

 CITY OF ST. CATHARINES	Legal and Clerks Services - Legal Services Division		
	Subject:	Staff-Council Relations Policy	Policy #: LCS2019-1
	Approved by L.C.S: 		
	Issue Date:	February 11, 2019	Revision Date:
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Application & Purpose

- 1.1 This Staff-Council Relations Policy applies to all Members of the Council of the City of St. Catharines, including the Mayor, and all members of Staff of the City of St. Catharines, including the CAO.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to set out a general standard to ensure that Council and Staff share a common understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities as well as a common basis for their relationship, and to set out acceptable standards to govern their relationship and to which all Members and Staff are expected to adhere to and comply with.

Statement of Principles

- 1.3 This policy is intended to set a high standard for relations between Council and Staff in order to provide good governance and instill a high level of public confidence in the administration of the City by its Members as duly elected public representatives and its Staff as public administrators.
- 1.4 The following key statements of principle are intended to guide Council and Staff and to assist with the interpretation of this policy:
 - Members and Staff shall recognize that positive internal relations are central to the collective ability of Members and Staff to provide good governance and instill a high level of public confidence in the administration of the City;
 - Members and Staff shall relate to one another in a respectful, professional and courteous manner;
 - Members and Staff shall understand and respect each other's respective roles and responsibilities; and
 - Members and Staff shall work together in furtherance of the common goal of serving the public good.

The above statements are key principles that are intended to facilitate an understanding, application and interpretation of this policy – these principles are not operative provisions of this policy.

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Definitions

1.5 The following terms shall have the following meanings in this policy:

- (a) “CAO” means the Chief Administrative Officer of the City;
- (b) “Member” means a Member of Council including the Mayor; and
- (c) “Staff” means the CAO and all officers, directors, managers, supervisors and all non-union and union employees, whether full-time, part-time, contract, seasonal or volunteer employees, as well as agents and consultants acting in furtherance of the City business and interests.

General Obligations

1.6 In all respects, Members and Staff shall:

- (a) relate to one another in a courteous, respectful and professional manner;
- (b) maintain formal working relationships in order to promote equality and discourage favouritism;
- (c) understand their respective roles and responsibilities, and appreciate and respect the roles and responsibilities of the other;
- (d) work together to produce the best results and outcomes for the City and always for the collective public interest of the City; and
- (e) act in a manner that enhances public confidence in local government.

Roles and Responsibilities of Members

1.7 Members acknowledge and agree that:

- (a) Council as a whole is the governing body of the City and that it comprises a collective decision-making body;
- (b) they are representatives of the entire City;

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- (c) Staff serve the whole of Council rather than any individual Member;
- (d) they will respect the administrative and managerial chain of command by:
 - (i) directing any questions or concerns in relation to the general administration or management of the City to the Mayor or the CAO for their consideration;
 - (ii) directing any inquiries relating to City business to the appropriate Staff department head;
 - (iii) giving direction to Staff only as Council and through the CAO;
 - (iv) refraining from attempting to influence the recruitment of any Staff position unless they are authorized by Council to participate in the recruitment process; and
 - (v) refraining from becoming involved in the management of Staff.
- (e) they shall use Staff time effectively, which includes but is not limited to only referring essential matters to Staff for reports;
- (f) whenever possible, they shall notify Staff if an action or position of Staff is to be questioned or criticized at a public meeting to ensure Staff has sufficient time to formulate an intelligent, informed and helpful response for the consideration of Council and that any such questioning or criticism shall be undertaken with courtesy, respect and professionalism, and in no event shall there be any attempt to humiliate, berate, disparage or denigrate Staff and that they shall refrain from publicly criticizing members of Staff in relation to their intelligence, integrity, competence or otherwise;
- (g) as individual Members, they have no greater access to records or information held by the City than any member of the public and that they cannot access records or information otherwise protected from disclosure by the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* or in accordance with the process set out in that statute; and
- (h) certain members of Staff are statutory officers and have specific statutory authorities, duties, powers and responsibilities that cannot be interfered with or derogated from.

Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

1.8 Staff acknowledge and agree that:

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- (a) Council is the collective decision-making and governing body of the City and is ultimately responsible to the electorate for the good governance of the City;
- (b) they shall implement Council's decisions and establish administrative practices and procedures to carry out Council's decisions and any duties specifically assigned to them by Council;
- (c) they shall assist Council in their decision-making process with respect to its decision, policies and programs by providing Council with information based on professional expertise, research and good judgment in a professional and timely manner;
- (d) they shall serve the whole of Council rather than any individual Member;
- (e) that all Members are equal and shall be treated as such and always with courtesy, respect and professionalism;
- (f) they shall respond to inquiries from Council and provide appropriate and timely follow-up to such inquiries as necessary;
- (g) they shall refrain from becoming involved in the policy and decision-making process of Council, outside of providing recommendations within their areas of responsibility or expertise and ensuring that Council is provided with the information necessary in order to make their decisions and that Council is aware of any issues that may impact such decisions;
- (h) they shall diligently and impartially implement Council's decisions; and
- (i) they shall not communicate publicly on any matter respecting any Council decisions or policies without authorization to do so (to avoid misrepresentation of Council decisions or policies, disclosure of confidential information or damaging public confidence in the City) and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, shall refrain from publicly criticizing decisions or policies of Council or Members in relation to their intelligence, integrity, competence or otherwise.