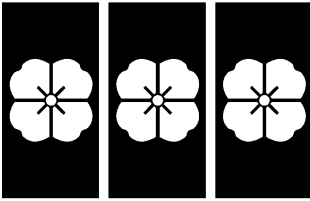

C I T Y O F



MILWAUKIE

Personnel and Administrative Policy and Procedure

SUBJECT: Council Agendas

Effective Date: July 1, 2003; updated April 17, 2008

Purpose

Staff reports to Council shall be prepared in an established format. Reports shall be written for the perspective of the reader and not the writer, with clear and understandable language, complete yet concise.

Policy

The policy is intended to establish groundrules in developing a tradition of quality staff reporting to the Council and community. A quality staff report is accurate, readable, and assists the Council in its research, development of alternatives, and analysis of policy issues. Staff reports serve three primary purposes:

- To inform and assist Council members in their decision making,
- To inform the interested public, and
- To serve as an archival record of Council action taken on a given issue.

Responsibilities

The preparation, publication, and distribution of the Council agenda and agenda items are an ongoing, interconnected activity requiring cooperation and teamwork.

Department heads are responsible for:

- Adhering to the internal agenda procedures including review timelines,
- Adding, deleting, or modifying items on the agenda forecast to realistically reflect departmental timelines and constraints,
- Ensuring other departments have the opportunity to review and comment on agenda items affecting them,
- Authorizing legal review of completed staff work,
- Notifying the city recorder of any advisory boards or interest groups that need to be aware of an agenda item,
- Educating their staff on the agenda procedure and tools available, and
- Processing agenda items in a timely manner as either the originating or reviewing department.

City Attorney ensures legal compliance and is responsible for:

- Reviewing items such as contracts and agreements, resolutions, ordinances, and issues with potential legal or liability impacts after staff completes its research.

City recorder monitors, and coordinates the preparation of the final meeting agendas and material. The recorder is responsible for:

- Posting the annual agenda forecast on the [S:] drive including review dates, submission deadlines, and actions taken,
- Tracking items for future agendas as they proceed toward Council consideration,
- Coordinating, compiling, and updating draft Council agendas with the city manager and department heads,
- Reviewing material submitted for grammar, document formatting, and completeness prior to final city manager consideration,
- Producing and distributing the agenda packet in paper and/or electronic formats to ensure compliance with city and state laws, and
- Providing documents for original signatures at meetings and ensuring appropriate distribution and archiving.

City manager carries out long-range planning with Council and department heads on agenda issues. The city manager is responsible for:

- Identifying those items appropriate for Council consideration and determining which of those may be complex or potentially controversial,
- Ensuring all affected departments have an opportunity to review an issue,
- Providing thorough financial analysis and policy level review of agenda items.

Mayor/Presiding Officer and **city manager** review the agenda prior to the agenda packet distribution to:

- Determine any revisions to the final agenda.

Guidelines

Target Dates in the Process

- 18 days prior to meeting -- Ordinances, contracts, agreements, or other legally binding documents are due in city attorney's office for review. The department/division head must approve this activity.
- 13 days prior to meeting -- Each department transmits its staff reports electronically to the City Recorder by 3 p.m. City recorder drafts agenda, combines the staff reports and transmits these electronically to the agenda review group by the end of that day.
- 8 days prior to meeting -- agenda review by mayor/presiding officer and city manager for final approval of all items submitted.
- 7 days prior to meeting -- agenda distributed.
- Council meeting.

In addition to these dates, each department/division head may establish deadlines for proofreading, editing, establishing concurrence, and final departmental review.

Procedures

Research Requirements

Basic Ground Rules

Those who prepare staff reports are usually selected for their expertise knowledge, and access to information on a specific topic. It is critical for the staff report to reflect these qualities and not the writer's personal bias. Staff reports undergo a lot of scrutiny, so it is important for the writer to do his or her homework and provide accurate information.

Litmus test. If you were the elected official and asked to vote on your recommendation, would you be willing to stake your professional image and political reputation on the research being complete. If the answer is "maybe" or "no", re-do it because it is not complete staff work.

The Complete Staff Report

Council staff reports provide information and generally request some kind of action from the governing body. If essential elements are missing, the staff report can mislead and confuse the policy makers. An ideal report would result in the Council only needing to debate the merits of alternatives -- not digging for facts or asking background questions at the meeting.

For the staff report to be truly valuable, the writer needs to:

- Thoroughly understand the objective and clearly relay it to the reader,
- Communicate with other staff to define the scope of the report since it may impact more than one department,
- Research all the facts, including historical background,
- Craft a logical, informative, and unbiased discussion of the issue,
- Eliminate any typographical errors, poor grammar, or convoluted arguments by having someone proofread the report, and
- Submit the completed report on time.

Strategies

Completed staff work is the study of a problem and presentation of a solution. Comprehensive fact finding by the writer protects the decision-maker from half-formulated ideas and pages of unorganized information.

Do all the homework first. Collect the details, resources, and other supporting materials related to your subject. Do not write the report, and then look for facts to support it. Citizens who are truly concerned about an issue may come to a

Council meeting with an amazing amount of data and overwhelm a poorly researched staff recommendation. It is staff's job to support the policy makers in weighing the facts and making their decisions.

Once you have your facts down, create an outline. Some writers use 3 x 5 cards as a way to organize ideas and key points into a logical sequence. A conversational, logical explanation of a topic can go a long way in helping not only elected officials but also the public in understanding some fairly complex topics. Begin by explaining what action is being requested, introduce the subject, and end with a summary or conclusion.

Always prepare a rough draft of the report. Double-space the paragraphs to allow for handwritten edits without creating a Gordian Knot of lines, arrows, and editing marks. Let someone else read the draft and critique your work.

Most successful staff reports are brief and succinctly convey the facts. Staff reports longer than 2 to 3 pages can be a burden to the reader. Furthermore, the most essential points of the report may be lost in an overabundance of detail and irrelevant comments. Remove unnecessary adjectives and prepositional phrases to shorten sentences and make them more concise.

Eliminate bureaucratic jargon and acronyms. If using an acronym, be sure to explain it by using the full name followed by the acronym in parentheses. For example, "Neighborhood District Association (NDA)." The acronym may then be used in the remainder of the report.

Finally, make sure you tell the reader what type of action is expected. The "action requested" portion of the staff report lets the Council know how to phrase a motion if members decide to do so. Use the subsequent paragraphs to provide the background. The bottom line is: do not bury the recommended course of action in a lot of historical background.

Format, Style, and Content

Format and Style

Logo

Only the City dogwood logo or during 2003 the Centennial logo, is acceptable for staff reports. Those done on departmental letterhead will be returned to the originator.

Type Style

Standard type for the staff report is Arial, font size 12 point.

Language

As a rule, it is preferable to use generic "staff" or "City" labels since staff reports represent an overall position as opposed to a departmental or individual position. Whenever possible, eliminate the use of personal references such as "we", "us", "you", or department name.

Preferred	Avoid
"Staff believes ..."	"We believe that ..."
"Staff recommends ..."	"Public works recommends ..."

Adjectives can add color to a written report but may be perceived as staff editorializing, so use them sparingly. For example, "Staff strongly recommends..." or "The engineer did a yeoman's task preparing this highly complex study..."

Content

The following headings will be used for most staff reports:

- Action Requested
- Introductory Heading
- Summary (if report is over five pages)
- Background
- Concurrence(s)
- Fiscal Impact
- Work load impact
- Alternatives

Introductory Headings

A "Council Staff Report" template, including the graphic for the first page and header for following pages, is accessible to all users in Word by clicking on "file", "new", "City templates." Please note, on the second page of the template, the title of the staff report must be added to the header following the words "*Staff report.*"

The following should be entered:

To: Mayor and City Council

Through: Mike Swanson, City Manager
Name and Title of Department Manager if applicable

From : (Name and title of report writer)

Subject: In most cases, the "Subject" is a brief though clear description of topic. The "subject" will be used on the printed agenda itself. To facilitate future tracking, include reference numbers such as:

- planning application file numbers;
- capital improvement projects; and
- public works project numbers.

Action Requested

The first section is staff's recommendation written in motion-ready language. Council can use the language verbatim to make a clear, concise, and legal motion. For example:

Common Recommendation Formats

Ordinances and Resolutions

- Adopt an ordinance amending Municipal Code Chapter 2.10 -- Boards and Commissions Generally (with a brief explanation of the proposed amendment).
- Adopt a resolution establishing fees for City services to be effective July 1, 2000.

General Bids and Contracts

- Advertising for bids
Authorize staff to advertise for bids (or RFP or RFQ) for (project number and name) as approved in the (fiscal year) budget.
- Awarding contracts
Authorize the City Manager to sign a contract with (contractor name) in the amount of (contract bid amount) for the (project name and number).
- Entering into agreements
Authorize the City Manager (or other designated person) to enter into an agreement with (contractor name) for (type of service) in the amount of (dollar amount of agreement).

Other Types of Recommendations

- Directing to take some action:
Direct staff to prepare a funding request to the Parks District based on Council priorities and consideration of the Park and Recreation Board's proposed projects for fiscal year 1999 – 2000.
- Providing information
This report provides an update on the Neighborhood Grant Program and is for information only.

Reminders

- Do not simply make reference to an attachment in the recommendation paragraph (e.g. "That the City Council approve the attached agreement ..."). This could cause confusion for the Council, the recorder, and the general public who may only see the agenda page.
- If the staff recommendation is different from that of an advisory board, clearly state that in the paragraph.
- If there are multiple recommendations, make the distinctions clear.

Summaries or Reports-in-Brief

Why a summary?

If the staff report is over five pages, excluding attachments, a one paragraph "Summary" section must be included to concisely summarize the information contained in the report. This section is intended to highlight key information, not introduce anything new.

Preparing the summary.

It will probably be easier to write this section after the entire report is drafted. Start at the beginning of the "Background" section and briefly paraphrase the key points. Include reference to any established Council goals or directives. If there is cost information, be sure to include it. This section is not intended as a table of contents, but rather a summary highlighting the main points of the full report. These examples may illustrate that point:

- Misses the key information: "To implement the proposed program, the report discusses code enforcement staffing needs and costs."
- Hits the target: "To carry out the proposed neighborhood abatement program and address the Council goal of beautifying Milwaukie neighborhoods, adding a .5 FTE code enforcement specialist is recommended. The first year cost of the program is estimated to be \$21,000."
- Misses the key information: "Additional costs will be incurred to complete the maintenance program."
- Hits the target: "Completing the maintenance program will cost an estimated \$12,000 for the remainder of fiscal year 2000 - 2001."

Litmus test: Would someone who chooses not to read the entire report be aware of the key points and understand the impacts of the recommendation after reading the summary?

History of Prior Actions and Discussions

The history section contains information (when appropriate) to help Council with the history of proposed actions and set the stage for subsequent discussions.

Background

The background section will be the bulk of the staff report and should be written and formatted in a "user friendly" manner. It must include the necessary details to explain and support the recommendation. To help the reader, especially with lengthy and/or complex reports and concepts, the writer may wish to use sub-headings to break up large blocks of text.

Sub-Heading Suggestions

- Purpose
- Significant Impacts
- Citizen or Neighborhood District Participation
- Project Scope of Work
- Evaluation and Selection Process
- Conclusion

Concurrence

When applicable, staff reports should include a statement regarding the concerns and/or opinions of City departments, advisory boards, or jurisdictions affected by the recommended action. In citing concurrence of department heads, use titles rather than proper names. If the city attorney has reviewed and commented on legal issues, include that in the staff report.

Fiscal Impact

What is the purpose of this statement?

This section should clearly identify any fiscal impacts associated with the proposed action. The action could result in savings, additional revenues or expenditures, or no fiscal impact at all. In cases where a Fiscal Impact statement is clearly not appropriate, such as a progress update, do not include this section.

What type of information should the statement contain?

The Fiscal Impact statement identifies total costs and includes a thorough explanation of how the recommendation will be financed. The flow of the discussion should generally proceed as follows:

- Identify the estimated total costs of the recommendation, including contingencies,
- Explain if the cost is one-time or ongoing. If the cost is ongoing, discuss the impact to the current and future fiscal year budgets,
- Provide any formal estimates as attachments to the staff report, and
- Describe funding sources
if existing funds are adequate, then describe how much is needed and from what department(s) money is available.
if funds are not adequate, transfers will need to be made (e.g. how much money is needed and why; why funds being requested are no longer needed for the original purpose budgeted; and fund balances).

Alternatives

This section identifies reasonable alternatives to the recommended action, including the consequences of taking no action. State the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative with an explanation of why each was not the recommended action. If there are no realistic alternatives, this section should not be included in the staff report.

Attachments

To ensure complete reporting, attachments such as the following are frequently included:

- attachments that provide supportive information,
- copies of documents for signature, and
- advisory board minutes or correspondence.

Supportive Attachments

These attachments supplement and/or validate information in the staff report. Normally, these are used as reference and do not act as a substitute for information detailed in the report itself. You may occasionally find that the attachment thoroughly and effectively explains the entire issue. Under this rare circumstance, the writer should at minimum summarize and reference the attachment contents in the staff report.

Lengthy or Oversized Documents

In instances when attachments are extremely lengthy or oversized, they will be available for review in the City Hall Council Office and City facility public information areas. The staff report will make a statement to that effect: "Plans and specifications are available for review in the Council Office, City Hall, and Ledding Library." The report writer is responsible for providing these records to the city recorder so they will be available at the same time as the staff report.

Packet Preparation

Types of Council Sessions

Work Sessions

These are utilized to provide information or receive Council direction. Council may vote in work sessions on non-legislative issues. Work sessions are generally appropriate during the early stages of complex, long-term issues or for updates.

Executive Sessions

Executive sessions are defined by state statute. These are the only proceedings from which the public is excluded; however, the press may attend but cannot make any information public. These are held only for specified reasons including labor negotiations, current or pending litigation, consultation with legal counsel, personnel issues, and real property transactions.

Regular Sessions

Municipal Code Chapter 2.04.140 describes the order of business.

Proclamations, Commendations, Special Reports, and Awards

This is the section during which proclamations are read; staff or members of the community present activity or program updates not requiring direction; and awards, certificates, and commendations are presented.

Consent Agenda

This section is made up of routine items and are not given discussion time on the regular agenda. Any item, however, may be removed by Council from Consent to Other Business for discussion. Council acts on consent items with one general motion.

Public Hearings

These are required by law, as in many land use matters, appeals, budget actions, or other matters where public testimony is either mandatory or desirable.

Other Business

This section includes action items for which staff asks Council to make a decision, vote, or come to consensus. Staff or other appropriate individual presents each item.

Information

This section is made up of items of information that might include advisory board minutes, departmental reports, and items of regional information.

Material Due

The timelines for submitting packet material can be directly referenced in the Council agenda forecast folder on the [S:] drive. The city attorney has requested one week to review Council items, so it is important to consider the additional time when scheduling agreements, contracts, or ordinances for governing body approval.

Photocopying

Avoid disappointing copying mistakes by not mixing duplexed and single-sided materials -- or at least making it very obvious to the person making the copies this is the case. Highlighted material can be done on the color copier but be sure to make it clear this is what you wish. Adding shading to text can also prove to be a problem, so, if the writer wishes to highlight for emphasis, it is probably best to shade the area around the text. For example:



so, if the writer wishes to highlight for emphasis, it is probably best to shade the area around the text

Electronic Help

Electronic agendas and templates are designed to help decrease labor and paper expenses and increase the accuracy and timeliness of information. Please make every effort to utilize this information rather than relying on paper copies. Council agendas are posted on the shared drive as Word documents.

The Council agenda forecast offers users a project management tool. It will assist you in planning the presentation of your own item and prevent overloading a particular meeting agenda. The forecast is a planning tool and should not be used to provide the public with anything other than a tentative schedule.

Templates are available under "New Office Document" -- "City Templates."

- [Staff report](#)
- [Ordinance](#)
- [Resolution](#)

Ordinances and Resolutions -- When to Use

Ordinances

An ordinance is an enforceable municipal law, statute, or regulation which applies to all citizens within the City; penalty provisions may apply. Ordinances should be used when required by state or local law, when a policy or regulation requires a civil or criminal penalty for enforcement, or when the subject matter is of continuing significance and a formal, permanent record is required. Because of the legal effect and record keeping requirements, ordinances should not be used if a resolution, motion, or some other form of policy declaration would do. Ordinances normally go into effect 30 days after adoption unless there is an emergency clause or is stated otherwise in the body of the ordinance.

All ordinances must be reviewed by the city attorney before they are submitted for the agenda. The ordinance adoption process is outlined in the City Charter and Code and includes some timelines and restrictions. Substantive changes to an ordinance will result in a delay or a full reading of the ordinance at the Council meeting, so make sure the it is in its final form when submitted for the agenda packet.

Resolutions

A resolution is a decision, opinion, policy, or directive of a municipality expressed in a formally drafted document and voted upon. Resolutions are normally used for "one-time" or temporary decisions, where there is no long-term enforcement required. Resolutions are normally used for position statements, declarations or

memorials, setting fees, or making formal recommendations. Resolutions go into effect immediately upon adoption unless stated otherwise.

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES

The following numbers of copies should be included as part of the agenda package submittal:

Resolutions and Ordinances -- One original for signature and one for copying with staff report.

Contracts -- Three originals for signature and one for copying with staff report.

AFTER-MEETING ACTIONS

Amended Ordinances and Resolutions

When an ordinance or resolution is amended at the Council meeting, the originating department is responsible for making those changes and forwarding it to the city recorder for signatures.

Signed Documents

Three people sign each adopted ordinance and resolution: the Mayor, city attorney, and city recorder. After all the signatures are complete, the city recorder's office sends copies of the documents to the affected departments, anyone who provided public testimony, and those who signed the "interested party" form. The municipal code requires that adopted ordinances be posted for 10 days in a conspicuous location at City Hall and the Library. Resolutions are not posted, but there are Ballot Measure 5 requirements to advertise any fee increases.

Contracts and agreements frequently go through a routing process, and there is an on-line transmittal form for that purpose. One fully executed copy of all original documents must be returned to the city recorder's office for vault filing.

Cross-reference:

[City Council Agenda Report Manual](#)

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES

The following numbers of copies should be included as part of the agenda package submittal:

Resolutions and Ordinances -- One original for signature and one for copying with staff report.

Contracts -- Three originals for signature and one for copying with staff report.

AFTER-MEETING ACTIONS

Amended Ordinances and Resolutions

When an ordinance or resolution is amended at the Council meeting, the originating department is responsible for making those changes and forwarding it to the city recorder for signatures.

Signed Documents

Three people sign each adopted ordinance and resolution: the Mayor, city attorney, and city recorder. After all the signatures are complete, the city recorder's office sends copies of the documents to the affected departments, anyone who provided public testimony, and those who signed the "interested party" form. The municipal code requires that adopted ordinances be posted for 10 days in a conspicuous location at City Hall and the Library. Resolutions are not posted, but there are Ballot Measure 5 requirements to advertise any fee increases.

Contracts and agreements frequently go through a routing process, and there is an on-line transmittal form for that purpose. One fully executed copy of all original documents must be returned to the city recorder's office for vault filing.

Cross-reference: [S:\City Council Agenda Report Manual](#)