

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-02-13

**A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE
COUNCIL RELATIONS POLICY AND CODE OF ETHICS**

WHEREAS, the City of Castle Hills is a Type A General Law City governed by a City Council comprised of six members and presided over by the Mayor; and

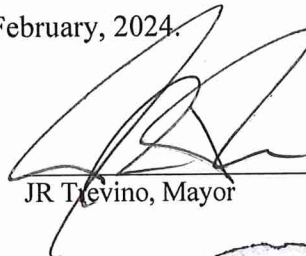
WHEREAS, the City of Castle Hills City Council, as the governing body for the City of Castle Hills, has the initial responsibility for the integrity of governance and is responsible for its own development (both as a body and as individuals), its responsibilities, its own discipline, and its own performance; and

WHEREAS, the City Council adopted a Council Relations Policy and Code of Ethics on December 8, 2020; and

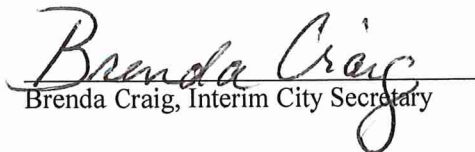
WHEREAS, the City Council believes that amendments to the Council Relations Policy and Code of Ethics should be made to update or clarify certain provisions in the Council Relations Policy and Code of Ethics.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Castle Hills, Texas hereby adopts the Amended and Restated Castle Hills Council Relations Policy and Code of Ethics attached as Exhibit "A" to this resolution.

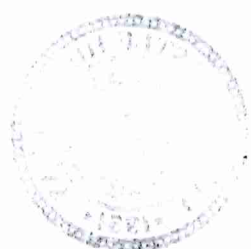
PASSED AND APPROVED this the 13th day of February, 2024.


JR Trevino, Mayor

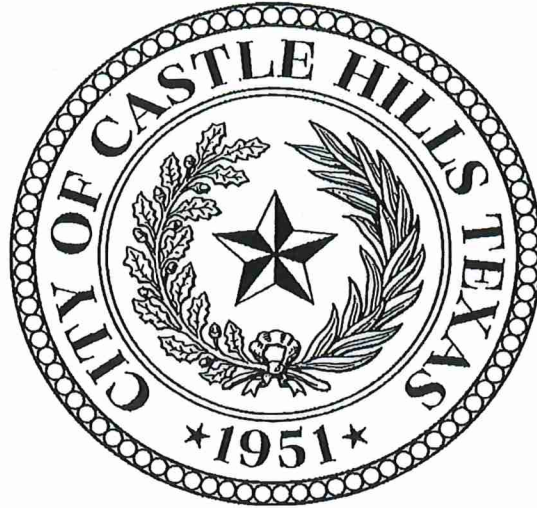
ATTEST:


Brenda Craig, Interim City Secretary





CITY OF CASTLE HILLS



Amended and Restated Council Relations Policy And Code of Ethics

_____, 2024

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. *The Governing Body*

The Castle Hills City Council and the Mayor comprise the Governing Body of the City of Castle Hills; therefore, they must bear the initial responsibility for the integrity of governance. The Governing Body is responsible for its own development (both as a body and as individuals), its responsibilities, its own discipline, and its own performance. The development of this policy is designed to ensure effective and efficient governance.

This policy will address Mayor and Council relations as well as Council and Staff relations. By adopting these guidelines for elected officials, the Governing Body acknowledges its responsibility to each other, to the professional staff, and to the public as a whole.

B. *Values*

The Governing Body will govern the City in a manner associated with a commitment to the preservation of the values and integrity of representative local government and democracy and a dedication to the promotion of efficient and effective governing. The following statements will serve as a guide and acknowledge the commitment being made in this service to the community:

1. The Governing Body has high priorities for the continual improvement of the Councilmember's professional ability and the promotion of an atmosphere conducive to the fair exchange of ideas and policies among Councilmembers.
2. The Governing Body will endeavor to keep the community informed on municipal affairs; encourage communication between the citizens and the Governing Body; strive for strong working relationships among Bexar County, the City of San Antonio, the North East Independent School District, and neighboring communities.
3. In its governance role, the Governing Body will continue to be dedicated to friendly and courteous relationships with Staff, other Councilmembers, and the public, and seek to improve the quality and image of public service.
4. The Mayor and each Councilmember will make a commitment to improve the quality of life for the individual and the community, and to be dedicated to the faithful stewardship of the public trust.

II. MAYOR AND COUNCIL

This section outlines the respective responsibilities of the Mayor, Councilmembers, and the Code of Conduct applicable to each in their respective roles as elected representatives of the people. It holds to the principle that the effective delivery of services and the efficient administration of government is ultimately the aim of all concerned.

- A. *City Government.* The City of Castle Hills is a Type A General Law City. It is governed by a 6-member City Council presided over by the Mayor. The Mayor is the chief executive officer of the City and represents the City in all matters and whose authority and actions are derived by the will, discretion, and direction of the Council. According to [Local Government Code Section 22.042](#), the Mayor is to ensure that the laws and ordinances of the City are properly carried out

and is to perform the duties and exercise the powers prescribed by the Governing Body. For this reason, Councilmembers being informed in all matters involving the City is one of the principal responsibilities of the Mayor. Councilmembers are to be kept informed in a timely manner of City business or activities, resulting in better-informed Councilmembers who will be able to contribute ideas, voice opinions, or make timely and proper decisions. In accordance with [Local Government Code Section 22.042](#), the Mayor shall give to the Council any information on a timely basis and shall recommend to the Council any measure that relates to improving the finances, police, health, security, cleanliness, and comfort of the City.

B. Mayoral Responsibilities

1. The Mayor shall be the presiding officer at Council meetings.
2. The Mayor is the chief executive officer of the City unless absent, at which time the Mayor Pro Tempore may assume the Mayor's duties, including acting as the presiding officer at Council meetings (See [Local Government Code Sections 22.042](#) and [22.037](#)).
3. The Mayor shall have a voice in all matters before the Council, but in accordance with state law, may not vote on any agenda items requiring Council action except elections or in the instance a vote of City Council ends in a tie.
4. The Mayor shall provide the City Council with any information relating to improving the finances, police, health, security, cleanliness, comfort or good government to the City.
5. The Mayor will encourage all Councilmembers to participate in Council discussion and give each Councilmember an opportunity to speak before any Councilmember can speak again on the same subject.
6. The Mayor is responsible for keeping the meetings orderly by recognizing each Councilmember for discussion, promoting reasonable speaking time, encouraging debate among Councilmembers, and keeping discussion germane to the agenda item being considered.
7. The Mayor shall preserve order and decorum and shall require Councilmembers engaged in debate to limit discussion to the matter or question under consideration.
8. Should a conflict arise among Councilmembers, the Mayor shall serve as mediator.
9. The Mayor shall not mandate Department Heads (Chief of Police, Fire Chief, and Public Works Director) or City Manager to relay any correspondence from a Councilmember to the Mayor.

C. Councilmembers' Responsibilities

1. Any Councilmember may request that the City Manager place an item on a Council meeting agenda for discussion or action.
2. Each Councilmember is responsible for being prepared to attend Council meetings and discuss the agenda.

3. Each Councilmember is encouraged to attend at least one Texas Municipal League sponsored conference during their term in order to stay informed on issues facing municipalities.
4. It is the responsibility of Councilmembers to be informed about previous action taken by the Council in their absence. In the case of absence from a workshop session where information is given, the individual Councilmember is responsible for obtaining this information prior to the Council meeting when action on said item is to be voted upon.
5. When addressing an agenda item, the Councilmember shall first be recognized by the Mayor, and confine himself/herself to the question under debate.
6. In the absence of a ruling by the Mayor on any procedural matter, a Councilmember may move to change the order of business or make any other procedural decision deemed appropriate. The affirmative vote of a majority of the Councilmembers present and voting shall be necessary to approve the motion.
7. Any Councilmember may appeal a ruling by the Mayor to the Council as a whole. If the appeal is seconded, the person making the appeal may make a brief statement and the Mayor may explain his/her position. The Mayor will then put the ruling to a vote of the Council. Action by the Council shall be by a majority vote of Councilmembers present and voting.
8. Any Councilmember may ask the Mayor to enforce the rules established by the Council. Should the Mayor fail to do so, a majority vote of the Councilmembers in favor of enforcement shall require him/her to do so.
9. Councilmembers are not required to include the Mayor in any correspondence with any Department Heads or the City Manager.
10. When a Councilmember is appointed to serve as liaison to a board, commission, or committee, the Councilmember is responsible for keeping the City Manager informed of such board, commission or committee activity. When needed, reports by a liaison to the Council shall be at Council meetings.
11. Neither any Councilmember nor the Mayor shall direct the appointment of any person to, or removal from, employment by the City Manager or any of the City Manager's subordinates, or in any manner take part in the appointment or removal of employees of the City, except the City Manager. Neither a Councilmember nor the Mayor shall interfere in the City Manager's recommendation process of the appointment, suspension, or removal of a municipal officer other than Councilmembers and those municipal officers who are appointed by the governing body. Except for the purpose of inquiry, neither the Council nor any Councilmember shall give orders to any subordinates of the City Manager. Nothing in this section interferes with the role of the Mayor to make temporary appointments of municipal officers subject to confirmation by the Council, nor does this section interfere with the role of the Mayor and/or Council to determine the selection process of municipal officers.

D. Code of Conduct for Mayor and Councilmember Relations

1. The Mayor and Councilmembers shall demonstrate respect and courtesy to each other, to the City Manager and Staff members, and to members of the public appearing before the Council.
2. During the Council meetings, Councilmembers shall preserve order and decorum, shall not interrupt or delay proceedings, and shall not refuse to obey the requests of the Mayor or the rules of the Council.
3. The Mayor and Councilmembers will not use their position to secure special privileges and shall avoid situations that create a perception of bias or partiality in regard to a question before the Council.
4. The Mayor and Councilmembers will not condone any unethical or illegal activity. All members of the Council agree to uphold the intent of this policy and govern their actions accordingly.
5. Councilmembers shall endeavor to limit communication with the City Manager to one hour a week. Requests for information should be directed to the City Manager.
6. The Mayor and Councilmembers shall refrain from rude and derogatory remarks and shall not belittle the Mayor or other Councilmembers, the City Manager, Staff members, or members of the public.
7. The Mayor and Councilmembers shall not create a hostile work environment towards employees by verbal, written, or physical presence which disrupts their work environment. If the Mayor or any Councilmember has knowledge of a hostile work environment, he/she will notify the City Manager.

III. CITY MANAGER AND STAFF

No single relationship is as important as that between the Council and the City Manager in effectively governing the City of Castle Hills. It is for this reason that the Council and City Manager must understand their respective roles in that process.

The City Manager is the primary link between the Council and the City's professional Staff. Therefore, Council's relationship with the Staff shall be through the City Manager on issues related to the management or administration of the City. In this manner the citizens are assured that integrity is evidenced in local governance in Castle Hills.

A. City Manager's Responsibilities

1. The City Manager is directly responsible for providing information to the Mayor and all Councilmembers concerning any inquiries by a specific Councilmember. Any information the City Manager deems appropriate or necessary shall be relayed to the Mayor and all Councilmembers. With the exception of Public Information Act requests, requested information shall be shared with the entire Council. Staff is committed to providing a timely response to a request for information and elected officials are expected to respect the time it may take for staff to provide requested information given current workload.

2. The City Manager, within fifteen (15) days of an election or appointment of a Councilmember, will make certain that the City Secretary (a) has prepared and delivered to new Councilmembers copies of (1) this Policy and Code of Ethics, (2) minutes of the last three meetings of the City Council, and (3) lists of names and contact information for the members of each City Board, Commission, or Committee appointed by the City Council and (b) has informed new Councilmembers of any required Open Meetings Act or Public Information Act training and any Texas Municipal League conferences and seminars available for new Councilmembers.
3. The City Manager is responsible for the professional and ethical behavior of himself/herself and the discipline of his/her Staff in any matter related to unprofessional or unethical behavior.
4. The City Manager is responsible for ensuring that the Staff receives the education or information necessary to address the issues facing municipal government.
5. The City Manager will also be responsible for meeting personally with new Councilmembers and informing them about City facilities and procedures within thirty (30) days of an election.
6. The City Manager serves as the purchasing agent for the City and supervises the purchase of all material and equipment for which funds are provided in the budget and lets contracts necessary for operation or maintenance of the city services for amounts approved by the Council.
7. If the City Manager is temporarily absent, he/she shall appoint a designee until his/her return. If the City Manager is otherwise absent or disabled, the Council shall designate a properly qualified person to perform the duties of the office of City Manager or may appoint an Interim City Manager.
8. The City Manager or designee will provide monthly updates to the City Council summarizing events/items concerning, involving, or about the City or with specific department and services.

B. Code of Conduct for Council, City Manager, and Staff Relations

1. In order to ensure presentation of agenda items by the City Manager and Staff, questions arising from Councilmembers after receiving their information packet should, whenever possible, be presented to the City Manager for Staff consideration prior to the Council meeting. This allows City Manager and Staff time to address the Councilmember's concern and provide all Councilmembers with additional information.
2. The City Manager shall designate himself/herself or the appropriate Staff member to address each agenda item and shall see that each presentation is prepared and presented in order to inform and educate the Council on the issues that require Council action.
3. The presentation shall be professional, timely, and allow for discussion of options for resolving the issue.

4. The City Manager or Staff member making the presentation shall (a) make it clear that no Council action is required, (b) present the Staff recommendation, or (c) present the specific options for Council consideration.
5. The City Manager and all Staff members shall show each other, the Mayor, each Councilmember, and the public respect and courtesy at all times. They are also responsible for making objective, professional presentations to ensure public confidence in the process.
6. When asked to respond to a question in their professional opinion, the City Manager or Staff member may respond without fear of repercussions, retaliation, or disciplinary action.
7. The Mayor and the City Manager will address any conflicts arising between the Staff and the Council or any individual Councilmember.

IV. MAYOR AND COUNCIL CODE OF ETHICS

The office of an elected official is one of trust and service to the citizens of Castle Hills. This position creates a special responsibility for the Mayor and each Councilmember. In response to this unique challenge, the Mayor and Council are expected to govern this City in a manner associated with commitment to the preservation of the values and integrity of representative local government and local democracy and dedication to the promotion of efficient and effective governing.

To further these objectives, certain ethical principles shall govern the conduct of the Mayor and each Councilmember who shall adhere to the following:

1. Dedicate themselves to the highest ideals of honor and integrity in all public and personal relationships in order that the member may merit the respect and confidence of the citizens of Castle Hills.
2. Recognize the chief function of local government at all times is to serve the best interest of all the citizens of Castle Hills.
3. Be dedicated to public service by being cooperative and constructive, and by making the best and most efficient use of available resources.
4. Recognize that public and political policy decisions based on established values are ultimately the responsibility of the City Council.
5. Conduct business in open, well-publicized meetings in order to be directly accountable to the citizens of Castle Hills. It is recognized that certain exceptions are made by the Open Meetings Act for executive sessions but that no action may be taken in an executive session. Any action as a result of that type of meeting will be handled and taken later in the open session.
6. Comply with the requirements of [Chapter 171 of the Local Government Code](#) as to not participate in discussion or action on an agenda item and timely filing an affidavit of recusal when necessary under Chapter 171.

7. Not seek or accept gifts or favors in exchange for official conduct; not utilize their official position for personal gain; not use confidential information for personal gain; and not misuse public funds or public property.
8. Avoid the undesirable influences of family relationships or close relatives of the Councilmembers, the appearance of preferential treatment related to family relationships or close relatives, and any interference with the proper administration of the affairs of the City of Castle Hills. For purposes of this section, close relatives are persons within the second degree by affinity or third degree by consanguinity.
9. Adhere to Nepotism Laws. Nepotism is the showing of favoritism toward a relative. The City forbids the practice of nepotism in hiring personnel or awarding contracts in accordance with state law. No person related within the second degree by affinity or third degree by consanguinity to the Mayor or any Councilmember or the City Manager or to any employee who would supervise his or her job performances either directly or indirectly shall be appointed to any paid office or position of the city. Exception: This prohibition shall not apply to any person who shall have been employed by the city for two (2) or more years prior to and at the time of election of the Mayor, or Councilmembers or the appointment of the City Manager so related to him or her. In following City policies as to nepotism, the following definitions apply:
 - (a) A close relative is defined as a person who is related within the second degree of affinity or the third degree of consanguinity.
 - (b) The term spouse shall mean persons who are living together in conjugal relationship, whether legally married or not, and such persons shall be considered a spouse for the purposes of determining by affinity.
10. A Councilmember shall not intentionally or knowingly disclose any confidential information gained by reason of said official position concerning the property, operations, policies or affairs of the city. This rule does not prohibit:
 - (a) Any disclosure that is no longer confidential by law; or
 - (b) The confidential reporting of illegal or unethical conduct to authorities designated by law.
11. Any sustained violation of the Code of Conduct by any Councilmember(s) are grounds for censure by the City Council.

V. CITY COUNCIL MEETING INFORMATION

This section will explain components of meetings, agendas, presentations, minutes, parliamentary procedure, maintaining order and citizen participation. There are three (3) basic types of meetings: a regular meeting, a special (or called) meeting, and a workshop. All meetings are restricted to consideration of items posted on their agendas by the City Manager, Staff or Councilmember. Unless items are posted on the agenda, there can be no action or discussion. For City Council to convene a meeting, proper posting of the date, hour, place, and subject of the meeting is required for all meetings. All Meetings require minutes to be taken. All Meetings are open to the Public except for Executive Session items. Meetings require a quorum of City Councilmembers to convene.

- A. *Regular Meetings.* At this time, regular meetings of the Council are held on the second (2nd) Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at 209 Lemonwood, Castle Hills, Texas. This is the monthly meeting at which most of Council activities transpire. Three members of the City Council (not including the Mayor) must be present to constitute a quorum to conduct business at a regular meeting. However, at a regular meeting to consider the imposition of taxes or at a special /called meeting, two-thirds or four members of the Council (not including the Mayor) are required to constitute a quorum. If a quorum is not present, the Mayor or presiding officer in the absence of the Mayor may wait a reasonable amount of time to see if enough members of the Council arrive to establish a quorum. A meeting may not be convened in the absence of a quorum.
- B. *Special Meetings.* Special meetings are subject to call by the Mayor, the City Manager, or the application of three (3) Councilmembers. The purpose of such meetings is generally to discuss or act upon matters that cannot be delayed until a regular meeting. Quorum for special meetings is four (4) Councilmembers (not including the Mayor). (See [Sections 22.038](#) and [22.039](#) of the Local Government Code).
- C. *Workshops.* Workshops are under the guidelines for a special meeting. They can be held at any time or any place within the city limits of the City of Castle Hills with proper posting and notification. The Council may hear reports and deliberate on items listed on the agenda. No action items shall be placed on the Agenda for a Workshop meeting and no action will be taken at a Workshop meeting.
- D. *Public Hearings.* The purpose of a public hearing is to allow citizens and interested persons to present information and opinions on both sides of an issue. Some public hearings are required by state law, such as [Chapter 102 of the Local Government Code](#) which requires a public hearing on the city budget prior to its adoption, and [Chapter 211 of the Local Government Code](#) which requires public hearings on certain zoning matters. Other public hearings may be scheduled and conducted by the City Council to obtain a full range of citizen opinion on important matters.
- E. *Emergency Items.* If permitted under the Open Meetings Act, emergency special meetings or emergency agenda items must be posted at least one (1) hour in advance of the meeting. Emergency meetings or items are extremely rare. Please consult the City Manager, City Attorney, or City Secretary regarding which items qualify.
- F. *Open Meetings Act.* Pursuant to [Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code](#) (the Open Meetings Act) NO ACTION CAN BE TAKEN ON ANY ITEM UNLESS THAT ITEM HAS BEEN POSTED ON THE AGENDA FOR THAT MEETING AS AN ITEM ON WHICH ACTION OR POSSIBLE ACTION MAY BE TAKEN AND THE AGENDA HAS BEEN POSTED AT CITY HALL AT LEAST SEVENTY-TWO (72) HOURS PRIOR TO THE MEETING.

VI. PREPARATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE AGENDA

A. *Selection of Agenda Items*

The Mayor and/or City Manager will exercise their best judgment in determining the most important items received for placement on the agenda and adding other items of business to come before the Council. An item not appearing on the agenda shall not be taken up for

discussion as a matter of Council business during any Council meeting. However, the Council may receive items as information relevant to City business.

B. Submission of Agenda Items

1. Any member of the Staff wishing to have an item placed on the agenda shall submit that item to the City Manager's office, through regular supervisory channels, for approval. The City Manager may establish procedures for submission of routine items without his or her approval.
2. The City Manager shall cause the City Secretary to prepare the agenda for the Mayor's review and approval.
3. Consent Agenda. The following matters may be placed on the Consent Agenda: minutes; contracts or expenditures requiring Council approval that are within the budget; contracts city staff was authorized to negotiate and bring back for approval; plat approvals where variances are not accepted; acceptance of subdivision infrastructure; and other similar routine, administrative matters that do not require deliberation. Items on the Consent Agenda may be approved with a single motion and vote; provided that any Councilmember may request that an item be pulled from the Consent Agenda for discussion.
4. A Councilmember that wishes to place an item on an agenda must submit the agenda item and the background material described in Item 5 below to the City Manager's Office by 5:00 p.m. ten (10) calendar days prior to the regular meeting. The Mayor may consult with a Councilmember about placement of an agenda item on a later meeting. All items submitted by the deadline will appear on the agenda for the meeting unless the Councilmember agrees to delay the agenda item to a later meeting. A Councilmember shall strive to provide supportive reasoning before the City Council meeting for proposed agenda item to preserve the resources of City staff. A Councilmember shall work with the City Manager, if necessary, to draft a reasonable understanding of the submitted agenda item. The Mayor may waive the deadline for agenda items that are time sensitive.
5. The Councilmember shall provide the City Manager with materials providing background information on the agenda item that consists of, at a minimum, a written explanation about the purpose of the agenda item and any additional relevant information or documents. The City Secretary will assist with preparing the Executive Summary based on the Councilmember's written explanation for the Councilmember's review and approval.
6. The Councilmember-requested agenda items will be identified as "Council Directive" in the Executive Summary.
7. Items requested by Councilmembers will be placed at the end of the agenda.

C. Distribution of the Agenda

Agenda packets for regular meetings will be distributed electronically to Councilmembers or placed at police dispatch for collection on the Friday evening before a regular meeting, when feasible. Agenda packets for special meetings will be distributed electronically at least seventy-two (72) hours before the special meeting. This is to afford ample time for the Mayor and Councilmembers to inquire into the nature of each matter to be discussed and to

personally investigate the matter so as to better inform himself or herself before a Council meeting. Councilmembers are encouraged to call the City Manager or Mayor regarding any questions about items on the agenda or any other matters that concern the City. Councilmembers are cautioned about engaging in discussions of City business with other Councilmembers. While one Councilmember may talk to one other Councilmember, any discussion that covers City business that could be interpreted as an action to circumvent the Open Meetings Act could result in charges being brought against the Councilmember(s) involved for violating the provisions of the Open Meetings Act, particularly if either one of those Councilmembers then discusses the same item with a third Councilmember.

VII. COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

These procedures shall apply to all meetings of the City Council. The Mayor shall be the presiding officer at all meetings of the City Council and have a voice in all of its proceedings, but the Mayor shall have no vote except in elections or in the event of a tie vote by the council in accordance with state law. Councilmembers shall speak in Council meetings upon being recognized by the presiding officer except in the instance of a point of order, which recognition shall not be unreasonably withheld. In the event of the absence of the Mayor, the Mayor Pro Tempore shall be the presiding officer. The Mayor Pro Tempore is permitted to vote in all matters as the Mayor Pro Tempore continues to be a Councilmember even when presiding. In the event of the absence of the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore, the Councilmembers in attendance, if constituting a quorum, shall select one of the Councilmembers to preside over that meeting. In any case, the presiding officer shall have the same duties and responsibilities as the Mayor during the Council meeting. Mayor and Councilmembers shall refrain from private conversations with one another during Council meetings.

- A. *Call to Order.* All meetings will begin promptly at the time stated. A quorum must be present to convene the meeting.
- B. *Agenda.* The Mayor or other presiding officer will follow the agenda as posted; however, the presiding officer shall have, subject to the approval of the council, the prerogative of addressing items out of order should such change facilitate guests or other factors.
- C. *Presentation of Agenda Items.* Agenda items scheduled by the City Manager will be presented by the City Manager or the City Manager may call on a staff member to present the item. Staff members may attend council meetings and be available as resource persons; however, they are not to speak on City issues unless directed by the City Manager, Mayor or the City Council.
- D. *Presentations from the Floor*
 - 1. All guests and other persons who are to speak to the City Council, including Staff Members, other than the City Manager, City Attorney, or City Secretary, shall wait in the audience until recognized by the Mayor or presiding officer. When called by the Mayor or presiding officer for an opportunity to be heard, the recognized person shall move immediately to the podium and make their comments.
 - 2. The speaker shall identify herself or himself by name and address and the agency represented, if any. The speaker shall remain at the podium until all Council questions have been answered and the Mayor or presiding officer has dismissed the speaker. Speaking from the podium will assure that the recording equipment picks up the presentation.

E. *Council Action.*

1. After the Council has heard all of the facts, reviewed the supporting data and listened to the arguments for and against each agenda item, it will act by approving or disapproving a motion. In the event that there is no motion or no second to a motion, no action will be deemed taken. Although Robert's Rules of Order would require a motion to act prior to any discussion of any item on the agenda, this policy permits introduction of an item and discussion prior to making a motion for action.
2. The City Council may act by adoption of a resolution, adoption of an ordinance, or passage of a motion. A resolution is an expression of the will of the Council. The resolution may be written to honor some person, to recognize an event, to ask the city administration to look into a matter, perform a task, to execute a contract, or to fulfill some other desire of the Council. An ordinance is a law or regulation. The Council adopts an ordinance to set traffic regulations, to establish zoning or land use regulations, to set the tax rate, to amend a prior ordinance, etc. Both ordinances and resolutions require the presentation of the item on the agenda, a motion and a second to the motion, and an affirmative vote of three Councilmembers (except when only three Councilmembers are present and voting or when state law requires a vote by more than a simple majority of the Council).
3. There is no prohibition against a Councilmember making a motion and then voting against his or her own motion. A person may be opposed to an action and want a motion on the floor so they can register the opposing vote.

VIII. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

- A. The City Secretary or the City Secretary's designee will keep minutes of all meetings. The Secretary will record the proceedings and the audios (and videos, if any) will be kept in accordance with state and local retention requirements unless issues arise that require longer retention.
- B. The minutes will record the presence of each Councilmember, City Staff Member, and persons who spoke on record. The minutes will include all areas of discussion and identify each speaker and may include a brief summary of their comments. The minutes will not necessarily be a verbatim recording of all discussions. The minutes will reflect all motions made and identify the persons who made and seconded each motion. The minutes will include the text of all motions made and seconded. The result of each motion, including, a roll call vote if required or requested, will be included in the minutes. The minutes will include a brief summary of the subject and matters discussed by Council.
- C. Each agenda item may be identified in the minutes by sub-headings to facilitate review by the Mayor and Councilmembers. It is important that the minutes include the name of any person who addressed the Council as well as the specific subject or request presented.
- D. The minutes should not include verbatim discussion and copies of statements, or any extraneous discussions. Any Councilmember who desires to have a verbatim statement included as a part of the minutes shall provide a typed copy of such verbatim statement to the City Secretary prior to the presentation of such statement.
- E. Copies of the minutes will be included in the agenda packet distributed to the Council prior to the meeting at which they are to be considered for adoption. Minutes may be amended should

a Councilmember recognize an incorrect statement and then approved by the City Council, which amendment may be made when acting on the Consent Agenda item. The minutes are a record of the council proceedings and should be consistent with a tape or other recording of the meeting.

IX. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

- A. *Robert's Rules of Order.* In regular and special meetings, the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order will be followed as far as is feasible and consistent with the Open Meetings Act. Generally, the City Attorney will be the Parliamentarian for Council meetings.
- B. *Calling for the Question.* Any Councilmember may call for the question on any issue, and upon seconding by another Councilmember; the issue to call for the question shall immediately be put to vote. Passage of the motion to address the previous question shall terminate debate on the motion, amendment or item under discussion, and action shall be taken on that item immediately, and the chair shall then move to the next item.
- C. *Limiting Debate.* The Council may agree to limit debate on any business before it. That agreement should be formalized by a majority of the Council on a roll call vote prior to any deliberation on that item.
- D. *Roll Call Vote.* Any Councilmember may request a roll call vote at any time.

X. DECORUM AND DEBATE

- A. *Order.* It is imperative that the presiding officer maintains order at all times. The presiding officer must not permit debate or comments from any Councilmember who has not been recognized. Interruptions must be silenced by voice, use of the gavel or other means and, in the event of any person's failure to heed the directions of the presiding officer, the officer may have that individual removed from the room.
- B. *Recognizing the Speaker.* When a measure is presented to the Council for consideration, the presiding officer shall recognize the appropriate individual to present the case. When two or more Councilmembers wish to speak, the presiding officer shall name the Councilmember who is to speak first and direct that the other shall speak next. No Councilmember shall speak first and may direct that the other shall speak next. No Councilmember shall interrupt another who is speaking except to make a point of order or to make a point of personal privilege.
- C. *Overriding a Decision.* In accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, the majority of the Council may override any decision of the presiding officer regarding the conduct and handling of the Council meeting. In order for a decision of the presiding officer to be overruled, there must be a motion, a second and a vote by the majority of Council overruling the decision of the presiding officer.
- D. *Personal Attacks.* No member of the public or Councilmember shall be permitted to indulge in personalities, use language that may be considered personally offensive, question motives of other members, charge deliberate misrepresentation, or use language tending to hold another Councilmember or the public up to contempt.

XI. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AT MEETINGS

- A. *Registration.* All citizens wishing to speak at any regular or special Council meeting will be asked to sign the register provided and indicate the agenda item that they wish to address. Ordinarily, one who wishes to address an agenda item will be invited to speak when the agenda item comes up for discussion. One who wishes to address a subject not on the agenda will have an opportunity to speak during the citizen comments agenda item. Citizen comments are limited to three minutes, except that persons using an interpreter shall be limited to six minutes. The Mayor or a Councilmember may make a motion to grant additional time for a citizen to continue speaking, and if such motion is seconded and approved by a majority vote of the Councilmembers, additional time may be granted.
- B. *Comments on Agenda Items.* To maintain decorum, the Mayor or presiding officer, at all meetings, may ask the citizens present if they wish to speak for or against any item on the agenda. If so, they will be given an opportunity to do so at the proper time, when recognized by the presiding officer. No citizen may speak nor otherwise interrupt any meeting until recognized by the presiding officer.
- C. *General Comments.* Citizens who wish to bring up a matter not on the agenda may do so, but only under the citizen comments agenda item. Council is prohibited from discussing or acting on any item that has not been posted on the agenda, except possibly putting an item on a future agenda, but the Mayor, the presiding officer, or the City Manager may provide specific factual information or recite existing policy as to the matter raised.
- D. *Fire Safety.* Citizens are welcome and invited to attend Council meetings. However, the number admitted shall be limited to the fire safety capacity of the Council Chambers.

XII. REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA FORMAT

The agenda for regular and special meetings of the City of Castle Hills shall be divided into the following types of business:

- A. *Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.* The Mayor or presiding officer shall designate a person to lead the City Council and audience in the invocation and pledge.
- B. *Public Comments Period.* The Open Meetings Act does not entitle the public to choose the items to be placed on an agenda or discussed. The Council shall, however, give members of the public an opportunity to speak at a public meeting, but it may set reasonable limits on the number, frequency, and length of presentations before it, so long as such reasonable limits do not unfairly discriminate among speakers for or against a particular point of view in adherence with [Section 551.007 of the Government Code](#).

The Mayor or presiding officer will preserve order and decorum, preventing the impugning of any member's motives or other personal comment not relevant to the orderly conduct of business. The Mayor or presiding officer may request, and restate as appropriate, that all speakers keep comments brief and relevant to the question before the council. All visitors shall refrain from abusive, rude, or inappropriate conduct. See [Section 42.05 of the Penal Code](#) regarding the "hindering" or "disrupting" of official proceedings.

- C. *Presentations.* The Mayor or presiding officer will recognize individuals, groups, firms, etc. for meritorious service to the citizens of Castle Hills and short presentations requiring no Council action may be made to the Council regarding any issue of interest to the citizens of Castle Hills.
- D. *Consent Agenda.* The Consent Agenda contains routine items which do not need further discussion and may be approved with one motion and vote. The following explanatory note to the public may precede the consent agenda portion of the printed agenda:

“The Consent Agenda items are self-explanatory by the City Council or have been previously discussed and will be enacted with one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Councilmember so requests. The Consent Agenda is for consideration by the City Council only.”

The City Council and City Manager agree in advance on the general type of items that are to be included on the consent agenda. Routine business found on Consent Agendas will include:

1. Minutes
2. Monthly Financial Reports
3. Other Items already seen or approved by the City Council in past meetings.

When the Consent Agenda is used, the City Secretary is to ensure that such Consent Agenda items are incorporated into the minutes of the Council Meeting.

- E. *Board and Commission Appointments* – In accordance with applicable City Ordinances, the Council will vote to appoint, re-appoint, or remove members of the following City Boards, Commissions and Committees:
1. Architectural Review Committee
 2. Board of Adjustment
 3. Crime Control and Prevention District
 4. Economic Development Committee
 5. Parks and Projects Commission
 6. Zoning Commission
- F. *Public Hearings.* Staff may provide introduction of the agenda item and any background information that needs to be presented. The Mayor or presiding officer will open the public hearing for persons who wish to speak during the public hearing. The Mayor or presiding officer will declare public hearing closed once all persons who timely requested to speak during the public hearing have spoken.
- G. *Action Items.* Any agenda item requiring a Council vote, including but not limited to, the following items:
1. Ordinances
 2. Resolutions
 3. Budgets and Amendments
 4. Minute Orders
 5. All other municipal actions requiring Council approval except for bids, contracts and purchases.

- H. *Purchases/Bids and Contracts.* Any purchase, bid, or municipal contract/contract amendment will be done in accordance with state law and will require Council action.
- I. *Discussion Items.* Any items of interest to the citizens of Castle Hills that may require future Council action will be placed here so Councilmembers can discuss the issue before action is taken or ascertain if any future action is to be taken.
- J. *Executive Session.* Executive sessions may only be held regarding specific items as permitted by the Open Meetings Act. Discussions may be held in open session or closed session; however, action can only be taken in open session after the meeting is reopened to the public.
- K. *Reconsideration Of Matters.* In order for an action to be reconsidered, a Councilmember may request reconsideration by submitting a request for reconsideration to the City Manager's Office no later than 5:00 p.m. ten (10) calendar days after the Council Meeting in which a vote was taken on the item. A request to reconsider an item can only be sponsored by a Council Member who voted with the prevailing side. A motion to reconsider any action of the Council shall be placed on the agenda for the next succeeding Council Meeting following the reconsideration submission to the City Manager's Office for which proper notice can be given under the Open Meetings Act. Any motion for reconsideration must be made at such meeting. Such motion can only be made by a member who voted with the prevailing side but the motion can be seconded by any member. No question shall be twice reconsidered, except by unanimous consent of the Council.

XIII. ORDINANCES AND PUBLICATION OF ORDINANCES

- A. The City Council may adopt, publish, amend, or repeal an ordinance, resolution, rule, or regulation that:
 - 1. is for the good government, peace, and order of the municipality or for the trade and commerce of the municipality; and
 - 2. is necessary or proper for carrying out a power granted by law to the municipality or to an office or department of the municipality. ([Texas Local Government Code § 51.001](#))
- B. The City Council may adopt an ordinance, act, law, or regulation, not inconsistent with state law, that is necessary for the government, interest, welfare, or good order of the municipality as a body politic. ([Texas Local Government Code § 51.012](#))
- C. Upon the adoption of any ordinance that imposes a penalty, fine, or forfeiture, the City Secretary shall publish the ordinance, or a caption that summarizes the purpose of the ordinance and the penalty for violating the ordinance in every issue of the official newspaper for two (2) days; or one issue of the newspaper if the official newspaper is a weekly paper. ([Texas Local Government Code § 52.011](#))
- D. An affidavit by the printer or publisher of the official newspaper verifying the publication shall be filed in the Office of the City Secretary. ([Texas Local Government Code § 52.011](#))
- E. An ordinance required to be published by law takes effect when the publication requirement is satisfied unless the ordinance provides otherwise. An ordinance that is not required by law to be published takes effect when adopted unless the ordinance provides otherwise. ([Texas Local Government Code 52.011](#))

XIV. COUNCIL ELECTIONS

A. General Elections

1. Elections for municipal officers shall be held annually on a uniform election date and in accordance with the Texas Election Code, Annotated. ([Texas Local Government Code Section 22.003](#)) ([Texas Election Code Chapter 41](#))
2. Councilmembers shall be elected by a place system and shall be designated as Mayor, Councilmember Place One, Councilmember Place Two, Councilmember Place Three, Councilmember Place Four and Councilmember Place Five. ([Texas Local Government Code Section 21.001](#))
3. The Mayor and Councilmembers shall hold two-year staggered terms of office. The Mayor and Councilmember Place Two and Councilmember Place Three shall be elected in odd numbered years; and Councilmember Place One, Councilmember Place Four and Councilmember Place Five shall be elected in even numbered years.
4. Elected officials are allowed to exercise the duties of office no sooner than the fifth day after the election, excluding Sunday, after taking the oath of office, and signing the required statements. The oath of office is to be given in accordance with [Texas Constitution Article XVI, Section 1](#), [Texas Government Code Section 602.002](#), and [Texas Local Government Code Section 22.042](#).
5. Election results must be canvassed in a timely manner in accordance with the Texas Election Code. The quorum for a meeting to canvass election results is two (2), not counting the Mayor.
6. Elected officials must be sworn in within thirty (30) days after the date of the officer's election. If the elected official fails to qualify for office by taking the oath of office within thirty (30) days of the date of the officer's election, the office is considered vacant as per [Texas Local Government Code Section 22.007](#).

B. Election Procedure for the Mayor Pro Tempore

1. The Council will discuss, and by a majority vote, elect a Councilmember to serve as the Mayor Pro Tempore for the City.
2. The elected Mayor Pro Tempore must be a Councilmember.
3. Term dates for the Mayor Pro Tempore position will begin on the later of June 1 of each year or the date of the election of a new Mayor Pro Tempore. Unless the City Council votes otherwise, the role of Mayor Pro Tempore will sequentially rotate according to Councilmember place, beginning with Councilmember Place 1, then Place 2, etc.
4. If the Councilmember place that is up for appointment as Mayor Pro Tempore is vacant, or if the person holding such place declines to be elected as Mayor Pro Tempore, the appointment will go to the next Councilmember in the rotation.

5. The position will have a term of office until a new Mayor Pro Tempore is elected.
6. In accordance with Texas Local Government Code, Council may vote to alter this procedure at any time and elect any Councilmember to the position of Mayor Pro Tempore.

XV. COMPENSATION

Councilmembers shall not be compensated for their service on the City Council. Each City official shall be reimbursed for his/her actual expenses incurred, or reasonably expected to be incurred, while engaging in activities for or on behalf of the City and based on vouchers, receipts, statements or other evidence satisfactory to the City Secretary.

XVI. COUNCIL TRAVEL POLICY

- A. *Approved Travel.* The City will reimburse the Mayor and Councilmembers for reasonable business travel expenses incurred while on assignments away from normal work location. The Mayor must approve all business travel in advance.
- B. *Arrangements and Reimbursements.* Councilmembers with approved travel are responsible for their own travel arrangements. Expenses are expected to be limited to reasonable amounts. Expenses that generally will be reimbursed are:
 1. Air or train fare for travel in coach or economy class or the lowest available fare.
 2. Car rental fees.
 3. Fares for shuttle or airport bus service, or other public ground travel.
 4. Taxi or rideshare fares.
 5. Mileage costs for use of personal cars.
 6. Meals reimbursed with receipts.

Expenses which are not permitted under the terms of grants, contracts, or agreements with other agencies will not be charged as costs to those grants, contracts or agreements.
- C. *Accidents.* Councilmembers who are involved in an accident while traveling on business must promptly report the incident to the City Manager or City Secretary. Vehicles owned, leased or rented by the City of Castle Hills may not be used for personal use without approval of the Mayor.
- D. *Family and Friends of Councilmembers.* A family member or friend may accompany Councilmembers on business travel, when the presence of a companion will not interfere with successful completion of business objectives. Generally, Councilmembers are also permitted to combine personal travel and business travel. Additional expenses arising from such non-business travel are the responsibility of the Councilmember. Costs incurred by personnel other than Councilmembers will not be reimbursed.
- E. *Travel Advance.* Travel advance may be paid when business travel expenses are expected to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00). When travel is completed, City officials shall submit travel expense reports to the City Secretary on the appropriate forms within fifteen (15) days. If the travel advance is not fully expended for eligible travel related costs for which receipts or other documentation acceptable to the City Secretary, then the portion of the travel advance for which no receipts or other documentation acceptable to the City Secretary have been provided

shall be repaid to the City within fifteen (15) days of request by the City Secretary. City officials should contact the City Secretary for guidance and assistance on procedures related to travel arrangements, expense reports, reimbursement for specific expenses or any other travel arrangements.

F. *Vehicle Use*

1. Rental Vehicles. In cases where a rental car is used, Councilmembers do not need the optional insurance coverage; the City's auto liability coverage (Texas Municipal League Intergovernmental Risk Pool) will suffice. Councilmembers personal auto insurance will pay for damage to auto unless the city official obtains (purchases) the collision damage waiver.
2. Personal Vehicles. Where use of a personal vehicle is judged to be the most reasonable means of transportation in the conduct of official city business, reimbursement will be at the current IRS mileage rate.
3. City Vehicles. City Officials who travel in a city-owned vehicle may be reimbursed for the actual cost of fuel, oil or other expenses related to the safe operation of the vehicle (with actual receipts).

- G. *Conference Registration*. Conference registration checks will be made out only to the organization sponsoring the conference.

XVII. COUNCIL ACCESS TO CITY COMPUTERS

With the exception of a City-issued smart phone and/or tablet (if any), no Councilmember shall access a City computer or the City computer system without express approval of the Mayor or City Council, authorizing the access for specific Council actions. All requests to review specific materials should be reviewed by the City Attorney.

XVIII. COUNCIL E-MAIL

Each Councilmember shall be assigned a City e-mail address. Access for City e-mail shall be in the City Secretary's office or by a City-issued or personally-provided device. Each Councilmember is a temporary custodian of public information created or received by that Councilmember. Each Councilmember will surrender to the City within ten (10) days of request any public information in the possession of the Councilmember, even if on a personal device. See [Texas Government Code Section 552.233](#).

XIX. CITY-ISSUED EQUIPMENT

Any City equipment issued to the Mayor or any Councilmember shall be returned immediately to the City Secretary upon vacating their position. Any equipment issued to the Mayor or Councilmember shall be used for official use only. Any violation of this policy will result in denial of privilege to use City equipment.

XX. ANNUAL REVIEW OF POLICY

The City of Castle Hills should review The Council Relations Policy in December each year to determine if any amendments are needed.