



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF COURTENAY

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS

PREAMBLE

The purpose of the code of conduct is as follows:

- To provide guidance to Council and City staff to ensure that everyone is accorded reasonable and fair treatment;
- To assist Council members in avoiding potential problems relating to role clarity and behaviour;
- To preserve the integrity of the Council and City staff;
- To protect the individual rights of Council members and City staff as normal citizens.

PRIMARY FOCUS

Both Council and City staff recognize that their allegiance and loyalties are to the community as a whole and not to any individual (s), group (s), or association (s).

RELATIONSHIP TO COUNCIL MEMBERS AND/OR CITY STAFF

Each Council member will ensure that their behaviour prior to, during, or following a meeting or hearing, towards other Council members, members of City staff, and members of the public is at all times:

- courteous, professional, fair and unbiased;
- contributes to the preservation of orderly decorum;
- avoids sarcasm, derogatory comments or questions designed to embarrass;
- respectful of the rulings of Council as a whole;
- in conformance with any applicable City Respectful Workplace policies.

FAIR TREATMENT

Each Council member has a responsibility to ensure that all persons are:

- treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion, age, disability, occupation, or sexual orientation;
- dealt with in good faith;
- dealt with without bias and in a respectful manner;
- given an adequate opportunity to state their opinion.

As Chairperson of Council meetings and Public Hearings, the Chairperson should not tolerate:

- discourtesy by one person to another;
- rudeness to members of staff or the public;
- disruptive behaviour.

AUTHORITIES AND POWERS

Each member of Council will respect the legislation which accords to Council as a whole the authority to make decisions which guide the action of the administration. This authority is vested in Council when it is convened as a body at a duly constituted meeting.

Council members will therefore refrain from attempting to guide or influence individual members of staff.

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Council members will direct their requests for information or action to the office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or to the appropriate department head. If the matter is subject to a current Council policy, the administration will respond as quickly as possible in filling the request. If the request is not covered by a current policy or Council resolution, it will be forwarded to the CAO who will place the matter before Council to receive its direction.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Neither Council members nor members of the administration will act in such a way as to constitute a conflict of interest. In this, as in all matters, applicable legislation will prevail.

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS

A council member must not, directly or indirectly, accept a fee, gift or personal benefit that is connected with the member's performance of the duties of office, other than a gift or personal benefit that is received as an incident of the protocol or social obligations that normally accompany the responsibilities of office, or compensation authorized by law.

If a council member receives a lawful gift or personal benefit that exceeds \$250 in value, or the total value of such gifts and benefits, received directly or indirectly from one source in

any 12 month period, exceeds \$250, the Council member must file with the Corporate Officer, as soon as reasonably practicable, a disclosure statement indicating

- the nature of the gift or benefit;
- its source, including, if it is from a corporation, the full names and addresses of at least two individuals who are directors of the corporation;
- when it was received, and
- the circumstances under which it was given and accepted.

CONFIDENTIALITY

A council member or former Council member must, unless specifically authorized otherwise by council

- keep in confidence any record held in confidence by the municipality, until the record is released to the public as lawfully authorized or required; and
- keep in confidence information considered in any part of a Council meeting or Council Committee meeting that was lawfully closed to the public, until the Council or Committee discusses the information at a meeting that is open to the public or releases the information to the public.

ADHERENCE TO THE CODE, ACTS AND COUNCIL PROCEDURES

Each Council member will:

- adhere to all aspects of this Code of Conduct;
- adhere to the requirements of local government legislation; and
- adhere to the requirements of Council policies and resolutions.

If a Council member has a concern regarding a potential breach of the Code of Conduct, the issue should be raised at the next available Council meeting. Potential breaches of the Code of Conduct may be considered in-camera if Council so resolves provided that the subject matter relates to those matters listed in section 90 of the *Community Charter*.

COUNCIL SPOKESPERSON

The official decisions of Council will be conveyed to the public and all others by way of Council resolutions, bylaws and policies. These decisions will be conveyed by the Mayor (or his/her designate), or through the office of the Director of Legislative and Corporate Services, to the media as directed by the official Council decision or the CAO.

Any comments regarding Council positions by any other member of Council which are not consistent with the official position of Council should be prefaced as personal opinion only.

PUBLIC STATEMENTS

Council members are not restricted in any public statement they choose to make; however as a member of the Council they are expected to:

- support the role of the Council and its administration;
- support the current policies of the Council; and
- support the decisions of the Council as a whole.

Any requests by the media to the administration for comment or information pertaining to a matter within the jurisdiction of the Council and not yet subject to an approved policy or resolution should be immediately referred to the CAO and subsequently to the Mayor or designate.