

The Council Handbook

The City Council Handbook provides guidelines for how the City Council will operate. The group reviewed the Table of Contents and identified sections that they wanted to discuss with their colleagues. They also asked the Staff to review for things that need to be updated to reflect current practices (i.e. agenda delivery) and to make the document gender neutral and refer to positions vs. use of s/he/they pronouns. The Council reviewed the following issues:

- Page 2 – Vacancy: There is a staff report on the mechanics for filling vacancies. The Council had a conversation about the current practice, how vacancies are filled in other communities, and the pros and cons to various systems. If there is a Charter Review, this item could be revisited.
- Page 4 – Compensation: Section (C) CPI increase should be reviewed by the Budget Committee and look at the possibility of offering the Wellness package to the Council – perhaps include it in the annually adopted salary schedule vs. setting the compensation in City Code; remove Section (E) – Council does not receive compensation. Philosophically, the concept of elected officials has historically been people who could “afford” to hold elected office. This is something that should be evaluated. Staff will research the proper classification of City Councilmembers.
- Page 12 – Lots of incorrect items that need clean up (timing). The process is clear as outlined and keeps the Council from having a split vote.
- Page 14 – Policy regarding City Council Expression on State, Federal & International Issues: The City has a clear policy on this which keeps our meetings focused on issues related to Hayward.
- Page 16 – Meetings are to end by midnight if at all possible. Do we want to include here that we will have at least one meeting in the community – “strive to, at least once a year”?
- Page 18 – Agenda – Staff Presentations: There is desire for consistency. The City Manager pointed out there is a template and an expectation in terms of the amount of time each presentation should be. Staff provides the packet on Fridays – they try to get it done on Thursday, but it is a challenge to get a quality product to Council. Public Comment procedures were discussed and the balance that needs to be struck when there are many speakers and the Council still needs to work through the agenda. Decorum – this is a very tricky balance. The Chair needs to keep a certain level of decorum in the Chambers. Using breaks, limiting time, etc. are important tools that need to be used with discretion and evaluated for effectiveness after the matter for learning.
- Page 40 – Council Committees: Clarification on the Committee Process – appointments have historically occurred annually after an application process. If Council appoints throughout the year, there will need to be additional meetings. Special task forces – all of council needs to get the word out. The role of Council Committees when something has to go to Council for action – default should be to have it go on the consent Council (unless there is a reason not to) since it has been vetted at the Council level.
- Page 41 – Council liaison role is more than just reporting back to Council. There is also a role the Council plays for informing the Committee and to advise the Committee. Should there be a regular update format from the Councilmember to the council – electronically?
- Election Norms and Social Media – Should be researched, shared with Council, and vetted by a Council Committee that provides some conversation back to Council.

Cups and Community Building

The retreat concluded with a brief video presentation where Dr. John Nalbandian, Professor Emeritus of Public Administration at the University of Kansas and former Mayor and City Commissioner in Lawrence, Kansas, shared his metaphor for Cups and Community Building.