

City of Llano

Code of Conduct for Elected Officials

This Code of Conduct is designed to describe the manner in which Council members should treat one another, city staff, constituents, and others they come into contact with while representing the City of Llano. It is a guideline, and meant to supplement Elected Official Open Meetings Act Training, and Public Information Act Training required by the State of Texas.

We believe all City of Llano elected and appointed officials and staff must perform their duties in a manner that maintains and enhances public confidence and trust in the integrity, objectivity and impartiality of the City. Additionally, as a corporation entrusted with public funds, the City is obligated to ensure the protection and appropriate use of all its resources and assets.

Generally, City of Llano officials and staff must be professional, courteous and objective in all interactions. Elected officials and staff are expected to be reasonable and fair in their expectations of each other and resolve any conflict in a mature and professional manner. Sometimes we have to agree to disagree without using personal attacks or holding grudges.

Council Conduct with One Another

Councils are composed of individuals with a wide variety of background, 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 on contentious issues.

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 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. If there is a disagreement about the agenda or the Chair's actions, those objections should be voiced politely and with reason, following parliamentary procedure.

Demonstrate effective problem solving approaches

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

Council Conduct with City Staff

Governance of a City relies on the cooperative efforts of elected officials, who set policy, and City staff who implements and administers the Council's policies. Therefore, every effort should be made to be cooperative and show mutual respect for the contributions made by each individual for the good of the community. Clear, honest communication that respects the abilities, experience, and dignity of each individual is expected. Poor behavior towards staff is not acceptable.

Council inquiries/requests of Staff

Council members should feel comfortable making routine requests of any staff that does not require extensive research. Additionally, Council should feel comfortable, for example, asking the Street Department Foreman a question regarding the condition or history of a particular thoroughfare. Any request for work to be done or a request that requires research, opinion or an inordinate amount of time should be directed to the City Manager. The City Manager shall distribute the request to staff for follow-up. Responses to such requests shall be copied to all Council members, City Manager, City Attorney, and to appropriate Department Heads. Additionally, certain, extensive work projects should be first researched by City staff and approved for initiation by Council as a whole. Council should not make requests of staff for information to use against another Council member or staff person. Due to the amount of staff time required, and the lack of appropriate transcribing equipment, typed transcripts of meetings will not be made available to Council or the general public. A taped copy is available for the cost of the tape.

Public Criticism

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

Be considerate of staff time

Staff works for the Mayor and Council, and is available to discuss and work on City business with elected officials. Please understand that staff also works with citizens on projects and complaints; prepares administrative reports and documentation; and spends time working with staff groups on meeting the needs of the City and its residents. Be respectful of time and understand when an employee may be out of the office or working on another project when you call or come by. Staff will make every effort to meet the needs of elected officials.