



CITY OF  
**PALO  
ALTO**

## CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

**From: City Manager**

**Report Type: ACTION ITEMS**

**Lead Department: City Manager**

**Meeting Date: January 30, 2023**

### **TITLE**

Review and Adoption of the Policy and Services Committee Recommendations on the Revised Council Procedures and Protocols Handbook (previously discussed on December 19, 2022)

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Policy and Services Committee recommends that the City Council discuss, review and adopt a revised version of the Council Procedures and Protocols Handbook (“the Handbook”).

The full City Council discussed the Handbook on December 19, 2022 and asked staff to bring the item back for discussion and adoption. This report contains information from the December 19, 2022 staff report<sup>1</sup> and notes from the December 19<sup>th</sup> discussion that may be of assistance to the City Council.

### **BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS**

In June 2021, the City Council directed staff to prepare a comprehensive revision of the Procedures and Protocols Handbook. The first tasks were to reorganize the Handbook for clarity and ease of use and to update the Handbook to conform with law and current City Council practice. Staff retained a copy editor to assist with these tasks. Since that time, staff created an outline for the reorganized Handbook and brought a draft Handbook for the Policy and Services Committee to review and edit<sup>2</sup>. In addition, City Council, the Policy and Services Committee and staff introduced a number of potential policy changes to the Handbook. The attached drafts reflect reorganization, updates to conform with law and practice, and policy changes.

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<sup>1</sup> December 19, 2022 Staff Report (Handbook Item starts on pdf page 357):

<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/city-council-agendas-minutes/2022/20221219/20221219pccsm-amendedtime.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> December 13, 2023 Policy and Services Committee Report on Handbook:

<https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/policy-and-services-committee/2022/20221213/20221213ppsr.pdf>

Policy and Services Committee reviewed the draft revised Handbook and developed suggested language for the City Council to consider. At the December 19, 2022 City Council meeting, the City Council asked staff to bring the Handbook back to the City Council in 2023 for a longer discussion that allows the City Council to address each item in question. Staff recommends that Council consider the Handbook section by section, discussing any issues or concerns and tentatively voting to either adopt the section as drafted or direct staff to prepare additional revisions, before going on to the next section. When all the sections have been reviewed, the City Council can vote to adopt the entire Handbook. If the City Council has directed additional language to be prepared, staff can return to the City Council at a subsequent meeting for adoption of the Handbook.

In the December discussion, the City Council members most often referred to the redlined version of the Handbook which is **Attachment B** to this report. **Attachment A** is the “clean copy” of the revised Handbook with minor edits from P&S. As shared in December, in **Attachment B**, changes made to comply with law or current practice are not included in tracked changes.

### **How to read the Handbook drafts (Attachment A and Attachment B)**

In reorganizing the Handbook outline, staff and the copy editor approached it with the following scope, to:

- Reorganize the document to improve the ability to find useful guidance,
- Eliminate duplication where present, and
- Update to conform with current practice and changes in law.

In addition to the reorganized Handbook, the Policy and Services Committee also discussed many of the suggested topics from City Council members related to proposed new or revised language (topics included in the November 3, 2022 Supplemental Report Attachment (pdf page 103)<sup>3</sup>) and a couple extra topics. The reorganized Handbook (**Attachments A and B**) includes recommended language for the following topics:

1. Other standing committees
2. Removal of references to “Committee of the Whole”
3. \*Number of times Council members can attend remotely (Section 2.3 B.1)
4. \*Colleague’s memos timing (Section 2.4)
5. Council member speaking time
6. Clarification on individual speaker time based on number of speakers
7. Group speaker total time allocation

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<sup>3</sup> Policy and Services Committee November 3, 2022 Supplemental Report Attachment: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/files/assets/public/agendas-minutes-reports/agendas-minutes/policy-and-services-committee/2022/20221103/20221103ppssm-amended.pdf> (pdf page 103)

8. Annual Council priority setting guidelines and values inserted
9. Tools to respond to unprofessional behavior by Council members (including Censure)
10. Parameters for the voting delegate at conferences (such as League of California cities)
11. Council conduct with other public agencies
12. Use of letterhead
13. Use of staff time – 1 hour rule
14. \*Role clarity for Council board/commission liaison (Protocols Section 2.8)
15. \*Miscellaneous expenditures (incl. Council discretionary funding use) (Section 4.10)
16. \*Mayoral rotation (Section 1.1)

The Policy and Services Committee agreed upon language for most of the topics listed above except for the items above with an \* which staff left easy to identify in **Attachment A and B** for Council discussion. On the topic of the role of the Council liaison to Boards and Commissions, the Policy and Services Committee asked that the City Council refer that item back to Policy and Services for further discussion in 2023 in order to involve the chairpersons of Boards and Commissions.

At the full City Council discussion, the Summary Minutes<sup>4</sup> and video<sup>5</sup> show that further City Council discussion is needed on some of the recommendation from the Policy and Services Committee.

One topic that has been unresolved for a while that is not updated in these Handbook drafts is the Protocols Section 4 Travel Section. Since the December 19, 2022 Handbook discussion, staff reviewed the Handbook travel section and compared it to the citywide travel policy (**Attachment C**). It appears that the two documents are similar except for the reference on reimbursement for the use of a private bicycle. Given the similarity in content, staff recommends the City Council consider simply referencing the citywide travel policy in place of the existing text in Protocols Section 4. The remaining discussion for City Council consideration regarding travel are topics around City funding of Councilmember travel, like:

1. Is there a limit on how many times a Councilmember can travel in a year with reimbursement?
2. For international travel, will any Mayoral or City Council international travel expenses related to Sister Cities be covered by the City?
3. Are there any other guidelines the City Council would like to establish regarding City Council travel?

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<sup>4</sup> Summary Minutes, December 19, 2023: <https://portal.laserfiche.com/Portal/DocView.aspx?id=54912&repo=r-704298fc>

<sup>5</sup> December 19, 2023 Meeting Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nzt7Czro4hw> (Handbook item was item 21 and began around 5:13:50 in the video)

The City Council may also want to consider this in a two-step process related to the travel policy. The first step could be to accept the citywide travel policy reference as a starting point on this topic to replace the existing Protocols Section 4 text. Step 2 could be to later consider discussion on the policy questions above.

#### **FISCAL/RESOURCE IMPACT**

Staff and the copy editor will further clean up the Handbook (formatting and page numbers) upon adoption by the City Council and upload the document online.

#### **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

Staff solicited suggested changes from the City Council over the course of this process regarding desired changes to the Handbook. Continued discussion will occur at the January 30, 2023 City Council meeting.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This is not considered a project as defined by CEQA and no review is required.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Clean Copy of 12.14.22 Council Procedures and Protocols Handbook

Attachment B: Redlined Copy of 12.14.22 Council Procedures and Protocols Handbook

Attachment C: Citywide Travel Policy (update 2-2-2016)

#### **APPROVED BY:**

Ed Shikada, City Manager

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