their responsibility for proper governance and the need to conduct its business in an orderly and effective manner. The Council therefore establishes the following procedures to receive citizen input during public meetings.

1. Amount of time allocated

The Mayor will be responsible for recognizing any speakers, maintaining proper order, and adhering to any time limit set. Ordinarily, each speaker shall be afforded three minutes in which to make their presentation to the Council, with a maximum of twenty minutes for all presentations. Groups of citizens who wish to be heard on the same topic should designate a spokesperson.

2. Protocol for addressing the City Council

There shall be a time designated for the City Council to hear from the public at the beginning of City Council meetings held at City Hall on the first and third Monday of each month. The Mayor has the right to limit the number of speakers, as well as the amount of presentation time allocated to each speaker. If there is a large number of speakers wanting to address an issue, the Mayor may request or designate a spokesperson for groups wanting to speak with the Council.

If an item on the Council agenda for that meeting provides for a public hearing, the person wishing to make comments on that item shall speak at the time of the public hearing. (See Public Hearing Protocol under Policies and Protocol Relating to Conduct)

Requests to be heard regarding an item(s) on the regular agenda that does not have a public hearing should be made to the City Secretary prior to the start of the meeting. A "request to speak" form, provided by the City, requesting to be heard regarding a specific agenda item(s) shall contain the citizen's name, address, telephone number, and subject agenda item(s) number, which the speaker wishes to address. The form can be picked up at City Hall or in the Council Chambers, and must be turned in to the City Secretary prior to the item being addressed.

Speakers shall address the Council from the podium where a microphone insures that the audience can hear the speaker and a record of all comments may be made. If a speaker asks a question during the time designated for public comment under this policy, a Council member may give specific factual information or a recitation of existing policy to the speaker. Any comment or discussion by any Council member about the subject of the inquiry shall only be made at the time the subject is scheduled for consideration on the Council agenda (Government Code 551.042).

3. Protocol for dealing with requests made by citizens

Citizens with specific requests should first discuss them with the City Manager or City staff. The Council will consider requests that remain unresolved after being addressed through proper administration channels. Citizens who have not attempted to resolve situations at lower levels will be directed to the City Manager.

4. Protocol regarding complaints against City personnel

Negative comments regarding City personnel by name or title may not be made in open session (due to confidentiality provisions contained in the Texas Public Information Act and other state and federal laws). Specific complaints regarding municipal employees may be taken up with the employee's supervisor or City Manager.

Disruption of meetings by word or actions of any person may result in removal from the meeting by law enforcement officials.

IN UNOFFICIAL SETTINGS

Make no promises on behalf of the Council

Council members will frequently be asked to explain a Council action or give their opinion about an issue as they meet and talk with constituents in the community. It is appropriate to give a brief overview of City policy and to refer to City staff for further information. It is inappropriate to overtly or implicitly promise Council action, or to promise City staff will do something specific (fix a pothole, plant new flowers in the median, etc.).

Make no personal comments about other Council members

It is acceptable to publicly disagree about an issue, but it is unacceptable to make derogatory comments about other Council members, their opinions and actions.

Remember that Hutto is a small town

Council members are constantly being observed by the community every day that they serve in office. Their behaviors and comments serve as models for proper behavior in the City of Hutto. Honesty and respect for the dignity of each individual should be reflected in every word and action taken by Council members, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is a serious and continuous responsibility.

Council Relations with Other Public Agencies

Be clear about representing the City or personal interests

If a Council member appears before another governmental agency or organization to give a statement on an issue, the Council member must clearly state: 1) if his or her statement reflects personal opinion or is the official stance of the City; 2) whether this is the majority or minority opinion of the Council.

If the Council member is representing the City, the Council member must support and advocate the official City position on an issue, not a personal viewpoint.

If the Council member is representing another organization whose position is different from the City, the Council member should withdraw from voting on the issue if it significantly impacts or is detrimental to the City's interest. Council members should be clear about which organizations they represent and inform the Mayor and Council of their involvement.

Correspondence also should be equally clear about representation

City letterhead may be used when the Council member is representing the City and the City's official position. A copy of official correspondence should be given to the City Secretary to be filed as part of the permanent public record.

City letterhead will not be used for correspondence of Council members representing a personal point of view, or a dissenting point of view from an official Council position.

Council Relations with Boards and Commissions

The City has established several boards and commissions as a means of gathering more community input. Citizens who serve on boards and commissions become more involved in government and serve as advisors to the City Council. They are a valuable resource to the City's leadership and should be treated with appreciation and respect.

If attending a board or commission meeting, be careful to only express personal opinions
Council members may attend any board or commission meeting, which are always open to any member of the public. However, they should be sensitive to the way their participation – especially if it is on behalf of an individual, business or developer – could be viewed as unfairly affecting the process. Any public comments by a Council member at a board or commission meeting should be clearly made as individual opinion and not a representation of the feelings of the entire City Council.

Limit contact with board and commission members to questions of clarification

It is inappropriate for a Council member to contact a board or commission member to lobby on behalf of an individual, business, or developer. It is acceptable for Council members to contact board or commission members in order to clarify a position taken by the board or commission.

Remember that boards and commissions serve the community, not individual Council members

The City Council appoints individuals to serve on boards and commissions, and it is the responsibility of boards and commissions to follow policy established by the Council. But board and commission members do not report to individual Council members, nor should Council members feel they have the power or right to threaten board and commission members with removal if they disagree about an issue. Appointment and re-appointment to a board or commission should be based on such criteria as expertise, ability to work with staff and the public, and commitment to fulfilling official duties. A board or commission appointment should not be used as a political “reward.”

Be respectful of diverse opinions

A primary role of boards and commissions is to represent many points of view in the community and to provide the Council with advice based on a full spectrum of concerns and perspectives. Council members may have a closer working relationship with some individuals serving on boards and commissions, but must be fair and respectful of all citizens serving on boards and commissions.

Keep political support away from public forums

Board and commission members may offer political support to a Council member, but not in a public forum while conducting official duties. Conversely, Council members may support board and commission members who are running for office, but not in an official forum in their capacity as a Council member.

Inappropriate behavior can lead to removal

Inappropriate behavior by a board or commission member should be noted to the Mayor, and the Mayor should counsel the offending member. If inappropriate behavior continues, the Mayor should bring the situation to the attention of the Council and the individual is subject to removal from the board or commission.

Council Relations with the Media

The media (newspapers, radio, television, etc.) frequently contacts Council members for information and quotes.

The best advice for dealing with the media is to never go “off the record”

Most members of the media represent the highest levels of journalistic integrity and ethics, and can be trusted to keep their word. But one bad experience can be catastrophic. Words that are not said cannot be quoted.

The Mayor is the official spokesperson for the representative on City positions

The Mayor is the designated representative of the Council to present and speak on the official City position. If the media contacts an individual Council member, the Council member should be clear about whether their comments represent the official City position or a personal viewpoint.

All City press releases should go through the City Manager’s Office for distribution

The City Manager’s Office maintains up-to-date contact information for all local media outlets that cover Hutto. In order to insure that all media outlets are treated fairly, news releases should be submitted to the City Manager’s Office for review and distribution coordination. Some items may be best handled as a "media advisory" or a feature story suggestion. Other items may be best handled as correspondence to a particular group.

Choose words carefully and cautiously

Comments taken out of context can cause problems. Be especially cautious about humor, sardonic asides, sarcasm, or word play. It is never appropriate to use personal slurs or swear words when talking with the media.

Remember the media lives by a tight deadline

Because of the daily demands of the media business, deadlines are one of the most important factors for members of the media in determining what stories will be run. Because of these deadlines, it is essential for Council members to quickly reply to members of the media when they call for information on a story.

Sanctions

Public Disruption

Members of the public who do not follow proper conduct after a warning in a public hearing may be barred from further testimony at that meeting or removed from the Council Chambers.

Inappropriate Staff Behavior

Council members should refer to the City Manager any City staff who do not follow proper conduct in their dealings with Council members, other City staff, or the public. These employees may be disciplined in accordance with standard City procedures for such actions. Please refer to the section on Council Relations with City Staff for more details on interaction with City staff.

Council Members Behavior and Conduct

City Council members who intentionally and repeatedly do not follow proper conduct may be reprimanded or formally censured by the Council, lose seniority or committee assignments (both within the City of Hutto or with inter-government agencies). Serious infractions of the Council Relations Policy could lead to other sanctions as deemed appropriate by Council.

Council members should point out the offending Councilmember infractions of the Council Relations Policy. If the offenses continue, then the matter should be referred to the Mayor in private. It is the responsibility of the Mayor to speak with the offending Council member in private about the offenses. If the Mayor is the individual whose actions are being challenged, then the matter should be referred to the Mayor Pro Tem.

It is the responsibility of the Mayor to initiate action if a Council member's behavior may warrant sanction. If no action is taken by the Mayor, the alleged violation(s) can be brought up with the full Council in a public meeting.

Principles of Proper Conduct

Proper conduct IS...

- Keeping promises
- Being dependable
- Building a solid reputation
- Participating and being available
- Demonstrating patience
- Showing empathy
- Holding onto ethical principles under stress
- Listening attentively
- Studying thoroughly
- Keeping integrity intact
- Overcoming discouragement
- Going above and beyond, time and time again
- Modeling a professional manner

Proper conduct IS NOT...

- Showing antagonism or hostility
- Deliberately lying or misleading
- Speaking recklessly
- Spreading rumors
- Stirring up bad feelings, divisiveness
- Acting in a self-righteous manner

It all comes down to respect

Respect for one another as individuals ... respect for the validity of different opinions ...
respect for the democratic process ... respect for the community that we serve.

Glossary of Terms

Attitude: The manner in which one shows one's dispositions, opinions, and feelings.

Behavior: External appearance or action; manner of behaving; carriage of oneself.

Civility: Politeness, consideration, courtesy.

Conduct: The way one acts; personal behavior.

Courtesy: Politeness connected with kindness.

Decorum: Suitable, proper, good taste in behavior.

Manners: A way of acting; a style, method, or form; the way in which things are done.

Point of Order: An interruption of a meeting to question whether rules or bylaws are being broken, such as the speaker has strayed from the motion currently under consideration.

Point of Personal Privilege: A challenge to a speaker to defend or apologize for comments that a fellow Councilmember considers offensive.

Propriety: Conforming to acceptable standards of behavior.

Protocol: The courtesies that are established as proper and correct.

Respect: The act of noticing with attention; holding in esteem, courteous regard.

RESOLUTION NO. 2006-41R

**A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE CITY OF HUTTO COUNCIL RELATIONS
POLICY.**

WHEREAS, the Hutto City Council must bear the initial responsibility for the integrity of governance;

WHEREAS, the Council is responsible for its own development, its responsibilities, its own discipline, and its own performance;

WHEREAS, the development of the Council Relations Policy is designed to ensure effective and efficient governance;

WHEREAS, by adopting these guidelines, the Council acknowledges their responsibility to each other, to the City's professional staff, and to the public.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
HUTTO THAT:**

The City of Hutto Council Relations Policy are adopted to serve as the guidelines to preserve the values and integrity of representative local government and democracy.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS THE 3RD DAY OF JULY, 2006.

Kenneth L. Love, Mayor

ATTEST:

Patricia Gilmore, City Secretary

RESOLUTION NO. 2007-024-01 (a)

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A PROCESS FOR COUNCIL PARTICIPATION IN AGENDA DEVELOPMENT

Whereas, the agenda for the City Council meetings is produced by the City Manager and City Secretary, under the direction of the Mayor, in order to coordinate needed operational direction and policy-making; and

Whereas, the Hutto City Council is encouraged to be part of the agenda process by providing input on issues of discussion and development; and

Whereas, the Hutto City Council has agreed that they will provide requests to the Mayor for future agenda items that address areas of concern or involvement.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HUTTO, TEXAS:

That the City Council of the City of Hutto, Texas adopts the following amendment to the process for Council participation in agenda development:

Agenda Development Participation

Any Council member can request an item be placed on the agenda.

The request should be made to the Mayor, by noon, one week before the Council meeting.

The Mayor will discuss the item with the Council member and the City Manager to determine the appropriate placement on the agenda and the appropriate date for the item to be brought before Council not to exceed two consecutive meetings.

The Mayor will have the final authority on when a requested item will be placed on an agenda.

If the Mayor is unavailable, the Mayor Pro Tem will be the designated contact.

The Hutto City Council amends the Council Relations Policy to include the above process under the section on "Policies and Protocol Related to Conduct."

PASSED AND APPROVED on this 20th day of November 2008.

CITY OF HUTTO, TEXAS

David F. Begier, Mayor Pro Tem

Attest:

Debbie Chelf, City Secretary

RESOLUTION NO. 2007-024-01

**A RESOLUTION REVISING THE CONTACT INFORMATION
PROVISION FOR THE CITY COUNCIL**

Whereas, contact numbers for the City Council are held by the City Manager's Office in order to notify members of the Council during times of emergencies or the need for other notification; and

Whereas, the Council Relations Policy originally requested the Council members to notify the Hutto Police Department with their contact numbers; and

Whereas, the Hutto City Council has agreed that they will provide the contact information to the City Manager's Office for notification purposes.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
HUTTO, TEXAS:**

That the City Council of the City of Hutto, Texas adopts the following revision for the contact information provision under "Overview of Roles and Responsibilities":

Provide contact information with the City Manager's Office in case an emergency or urgent situation arises while the Council member is out of town.

The Hutto City Council also amends the Council Relations Policy to include the above language under the section on "Overview of Roles and Responsibilities."

PASSED AND APPROVED on this 19th day of February 2008.

CITY OF HUTTO, TEXAS

Kenneth L. Love, Mayor

Attest:

Debbie Chelf, City Secretary

RESOLUTION NO. 2007-024-00

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A PROCESS FOR COUNCIL PARTICIPATION IN AGENDA DEVELOPMENT

Whereas, the agenda for the City Council meetings is created by the City Manager and City Secretary in order to coordinate needed operational direction and policy-making by the Council; and

Whereas, the Hutto City Council is encouraged to be part of the agenda process by providing input on issues of discussion and development; and

Whereas, the Hutto City Council has agreed that they will provide requests to the City Manager for future agenda items that address areas of concern or involvement.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HUTTO, TEXAS:

That the City Council of the City of Hutto, Texas adopts the following process for Council participation in agenda development:

Agenda Development Participation

Any Council member can request an item be placed on the agenda for future discussion. The request should be made to the City Manager before noon a week before the meeting. The City Manager will discuss the item with the Council member and the Mayor to determine the appropriate placement of the item on the agenda.

The Hutto City Council also amends the Council Relations Policy to include the above process under the section on "Policies and Protocol Related to Conduct."

PASSED AND APPROVED on this 16th day of April 2007.

CITY OF HUTTO, TEXAS

Kenneth L. Love, Mayor

Attest:

Debbie Chelf, City Secretary

Resolution No. 2009-014-00 (Revised)

**TECHNOLOGY AND CITY EQUIPMENT USE POLICY
FOR THE HUTTO CITY COUNCIL**

I. Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish uniform procedures that shall apply to all city issued technology and other related equipment that a City Councilmember may use in execution of his or her official duties as a member of the Hutto, Texas City Council.

This Policy is based on and shall be consistent with the City policies defined in the City of Hutto, Texas Employee Handbook adopted by the Hutto City Council on November 6, 2006.

II. CITY PROPERTY/EQUIPMENT USE

City Councilmembers may be issued telephones, computers and computer related equipment, and other pieces of equipment to enable them to better serve the citizens of Hutto. Councilmembers are responsible for items formally issued to them by the City, as well as for items otherwise in their possession or control or used by them in the performance of their duties.

City issued telephone, computers and computer related equipment will be assigned per Council position and not to an individual Council person. After each election, the City Secretary will work with the IT Director to assign and/or collect this equipment. At the time of issuance, Councilmembers may be required to sign certain forms or other documentation evidencing their receipt of property and/or equipment.

Councilmembers should notify the City Secretary immediately if any equipment appears to be damaged, defective, or is in need of repair. The City Manager will refer the issue to the responsible individual for appropriate action.

A. Personal Use Prohibited - City property, materials, supplies, tools, equipment or vehicles may not be used for personal business.

B. Use of City Vehicles - City-owned or leased vehicles may only be used for official City business. City owned or leased vehicles may only be driven by authorized Councilmembers. Councilmembers must comply with the following:

1. Drivers must have a valid State of Texas driver's license appropriate for the vehicle operated and must maintain a satisfactory driving record.
2. Always observe all posted laws and speed limits.
3. Always wear seat belts when the vehicle is in operation.
4. No passengers other than City Councilmembers, employees or others on City business may ride in a City vehicle.
5. Report any broken, missing, or worn parts, tires, etc., or any needed maintenance of City vehicles immediately.
6. All drivers must be eligible for coverage under the City's insurance policy.
7. Drivers covered by Department of Transportation regulations must comply with them at all times.
8. At no time may a City Councilmember under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs drive a City vehicle or a personal vehicle while conducting City business.

9. Councilmembers involved in an accident while operating a City vehicle, or while operating a personal vehicle on City business, must immediately notify the proper law enforcement agency (if applicable) and the City Manager. Accident reports, along with any law enforcement report, must be filed with the City Manager.

III. ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AND SYSTEMS ACCESS USE

The City provides access to a computer network, Internet service, email, telephones, pagers, cameras, voice mail and fax communication systems, and other electronic equipment for use by City Councilmembers in the performance of their duties. These communication devices are referred to collectively in this policy as “electronic communications systems” or “systems.” These electronic communications systems are designed to support and enhance the communication, research and information capabilities of City Councilmembers and to encourage city-related communication and sharing of informational resources within the City. This policy governs user behavior pertaining to access and usage of the City’s electronic communications systems. This policy applies to all users of the City’s electronic communications systems. The City’s electronic communications systems access must be used in a professional, responsible, efficient, ethical and legal manner.

A. Internet and Email Access – City Councilmembers are provided a City Email address to conduct official business of the City. Email access should only be used in an acceptable and professional manner.

B. Acceptable Use - Acceptable uses of the City’s electronic communication systems are limited to those activities that support reference, research, internal/external communication and conducting City business in line with the user’s job responsibilities. Network users are encouraged to develop uses which meet their individual needs and which take advantage of the City’s internal network function. The City prohibits connection to sites or forwarding of information that contain materials that may be offensive to others including, but not limited to, sites or information containing sexually explicit material.

Users must understand that use of any City-provided, publicly accessible computer network such as the Internet and email is a privilege. No personal use of the Internet or email and other electronic communications systems is allowed under this policy. Information that is created and/or distributed on the City’s electronic communication system is considered a public record and must adhere to the guidelines set forth in the Public Information Act and any other stipulations set forth. The City is not responsible for personal communications sent on its electronic communications systems.

C. Unacceptable Uses of Electronic Communications Systems include:

- Using profanity, obscenity or other language which may be offensive or harassing to other coworkers or third parties.
- Accessing, displaying, downloading or distributing sexually explicit material.
- Accessing, displaying, downloading or distributing profane, obscene, harassing, offensive or unprofessional messages or content.
- Copying or downloading any commercial software is strictly prohibited.
- Using the systems for financial gain or for any commercial activity unrelated to City business.
- Using the systems in such a manner as to create a security breach of the City network.
- Accessing any site, or creating or forwarding messages with derogatory, inflammatory, or otherwise unwelcome remarks or content regarding race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, physical attributes or sexual preferences.
- Using the electronic communication systems for any illegal purpose or in any way that violates City policy or is contrary to the City’s best interest.

D. Filtering - The City uses software to filter inappropriate Internet sites.

E. Responsibility - The person in whose name a City-provided Internet, email or other electronic communications system account is issued is responsible at all times for its proper use, regardless of the user's location. Exchanges that occur in the course of conducting City business on the City's electronic communications systems will be considered a communication of the City and held to the same standards as formal letters.

F. No Right of Privacy/Monitoring. Users of City electronic communications systems may not assume they are provided any degree of anonymity and employees have no right to privacy with regard to such systems. Personal passwords are not an assurance of confidentiality. The Internet itself is not secure.

G. Restrictions – No software can be downloaded into the City's electronic communications system unless authorized by the appropriate City representative (IT Division representative, Assistant City Manager and/or City Manager) and approved by the City's IT Division as to be compliant with any copyright restrictions, annual licensing and maintenance agreements and compatibility to the City's operating systems. Under no circumstances will the City allow any software or other material relating to music, entertainment software or games to be downloaded.

Amendments of Policy

The City Council approves all policies and any amendments to this policy must be approved by the City Council.

The City Council reserves the right to revise or rescind any part of this policy and to make final decisions as to the interpretation and intent of all the information contained in this policy.

The Mayor and the City Council shall be responsible for enforcement of this policy.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HUTTO, TEXAS, that the Hutto City Council hereby adopts this policy and amends the Council Relations Policies to include the above process under the section on "Policies and Protocol Related to Conduct".

CONSIDERED and RESOLVED on this the **19th** day of the month of **March, 2009**.

CITY OF HUTTO, TEXAS

David F. Begier, Mayor Pro Tem

Attest:

Debbie Chelf, City Secretary

Resolution No. 2009-015-00

FISCAL AND REIMBURSEMENT POLICY FOR THE HUTTO CITY COUNCIL

I. Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish uniform procedures that shall apply to all related expenditures for professional development, legislative, and other necessary expenses incurred by members of the Hutto, Texas City Council while performing their official duties. These meetings are helpful to Councilmembers in fulfilling their responsibility to the citizens, important in fostering legislation favorable to the City and in representing the fiscal and operation posture of the City to outside agencies.

This policy shall be consistent with the City policies defined in the City of Hutto, Texas Employee Handbook adopted by the Hutto City Council on November 6, 2006.

II. General Procedures

A. Budget Review

The City Council and the City Manager shall work together through the budget process to determine what general fund monies will be annually allocated for the professional development and City business-related travel. Each City Councilmember will annually draft a training and development plan following the May elections to identify conferences and classes. The Mayor shall annually consider available funding and approve plans.

Each month, a detailed City Council budget report will be provided to the City Council. The City Manager and Mayor (or designee) shall meet to determine if a budget amendment is needed to fund increased appropriations if it is determined that sufficient funds are not available to cover expenses for any necessary yet unscheduled travel. This is subject to funding availability and economic conditions.

The Mayor and/or the Mayor Pro tem shall meet with any Councilmember who incurs any excessive or unapproved expenses. Councilmembers retain the right to oversee the adherence to council policies and procedures of fellow councilmembers.

Late or questioned expense reports and unpaid reimbursement expenses shall be referred to the Mayor.

III. Travel

A. Authorization

Each City Councilmember will be entitled to attend meetings that are budgeted per their approved council training and development plan. All travel and training requirements that are not specified in the approved budget, including unscheduled and unanticipated trips, must be approved by the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem and require the following:

- 3) a proposed budget for expenses related to the unscheduled training and/or trip must be submitted to the Mayor or designee in a timely manner prior to departure date, if possible; and,

- 4) verification of funding by the Mayor and City Manager before the training and/or trip is taken.

Councilmembers are encouraged to attend in-state training opportunities. Out-of-state training opportunities, however, may arise. Any out-of-state training not included in a Councilmember's training and development plan shall require City Council approval. The following is a list of suggested events and/or meetings that any member of the City Council may participate in as a group or on an individual basis, subject to availability of funds:

- ✓ Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG)
- ✓ National League of Cities
- ✓ Annual Institute of Mayors and Council members/Commission members
- ✓ Texas Municipal League Annual Conference
- ✓ Texas Municipal League Association of Mayors, Councilmembers and Commissioners
- ✓ Texas Municipal League Newly Elected Officials Conference
- ✓ US Conference of Mayors
- ✓ Related policy committees and task forces of these organizations
- ✓ Appropriate State and Federal agencies and legislative sessions

B. Request for Reimbursement and Return of Unexpended Funds

Upon return to the City, a complete accounting of all expenditures of City funds is to be filed within five (5) calendar days on the City's Travel Expense Reimbursement form. Receipts for all expenses, including hotel bills and registration fees, must be attached to the statement. All unexpended advance funds must be returned with the statement. Authorized expenses in excess of advance funds received will be reimbursed with proper approval.

Councilmembers shall notify the City Secretary's office as far in advance as possible to provide greatest flexibility in obtaining advantageous airfares and lodging rates.

In the event, a Councilmember is unable to attend a scheduled trip, he or she should notify the City Secretary's office as soon as possible to ensure that notification can be made to airlines or hotels for reimbursement of deposits in a timely manner and additional costs are not incurred. In such situations, the Council member unable to attend the scheduled event is responsible for contacting another Councilmember to see if they would be available to attend.

A Councilmember may be responsible for costs incurred to the City if cancellation is not due to an emergency.

Expenses not received by the City Secretary within thirty (30) days after conclusion of event shall not be reimbursed for expenses.

Travel expenses for spouse to conferences or meetings shall be paid for by the Councilmember.

C. Allowable Expenses

The following shall be allowable for travel.

1) Cash Advances

Cash advances may be issued to a Councilmember for expenses relating to authorized meetings in an amount sufficient to cover costs for lodging, daily per diem, ground transportation and parking.

Cash advances may be issued if councilmembers have no other convenient means of processing these expenses. The request for a cash advance shall be made by the councilmember to the City Secretary who will in turn process the travel advances.

2) Lodging

The City will pay training class/seminar, conference, and meeting related out-of-town lodging costs at a single occupancy rate. The City will pay for the cost of the room and City of Hutto related telephone calls only. Councilmembers may, at their own expense, upgrade their lodging. Additionally, Councilmembers are responsible for payment of non-reimbursable expenses as indicated.

3) Meals

A Councilmember will have meals paid for up to fifty dollars (\$50) per day. This includes, but not limited to meetings with local, state or federal officials, dignitaries, business representatives, other local government officials, or meals at professional organization functions. The business purpose and individuals who participated in the meal must be noted on the receipt.

Expenses for meals shall either be reimbursed at actual cost as supported by receipts or by per diem allowance. If a Councilmember requests to be reimbursed for actual costs, a detailed receipt (a credit card receipt listing the total amount due is not considered a detailed receipt) must accompany the request for reimbursement. In lieu of itemized receipts for meals, a per diem allowance of \$50 per day is authorized based on \$10 for breakfast, \$15 for lunch, and \$25 for dinner. Even if supported by a receipt, reimbursement shall not exceed \$10 for breakfast, \$15 for lunch, and \$25 for dinner. If seminar or training event includes the provision for a meal, the appropriate deduction will be made from your per diem or reimbursement. Alcoholic beverages are not covered by the City of Hutto.

Meals outside eligible for reimbursement include:

- a) If you depart City of Hutto before 7:00 a.m. and return after 9:00 a.m., breakfast is allowed.
- b) If you depart City of Hutto before 11:00 a.m. and return after 1:00 p.m., lunch is allowed.
- c) If you depart City of Hutto before 5:00 p.m. and return after 7:00 p.m., dinner is allowed.

4) Transportation

The City will pay all reasonable and necessary transportation costs incurred for non-local required travel relating to the performance of official duties or professional development as indicated in the City of Hutto Employee policy.

a) Travel by Air

If air travel is selected, payment will be made for the commercial coach fare rate only. If a discounted fare and/or airline special require the councilmember to leave or stay over an extra day, the City will pay for the lodging and meals for the extra day(s) provided the costs do not exceed the savings on the airfare.

b) Travel by Personal Vehicle

If a personal vehicle is used, the Mayor and councilmembers shall be reimbursed mileage at the Texas State Comptroller rate per mile for travel from City Hall to business-related meetings, luncheons, and ceremonial functions. The reimbursed amount is expected to cover all of the personal vehicle related expenses for meetings.

D. NON-ALLOWABLE EXPENSES

Expenses or charges for the following will normally not be reimbursed and must be paid for by the city councilmember:

1. In-hotel pay television and movies
2. Dry cleaning and laundry;
3. Health club and spas;
4. Expenses of a spouse;
5. Alcoholic beverages;
6. Personal long distance telephone calls; and
7. Other items of a personal nature.

It is recognized that the duration of travel and involved days of the week can affect the price of airfare and by modifying schedules that may incur additional lodging and/or other related expenses, a net savings can still be realized. Such schedule arrangements are authorized when personal schedules allow and the economic benefits to the City are warranted

Amendments of Policy

The City Council approves all policies and any amendments to this policy must be approved by the City Council.

The City Council reserves the right to revise or rescind any part of this policy and to make final decisions as to the interpretation and intent of all the information contained in this policy.

The Mayor and the City Council shall be responsible for enforcement of this policy.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HUTTO, TEXAS, that the Hutto City Council hereby adopts this policy and amends the Council Relations Policies to include the above process under the section on "Policies and Protocol Related to Conduct".

CONSIDERED and RESOLVED on this the 19th day of the month of **March, 2009.**

CITY OF HUTTO, TEXAS

David F. Begier, Mayor Pro Tem

Attest:

Debbie Chelf, City Secretary