

Code of Ethics

for members of San Angelo City Council and Boards and Commissions

(Adopted by the San Angelo City Council March 11, 2008, Amended June 17, 2008)

Preamble

The citizens and businesses of San Angelo are entitled to have fair, ethical and accountable local government which has earned the public's full confidence for integrity. In keeping with the City of San Angelo commitment to excellence, the effective functioning of democratic government therefore requires that:

public officials, both elected and appointed, comply with both the letter and spirit of the laws and policies affecting the operations of government; public officials be independent, impartial and fair in their judgment and actions; public office be used for the public good, not for personal gain; and public deliberations and processes be conducted openly, unless legally confidential, in an atmosphere of respect and civility.

To this end, the San Angelo City Council adopted this Code of Ethics for members of the City Council and of the City's boards and commissions to assure public confidence in the integrity of local government and its effective and fair operation. The members of the City Council and its boards and commissions shall be collectively referred to as "members" unless otherwise designated herein.

1. Act in the Public Interest

Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their primary concern, members will work for the common good of the people of San Angelo and not for any private or personal interest, and they will assure fair and equal treatment of all persons, claims and transactions coming before the San Angelo City Council, boards and commissions.

2. Comply with the Law

Members shall comply with the laws of the nation, the State of Texas and the City of San Angelo in the performance of their public duties. These laws include, but are not limited to: the United States and Texas constitutions; the San Angelo City Charter; laws pertaining to conflicts of interest, election campaigns, financial disclosures, employer responsibilities, and open processes of government; and City ordinances and policies.

3. Conduct of Members

The professional and personal conduct of members must be above reproach and avoid even the appearance of impropriety. Members shall refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other members of City Council, boards and commissions, the staff or public.

4. Respect for Process

Members shall perform their duties in accordance with the laws of the state and the processes and rules of order established by the City Council and board and commissions governing the deliberation of public policy issues, meaningful involvement of the public, and implementation of policy decisions of the City Council by City staff.

5. Conduct of Public Meetings

Members shall prepare themselves for public issues; listen courteously and attentively to all public discussions before the body; and focus on the business at hand. They shall refrain from interrupting other speakers; making personal comments not germane to the business of the body; or otherwise interfering with the orderly conduct of meetings.

6. Decisions Based on Merit

Members shall base their decisions on the merits and substance of the matter at hand, rather than on unrelated considerations.

7. Communication

Members shall publicly share substantive information that is relevant to a matter under consideration by the City Council or boards and commissions, which they may have received from sources outside of the public decision-making process.

8. Conflict of Interest

In order to assure their independence and impartiality on behalf of the common good, members shall comply with Texas Local Government Code Chapter 176.

In accordance with the law, members shall disclose investments, interests in real property, sources of income, and gifts; and they shall abstain from participating in deliberations and decision-making where conflicts may exist.

9. Gifts and Favors

Members will abide by state law, Charter provisions and City Ordinance with regard to accepting any gifts, favors or promises of future benefits which might compromise their independence of judgment or action or give the appearance of being compromised.

10. Confidential Information

Members shall respect the confidentiality of information concerning the property, personnel or affairs of the City. They shall neither disclose confidential information without proper legal authorization, nor use such information to advance their personal, financial or other private interests. They shall not reveal the contents of discussions in executive session to person not legally entitled to such information.

11. Use of Public Resources

Members shall not use public resources not available to the public in general, such as city staff time, equipment, supplies or facilities, for private gain or personal purposes.

12. Advocacy

Members shall represent the official policies or positions of the City Council, board or commission to the best of their ability when designated as delegates for this purpose. When presenting their individual opinions and positions, members shall explicitly state they do not represent their body or the City of San Angelo, nor will they allow the inference that they do.

13. Policy Role of Members

Members shall respect and adhere to the City Council-manager structure of San Angelo city government as outlined by the San Angelo City Charter. In this structure, the City Council determines

the policies of the city with the advice, information and analysis provided by the public, boards and commissions, and city staff.

Except as provided by the city charter, members therefore shall not direct or interfere with the administrative functions of the city or the professional duties of city staff; nor shall they impair the ability of staff to implement City Council policy decisions.

14. Independence of Boards and Commissions

Because of the value of the independent advice of boards and commissions to the public decision-making process, members of City Council shall refrain from using their position to unduly influence the deliberations or outcomes of board and commission proceedings.

15. Positive Work Place Environment

Members shall support the maintenance of a positive and constructive work place environment for city employees and for citizens and businesses dealing with the city. Members shall recognize their special role in dealings with city employees so that they in no way create the perception of inappropriate direction to staff.

16. Implementation

As an expression of the standards of conduct for members expected by the city, the San Angelo Code of Ethics is intended to be self-enforcing. It therefore becomes most effective when members are thoroughly familiar with it and embrace its provisions.

For this reason, ethical standards shall be included in the regular orientations for candidates for City Council, applicants to board and commissions, and newly elected and appointed officials. Members entering office shall sign a statement affirming they read and understood the City of San Angelo code of ethics. In addition, the Code of Ethics shall be annually reviewed by the City Council, boards and commissions, and the City Council shall consider recommendations from boards and commissions and update it as necessary.

17. Compliance and Enforcement

The San Angelo Code of Ethics expresses standards of ethical conduct expected for members of the San Angelo City Council, boards and commissions. Members themselves have the primary responsibility to assure that ethical standards are understood and met, and that the public can continue to have full confidence in the integrity of government.

The chairs of boards and commissions and the mayor have the additional responsibility to intervene when actions of members that appear to be in violation of the Code of Ethics are brought to their attention.

The City Council may impose sanctions on members whose conduct does not comply with the city's ethical standards, such as reprimand, formal censure, or loss of committee assignment. The city council also may remove members of boards and commissions from office as provided by the city ordinance.

A violation of this code of ethics shall not be considered a basis for challenging the validity of a City Council, board or commission decision.

NOTE: Member's Copy