

# CITY COUNCIL HANDBOOK/ CODE OF CONDUCT

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City Council

Dec. 17, 2019



# Recommendation

*Provide feedback on the City Council Member Handbook, Code of Conduct and Social Media Policy.*



# Background

- On June 11, 2019, the Alameda County Grand Jury recommended that the City more formally establish a Council Member Code of Conduct/Handbook.
- On July 16, 2019, the Council agreed with this recommendation and directed staff to return with such a Code of Conduct/Handbook.
- Following the Council's direction on July 16th, the City Manager's Office and the City Attorney's Office have been collaborating on consolidating existing City policies and reviewing best practices from other jurisdictions in order to create a Code of Conduct/Handbook (hereinafter "Handbook") that best suits Alameda.



# City Council Handbook

*The principal areas addressed by the proposed Handbook include:*

- *City governance*
- *Council meetings*
- *Agenda setting*
- *Staff attendance and participation at Council meetings*
- *Public participation at Council meetings*
- *Meeting minutes*
- *Council communications with staff and with the public*

*The proposed Handbook further outlines a process for Council censure of members who violate the policies set forth in the Handbook.*



# Social Media Policy (Alternative presented for discussion)

*Currently, Council members and Board/Commission members, from time to time, post comments on social media sites such as Facebook. Of course, a quorum of members posting on a particular conversation could violate both the Brown Act and the Sunshine Ordinance. Current City practice leaves members to self-regulate.*



# Social Media Policy (Alternative presented for discussion)

*Council May wish to consider a range of alternatives:*

- Continue existing practice*
- Council only vs. all Boards/Commissions*
- Recommendation vs. Direction*
  - Refraining from posting or responding on any form of social media for any matter within the Member's subject matter jurisdiction. If so, Staff recommends an exception permitting members to post on any site or page on which an individual member or less than a quorum of members has/have exclusive custody or control, (e.g. a Council member would be allowed to post on his or her own Facebook page.)*



# Social Media Policy (Alternative presented for discussion)

*Further alternatives in defining "topics that are within the subject matter jurisdiction":*

- *currently pending or agendized before the legislative body*
- *knows, or reasonably should know, is likely to come before that legislative body (suggest limiting this to a time period, e.g. within 60 days)*

