

**ARTICLE 5 - RELATIONS WITH CITY MANAGER & STAFF**

**5.1 Role of the City Manager.** The City Manager has general supervision over the City's administrative affairs. The Manager is directly accountable to the City Council for the execution of the Council's policy directives, and for the administration and management of all City departments. The powers and duties of the City Manager are defined by Washington law (RCW 35A.13.080). Such duties may be expanded by Ordinance or Resolution. Balanced with the City Manager's accountability to the Council for policy implementation is the need for the Council to allow the City Manager to perform legally defined duties and responsibilities without inappropriate interference by the Council in the day-to-day management decisions of the City Manager.

**5.2 Administrative Interference by Council Members.** Neither the Council, nor any of its committees or members, may direct or request the appointment of any person to, or his/her removal from, any office by the City Manager or any of his/her subordinates. Except for the purpose of inquiry, the Council and its members must deal with City staff solely through the City Manager and neither the Council nor any committee or member thereof may give any orders to any subordinate of the City Manager, publicly or privately; however, nothing in this section will be construed to prohibit the Council, while in open session, from fully and freely discussing with the City Manager anything pertaining to appointments and removals of City officers and employees and City affairs. (RCW 35A.13.120). See Section 5.4 for additional information concerning communication with staff.

**5.3 Administrative Complaints Made Directly to Individual Council Members.** When administrative policy or administrative performance complaints are made directly to individual Council members, the Council member will refer the matter directly to the City Manager for review and/or action. The individual Council member may request to be informed of the action or response made to the complaint.

**5.4 Council Communication with Staff.** The City of Sequim encourages open communication between the City Council and staff. The City's philosophy is that open communication creates healthier working relationships within the organization. Staff is encouraged to communicate directly with the City Council and the City Council is encouraged to communicate directly with staff, following the guidelines below. These guidelines are established to help everyone receive the information that they need to be successful in their roles. Following the guidelines will also improve efficiency by reducing the number of repeat questions and conversations that take place internally and in City Council meetings. These guidelines do not apply to Councilors conducting business with the City outside of their Councilor roles.

- Councilors will copy the City Manager on communications with staff;
- Council requests for information from staff requiring more than 2 hours of staff time will require City Manager approval. It is incumbent upon staff to confer with the City Manager under these circumstances and for the City Manager to communicate with Council if an issue requires policy direction or resolution. Under

those circumstances, the City Manager would refer the item back to the entire City Council in a public meeting for direction;

- Councilors are not to direct staff actions beyond the research requests mentioned above;
- Councilors acting in volunteer roles with separate organizations should keep the City Manager informed when interacting with staff.

**5.5 Staff Communication with Council.** Staff will copy the City Manager on communication with Council.

- Staff will copy the City Manager and Council on communications with the community in response to requests for service that come through the Council. Keeping everyone in the loop regarding the resolution of issues reported through the City Council is important to the Council and to the City Manager. The City Manager will inform the Council of the initial staff assignment of requests to the Council where a staff response is warranted;
- The City Manager and staff will share information requested by one Councilor with the entire Council, as a matter of practice. This will typically be done as a part of a response to a Councilor's request. Where possible and feasible, the City Manager will sometimes "bundle" these updates to the whole Council in the weekly update or in the City Manager's Report during City Council meetings.

**End of Article 5 – Relations with City Manager & Staff**