



## City Council Staff Report

**From: City Manager**

**Report Type: ACTION ITEMS**

**Lead Department: City Manager**

**Meeting Date: March 20, 2023**

Report #:2303-1100

### **TITLE**

Review and Revision of the Council Procedures and Protocols Handbook – Focus on Protocols – Including Consideration of Policy and Services Committee Recommended Changes

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Continued discussion of the City Council Procedures and Protocols Handbook (“the Handbook”) with particular focus on the Protocols portion of the Handbook. This is a follow up discussion to the January 30, 2023 discussion of the Procedures portion of the Handbook. The full City Council discussed the Handbook on December 19, 2022 and January 30, 2023. This report below contains information from the December 19, 2022 and January 30, 2023 staff reports and notes from the January 30th discussion that may be of assistance to the City Council.

### **BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS**

The full background on this item is available in the January 30, 2023<sup>1</sup> staff report related to the City Council direction to staff in June 2021 to revise and reorganize the Handbook for clarity and ease of use and to update the Handbook to conform with law and current City Council practice. The attached drafts reflect reorganization, updates to conform with law and practice, and policy changes only for the Protocols Portion of the Handbook since the City Council approved tentative agreements for the entire Procedures Portion of the Handbook on January 30, 2023.

Staff continues to make those cleanups as directed by the City Council on January 30, 2023. Since there are a few policy questions still outstanding on the Procedures Portion of the Handbook (listed below), staff will bring draft language for those sections of the Handbook back at a future date.

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<sup>1</sup> January 30, 2023 Meeting Agenda and related items:

<https://cityofpaloalto.primegov.com/Portal/Meeting?meetingTemplateId=1121> (The Handbook Discussion was Item 4; Report and Action and Summary Minutes are available through the link here).

For the Protocols Portion of the Handbook of the reorganized Handbook, there are topics that the Policy and Services Committee and full Council flagged for further Council discussion in the Protocols Portion of the Handbook (**Attachments A and B**) related to the following topics:

1. Parameters for the voting delegate at conferences (such as League of California cities)
2. Council conduct with other public agencies
3. Use of letterhead
4. Use of staff time – 1 hour rule
5. \*Role clarity for Council board/commission liaison (Protocols Section 2.8)

The Policy and Services Committee agreed upon language for most of the topics listed above and that language is included in the Attachments A and B. The item above with an \* is the one exception on the topic of the role of the Council liaison to Boards and Commissions, where 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.

The last topic that has been unresolved in the Protocols Portion of the Handbook 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. If this general direction is amenable to the Council, the Council could direct incorporation of language to clarify additional guidance for Council members travel activities such as the following:

“Councilmember travel expenses and reimbursements will adhere to Citywide Travel Arrangements and Expense Reimbursement Policy (Administrative Policy 1-02/ASD) with the following amendments:

1. The limit on how many times a Councilmember can travel in a year with reimbursement will be \_\_\_\_\_.
2. For international travel, any Mayoral or City Council international travel expenses related to Sister Cities will have \_\_\_\_\_ covered by the City.
3. Councilmember travel will be approved by \_\_\_\_\_.”

Staff maintained the page numbers from the January 30th Protocols Portion of the Handbook in **Attachments A and B** to minimize confusion. Similar to the January 30th discussion, staff recommends that Council consider the Protocols Portion of 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. If the Council

has directed additional language to be prepared, staff will return to the Council at a subsequent meeting for adoption of the Handbook including the few additional Procedures follow ups referenced earlier in this report.

#### **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 March 20, 2023 City Council meeting with particular focus on the Protocols portion of the Handbook.

#### **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  
(PROTOCOLS PORTION ONLY)

Attachment B: Redlined Copy of 12.14.22 Council Procedures and Protocols Handbook  
(PROTOCOLS PORTION ONLY)

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

#### **APPROVED BY:**

Ed Shikada, City Manager

Primary Author: Chantal Cotton Gaines, Deputy City Manager