

## **Elected Official Roles and Responsibilities**

Each elected municipal official has particular roles to play and responsibilities to perform, and understanding these helps local governments better serve their citizens. Here is an overview of the different roles the Mayor, City Council, and City Clerk members play.

### **The Mayor**

The mayor presides over meetings of the council.

The mayor presides over the council in a manner designed to promote high standards of democratic governance and chairs meetings with efficiency and fairness, never discriminating against any speaker, whether council member or member of the public, based on the speaker's point of view.

The mayor will not use his or her authority to thwart the democratic process.

Example 1: The Mayor will not cancel or adjourn meetings for the purpose of preventing a matter from coming to a vote.

Example 2: The Mayor will not refuse to allow a matter to be voted upon if it has received the necessary motion and second.

The mayor should sign all ordinances, resolutions, and city council minutes.

The mayor in cities and towns with mayor/council forms of government may veto any ordinance resolution or order adopted by the council.

The mayor has the same speaking rights as any other member of the city council.

The mayor demonstrates honesty and integrity in every action and statement.

The mayor recognizes that all electronic transmittals sent or received in performance of their duties as mayor are subject to the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.

### **The City Clerk**

The city clerk maintains the minutes from council meeting and present to the council for approval.

The city clerk presides over meetings of the council in absence of the mayor.

The city clerk, in the absence of the mayor, presides over the council in a manner designed to promote high standards of democratic governance and chairs meetings with efficiency and fairness, never discriminating against any speaker, whether council member or member of the public, based on the speaker's point of view.

The city clerk should sign all ordinances, resolutions, and city council minutes.

The city clerk has the custody of all the resolutions and ordinances of the city and keeps a regular and correct journal of the proceeding of the city council.

The city clerk when presiding in mayor's absence, has the same speaking rights as any other member of the city council.

The city clerk demonstrates honesty and integrity in every action and statement.

The city clerk recognizes that all electronic transmittals sent or received in performance of his/her duties are subject to the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.

The city clerk may perform all the functions of a mayor if the mayor is unable to perform his/her duties, or if he/she can not be located, during his/her disability or absence (A.C.A. § 14-43-501(b)(2)).

## **The City Council**

The city council sets the time and place for regular city council meetings.

The city council demonstrates respect, kindness, consideration, and courtesy to others during meetings.

City council members prepare in advance of meetings and are familiar with the issues on the agenda.

The city council serves as a model of leadership and civility to the municipality.

The city council inspires public confidence in local government.

All members of the city council have equal votes. No council member has more power than any other council member, and each should be treated with equal respect.

A city council member will remember at all times that as an individual he or she has no legal authority outside the meetings of the city council and that he or she shall conduct relationships with the city staff, the citizens, and all modes of communication on the basis of this fact.

Council members will inform the mayor and the city clerk of plans to be absent from a council meeting or plans to leave a council meeting before it is adjourned.

A city council member recognizes that all electronic transmittals sent or received in performance of their duties as a city council member are subject to the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.

## **Fostering Civility**

A code of conduct is a set of practices that the municipal leadership agrees to follow. This code of conduct has been developed to reinforce the concept that the mayor, council members, city clerk and city attorney serve as role models for their constituents and city staff. By adopting this code of conduct, the city council publicly sets a civility standard for others to follow and recognizes the importance of trust invested in them by the public to accomplish city business.

## **Principles and Guidelines**

The city council shall hold themselves accountable to the following principles and guidelines:

### **City Council Members' Conduct with One Another**

his council is composed of individuals with a wide variety of backgrounds, personalities, values, opinions, and goals. Despite this diversity, each council member has chosen to serve in public office in order to preserve and protect the present and the future of the City of Carlisle and its citizens. This common goal should be acknowledged even as council members may "agree to disagree" on contentious issues. Tone and volume of speech should be maintained at all times.

## 1. Conduct in Public Meetings

**Practice civility and decorum in all 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, however, the mayor, council members or city clerk 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. Therefore:

- Avoid personal comments that could offend other council members or those present during the meeting.
- Honor the role of the mayor in maintaining order, be respectful of the position.
- Be respectful of other members of the city council, city clerk, city attorney, commissions, committees, city staff, and the public by refraining from abusive conduct, personal charges, or verbal attacks. Profanity is not to be used at any time.
- Treat fellow council members with the respect you expect to receive in return.
- Always address citizens, employees, committee members, and fellow elected officials with respect.
- Request the opportunity to speak and address the council through the mayor or other person conducting the meeting, i.e. the city clerk in the mayor's absence.
- Recognize fellow council members and guest speakers by their formal names and appropriate titles; after initial acknowledgement, the terms "Mr." or "Ms." may be used.
- Be respectful of others' time and be brief and prepared in making remarks.
- Be prompt in attending public meetings so that they may begin at the publicly posted time.

## 2. Conduct with the Public

**Be polite and professional to speakers and treat them with care and gentleness.** Because personal concerns are often the reason citizens come before the council to speak, the mayor, council members and city clerk should remember that their behavior will either relax the speaker or push their emotions to a higher level of intensity. Therefore:

- Limit comments to issues and avoid personal attacks.
- Remain seated when someone is speaking at the podium.
- Don't just give the appearance of listening but actively listen.
- Ask for clarification, but avoid debate and argument with the public.
- Do not engage in personal attacks of any kind under any circumstance.
- Make no promises on behalf of the council or staff.
- Make no personal comments about other council members.

# Code of Conduct with Affirmation

## *City of Carlisle Code of Conduct*

### Opening Statement

This code of conduct is designed to describe the manner in which all elected official of the City, Mayor, Council Members, City Attorney and City Clerk should treat one another and others with whom they come in contact with in representing the City of Carlisle.

I affirm that I have read and understand the City of Carlisle City Council Code of Conduct. The principles and guidelines for the city's elected officials set forth in this document promote civility and set a standard of excellence that engenders trust and promotes the public good. This municipality does not condone activities that are in violation of the principles of appropriate conduct.

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Mayor

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City Clerk

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City Attorney

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Council member

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Council member

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Council member

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Council member

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Council member

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Council member

\*\*This affirmation should be signed yearly for all new and remaining elected officials of the city and kept on file in the city clerk's office.

**Resolution # 349**  
**Establishing a Code of Conduct**

Whereas the Carlisle City Council desires to adopt a code of conduct as a reference and guide for its members in order to promote a standard of unity and reputation of all elected officials representing the city.

Now therefore, be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Carlisle, Arkansas to adopt the attached document entitled "Code of Conduct."

Passed and approved this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_.

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Mayor

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City Clerk