

**CITY OF LAGUNA WOODS
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY 1.1**

COUNCILMEMBER ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

1.1.01. Statement of Purpose.

This Administrative Policy is intended to establish clear protocols and expectations related to councilmember requests for administrative support from staff.

1.1.02. Scope.

When used in this Administrative Policy, the term “councilmember” is inclusive of all members of the City Council, including the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem.

1.1.03. City Council-Staff Relationship.

- A. Laguna Woods Municipal Code Chapter 2.06 establishes the City Manager as the administrative head of the government of the City, under the direction and control of the City Council, except as otherwise provided.
- B. Laguna Woods Municipal Code Section 2.06.70 describes the relationship between the City Council, the City Manager, and staff. It is presented below in subsections (1) through (4) for ease of reference.
 - 1. The City Council and its members shall deal with the administrative services of the City only through the City Manager, except for the purpose of inquiry, and neither the City Council nor any member thereof shall give orders or provide direction or instructions to any subordinates of the City Manager. For purposes hereof, “inquiry” shall mean any and all communications short of giving orders, directions, or instructions to any member of the administrative staff. Such staff members shall provide all information reasonably requested by any Councilmember.
 - 2. The City Manager shall take orders and instructions from the City Council only when sitting in a duly convened meeting of the City Council and no individual Councilmember shall give any orders or instructions to the City Manager.
 - 3. The City Council shall instruct the City Manager in matters of policy.

4. Any action, determination, or omission of the City Manager shall be subject to review by the City Council. The City Council may not overrule, change, or modify any such action, determination, or omission except by the affirmative vote of at least three members of the City Council.
- C. The following policies supplement Laguna Woods Municipal Code Chapter 2.06, as authorized by Laguna Woods Municipal Code Section 2.06.100:
1. For the purpose of Section 1.1.03(B)(1), “reasonably requested” shall mean information requested in accordance with this Administrative Policy that the City Manager determines can be provided at a zero to nominal cost within a timeframe that would not cause undue disruption of work directed by the City Council as a whole or other urgent, time-sensitive, or critical staff activities which shall include, at a minimum, the provision of public-facing services, preparation for and posting related to City Council meetings, and activities required by law.
 2. Councilmembers shall direct requests for information from consultants or other contract service providers (excluding the City Attorney) to the City Manager. The City Manager’s oversight of communication with contract service providers is intended to ensure that the information provided is accurate and consistent with any contract obligations, and that the City does not incur undue costs in providing requested information.
 3. Councilmembers may contact the City Attorney directly but should only do so when the matter is of a plainly legal nature. Except for sensitive matters concerning the City Manager, councilmembers shall copy the City Manager on all written correspondence to the City Attorney.
 4. Unless authorized by the City Council or City Manager, councilmembers shall not communicate with any staff, other than the City Manager and City Attorney, regarding items that are considered in closed session.
 5. The City Manager may refer any request from a councilmember to the City Council for consideration and direction as a whole.

1.1.04. City Council Agendas.

- A. The City Manager is responsible for the preparation and posting of City Council agendas. While individual councilmembers may add items to agendas, they

shall not direct or exercise prior review over the contents of the balance of the agenda. Laguna Woods Municipal Code Section 2.06.070 prohibits individual councilmembers from directing the actions of the City Manager. To the extent individual councilmembers wish to provide direction to the City Manager regarding the preparation or posting of City Council agendas, it must be given by the City Council as a whole in a duly convened meeting.

- B. Councilmembers should attempt to introduce requests for future agenda items during a prior City Council meeting whenever possible. The “Other Comments and Reports” section of the agenda provides an opportunity to do so, in addition to at the time related items are considered. If a majority of the City Council so directs the City Manager, the City Manager shall prepare an agenda report and such other items as may be necessary for the City Council to consider the item at a future meeting. Absent specific direction to the contrary, the City Manager shall not prepare ordinances or incur more than nominal direct costs in the preparation of meeting materials prior to the item’s first agendized discussion. After the City Council has discussed the item, the City Manager may be directed to prepare additional meeting materials for subsequent meetings.
- C. Councilmembers may add items to agendas between meetings if the item is urgent, arose after the conclusion of the most recent meeting, or if they wish to initiate preliminary discussion. Unless the item is urgent and cannot be deferred to an introduction at the City Council meeting following the next meeting (see Section 1.1.04(B)), items shall not be added to the agenda on the four business days preceding the date the agenda is scheduled to be posted (e.g., if the agenda is scheduled to be posted on a Friday, the last day to add an item to the agenda is the preceding Friday). If the item is urgent, the City Manager may prepare an agenda report and such other items as may be necessary for the City Council to consider the item. Unless the item is urgent, the City Manager shall not prepare ordinances or incur more than nominal direct costs in the preparation of meeting materials prior to the item’s first agendized discussion. After the City Council has discussed the item, the City Manager may be directed to prepare additional meeting materials for subsequent meetings.

For the purpose of this subsection, “urgent” shall mean that the item requires immediate action and, if unaddressed at any point after the next City Council meeting, will not be timely. To the extent differences of opinion exist between the City Manager and the requesting councilmember regarding the urgency of an item, a determination shall be made by the City Attorney.

D. The following proclamations shall be agendized annually. All other requests to agendize proclamations shall follow the procedures for requesting future agenda items set forth in Section 1.1.04(B) and (C).

- a. African American History Month – February
- b. American Red Cross Month – March
- c. Community College Awareness Month – April
- d. Donate Life Month – April
- e. Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month – May
- f. Older Adults Month – May
- g. Drowning Prevention Awareness Period – May-August
(agendized in May)
- h. Elder Abuse Awareness Month – June
- i. Gun Violence Awareness Month – June
- j. Pride Month – June
- k. Wildfire Awareness and Prevention Season – mid-summer-early fall
(agendized in July)
- l. Constitution Day/Week and Citizenship Day – September
- m. Hunger Action Month – September
- n. Fire Prevention Week – October

E. The following moment of silence shall be agendized annually. All other requests to agendize moments of silence shall follow the procedures for requesting future agenda items set forth in Section 1.1.04(B) and (C).

- a. International Holocaust Remembrance Day – January

F. Councilmembers are encouraged to provide the City Manager with as much information as possible regarding requested future agenda items so that agenda language can be prepared that meets the intent of the item, while also complying with applicable provisions of state law (the Ralph M. Brown Act). Failure to do so may result in the City Council’s consideration of the item being limited in a manner that was not intended by the requesting councilmember.

G. Councilmembers are encouraged to include written materials in the agenda packet for items they have added to the agenda (e.g., a memorandum to the City Council or the text of a proposed proclamation or resolution). The inclusion of written materials in the agenda packet may be helpful in providing background on items that will be considered. Written materials for inclusion in the agenda packet shall be submitted to the City Manager no later than 12 p.m. two business

days prior to the date the agenda is scheduled to be posted (e.g., if the agenda is scheduled to be posted on a Friday, the last day to submit written materials for inclusion in the agenda packet is 12 p.m. on the preceding Wednesday).

- a. The City Manager may review written materials submitted for inclusion in agenda packets and provide comments and suggested revisions to the requesting councilmember in the interest of clarifying the material or converting the material to City standard formats and styles.
- H. Items added to City Council agendas by councilmembers shall be placed at the end of the applicable section of the agenda. Councilmembers may request that items be considered in a different order by making such a request any time after the pledge of allegiance at the City Council meeting.

1.1.05. Written Correspondence.

- A. Written correspondence that is received by the City without being addressed to a specific party shall be directed to the City Manager or his/her/their designee for review and response (if any). If City Council action is necessary or the City Manager or his/her/their designee determines that City Council action would be advantageous prior to responding to particular written correspondence, the City Manager may agendaize the matter for a City Council meeting.
- B. Reviewing and responding to written correspondence that is addressed to a specific councilmember is the responsibility of that councilmember. The City Manager or his/her/their designee may assist with reviewing and responding to written correspondence received by councilmembers upon request, except that when the subject of written correspondence falls outside the purview of the City, the City Manager or his/her/their designee shall limit their involvement to advising of that fact and providing referrals to other agencies, as appropriate. When written correspondence is administrative in nature, the City Manager or his/her/their designee may handle the review and response.
- C. Written correspondence sent by individual councilmembers shall clearly identify that opinions expressed are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or position of the City or the City Council as a whole.

1.1.06. Mayoral Commendations.

- A. The Mayor (or Mayor Pro Tem in his/her/their absence) may issue mayoral

commendations that are prepared by the City Manager or his/her/their designee for any of the following purposes:

- a. To recognize the birthdays of Laguna Woods residents.
 - b. To recognize the marriage anniversaries or similar State of California-recognized anniversaries of Laguna Woods residents.
 - c. To recognize the anniversaries of the establishment of Laguna Woods businesses, clubs, or nonprofit organizations.
 - d. To recognize the retirements of employees or volunteers of Laguna Woods businesses, clubs, or nonprofit organizations, or government entities and social service nonprofit organizations that provide services to Laguna Woods.
 - e. To recognize Laguna Woods residents, businesses, clubs, or nonprofit organizations being honored by other government officials or entities.
 - f. To recognize individuals or groups for heroic or lifesaving actions that occurred in or directly benefited Laguna Woods.
 - g. To commemorate events, functions, or other gatherings held by Laguna Woods businesses, clubs, or nonprofit organizations, or government entities and social service nonprofit organizations that provide services to Laguna Woods.
 - h. To commemorate events, functions, or other gatherings held in Laguna Woods or Orange County by government officials or entities.
- B. The preparation of mayoral commendations must be requested of the City Manager at least 10 business days in advance of the date by which they are to be presented. The City Manager may, but is not required to, accommodate requests made less than 10 business days in advance if doing so would not cause undue disruption of work directed by the City Council as a whole or other urgent, time-sensitive, or critical staff activities which shall include, at a minimum, the provision of public-facing services, preparation for and posting related to City Council meetings, and activities required by law.
- C. Mayoral commendations shall not be issued for presentation on dates that are beyond the term of the Mayor's (or Mayor Pro Tem's in his/her/their absence) appointment to such position or his/her/their City Council term.
- D. Mayoral commendations shall not do any of the following:
- a. Promote a for-profit event, function, or gathering.
 - b. Express personal ideological, political, or religious beliefs.

- c. Express or endorse matters contrary to policy or direction provided by the City Council.
- E. Mayor commendations shall clearly indicate that they originate from the Office of the Mayor and not use the phrase “on behalf of the City Council” or similar language that could be reasonably interpreted as indicating the City Council has approved the commendation. The phrase “on behalf of the City” may be used.
- F. Mayoral commendations shall not “proclaim” any matter or declare a “day of,” “week of,” “month of,” or similar form of honor (e.g., “best in class,” “citizen of the year,” “honorary title,” or “key to the city”), which are reserved for proclamations or other actions approved by the City Council.
- G. The City Manager shall establish a standard form for mayoral commendations issued for purposes set forth in Section 1.1.06(A)(a.)-(c.). Such standard form shall generally include the name(s) of those being recognized and a concise, standardized message of recognition. There is no expectation that staff prepare mayoral commendations including biographical information. To the extent mayors wish to highlight biographical information, they may do so in their oral comments at the time of presentation.
- H. To the extent differences of opinion exist between the City Manager and the Mayor (or Mayor Pro Tem in his/her/their absence) regarding the permissibility of content to be included in a mayoral commendation, a determination shall be made by the City Council.

1.1.07. Councilmember Letters of Recognition.

- A. Councilmembers may prepare and send letters of recognition on City letterhead with mailing paid for by the City for any of the following purposes:
 - a. To recognize the birthdays of Laguna Woods residents.
 - b. To recognize the marriage anniversaries or similar State of California-recognized anniversaries of Laguna Woods residents.
 - c. To recognize the anniversaries of the establishment of Laguna Woods businesses, clubs, or nonprofit organizations.
 - d. To recognize the retirements of employees or volunteers of Laguna Woods businesses, clubs, or nonprofit organizations, or government entities and social service nonprofit organizations that provide services to Laguna Woods.

- e. To recognize Laguna Woods residents, businesses, clubs, or nonprofit organizations being honored by other government officials or entities.
 - f. To recognize individuals or groups for heroic or lifesaving actions that occurred in or directly benefited Laguna Woods.
 - g. To commemorate events, functions, or other gatherings held by Laguna Woods businesses, clubs, or nonprofit organizations, or government entities and social service nonprofit organizations that provide services to Laguna Woods.
 - h. To commemorate events, functions, or other gatherings held in Laguna Woods or Orange County by government officials or entities.
- B. Staff may transfer letters of recognition prepared by councilmembers onto City letterhead and adjust the formatting to conform to City standards, provided such requests are made of the City Manager at least three business days in advance of the date by which they are needed. The City Manager may, but is not required to, accommodate requests made less than three business days in advance if doing so would not cause undue disruption of work directed by the City Council as a whole or other urgent, time-sensitive, or critical staff activities which shall include, at a minimum, the provision of public-facing services, preparation for and posting related to City Council meetings, and activities required by law.
- C. Letters of recognition shall not do any of the following:
- a. Promote a for-profit event, function, or gathering.
 - b. Express personal ideological, political, or religious beliefs.
 - c. Express or endorse matters contrary to policy or direction provided by the City Council.
- D. Letters of recognition shall not be titled “commendation” or “proclamation.”
- E. Letters of recognition shall clearly indicate that they are authored by individual councilmembers and not use the phrases “on behalf of the City,” “on behalf of the City Council,” or similar language. Each letter of recognition shall include a header reading “Office of Councilmember [Name].”
- F. Letters of recognition shall not “proclaim” any matter or declare a “day of,” “week of,” “month of,” or similar form of honor (e.g., “best in class,” “citizen of the year,” “honorary title,” or “key to the city”), which are reserved for proclamations or other actions approved by the City Council.

- G. To the extent differences of opinion exist between the City Manager and a councilmember regarding the permissibility of content to be included in a letter of recognition, a determination shall be made by the City Council.

1.1.08. Press Releases.

- A. All press releases shall be issued by the City Manager or his/her/their designee on behalf of the City. Press releases shall not be issued on behalf of individual councilmembers or regarding matters contrary to policy or direction provided by the City Council.
 - a. Press releases may be issued for “office hour”-type events that are held by councilmembers and open to the public at City Hall.
- B. Councilmembers may suggest topics for press releases to the City Manager or his/her/their designee who may, in their discretion, issue such press releases subject to the provisions of Section 1.1.08(A). Councilmembers may also seek City Council direction for the City to issue specific press releases, and may authorize the City Manager or individual councilmembers to issue the same, in the same manner described in Section 1.1.04.

1.1.09. Public Events, Meetings, and Gatherings.

- A. All public events, meetings, and gatherings shall be organized and coordinated by the City Manager or his/her/their designee. Public events, meetings, and gatherings shall not be held to personally benefit individual councilmembers or regarding matters contrary to policy or direction provided by the City Council.
 - a. Councilmembers may hold “office hour”-type events that are open to the public at City Hall; however, with the exception of press releases as provided in Section 1.1.08(A)(a.), the promotion of such events shall be the responsibility of the respective councilmembers, unless the City Council authorizes staff time and the use of City resources.
- B. Councilmembers may suggest public events, meetings, and gatherings to the City Manager or his/her/their designee who may, in their discretion, organize and coordinate such public events, meetings, and gatherings, subject to the provisions of Section 1.1.09(A). Councilmembers may also seek City Council direction for the City to hold specific public events, meetings, and gatherings, and may authorize the City Manager or individual councilmembers to organize

and coordinate the same, in the same manner described in Section 1.1.04.

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