

# CODE OF ETHICS

## PREAMBLE

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

- Public officials and city employees comply with both the letter and spirit of the laws and policies affecting the operations of government.
- public officials and city employees 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 Hudson City Council has adopted a Code of Ethics for Employees and 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.

### **1. Act in the Public Interest:**

Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their primary concern, employees and members will work for the common good of the people of Hudson and not for any private or personal interest, and they will assure fair and equal treatment of all persons, claims and transactions.

### **2. Comply with the Law:**

Employees and members shall comply with the laws of the nation, the State of Michigan and the City of Hudson in the performance of their public duties. These laws include, but are not limited to: the United States and Michigan constitutions; the Hudson 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 Employees and Members**

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

#### **4. Respect for Process:**

Employees and members shall perform their duties in accordance with 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 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 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 not use their official positions to influence government decisions in which they have a material financial interest or personal relationship that may give the appearance of a conflict of interest. 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 shall not take any special advantage of services or opportunities for personal gain, by virtue of their public office that is not available to the public in general. They shall refrain from 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:**

Employees and 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.

### **11. Use of Public Resources:**

Employees and 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. Representation of Private Interests:**

In keeping with their role as stewards of the public interest, members of Council shall not appear on behalf of the private interests of third parties before the Council or any board, commission or proceeding of the City, nor shall members of boards and commissions appear before their own bodies or before the Council on behalf of the private interests of third parties on matters related to the areas of service of their bodies.

### **13. 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 Hudson, nor will they allow the inference that they do.

### **14. Policy Role of Members:**

Members shall respect and adhere to the Council-Manager structure of Hudson City government as outlined by the Hudson 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 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 Council policy decisions.

### **15. 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 Council shall refrain from using their position to unduly influence the deliberations or outcomes of Board and Commission proceedings.

### **16. Positive Work Place Environment:**

Employees and members shall support the maintenance of a positive and constructive work place environment not only for themselves but also for citizens and businesses dealing with the City. Members shall recognize their special role in dealings with City employees to in no way create the perception of inappropriate direction to staff.

### **17. Public Relations:**

Employees and members shall promote Hudson in a positive light. Shall give the public their full attention to their concerns and questions. Shall treat each individual with respect and dignity they deserve.

### **18. Implementation:**

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

this reason, ethical standards shall be included in the regular orientations for employees, candidates for City Council, applicants to Board and Commissions, and newly elected and appointed officials. Employees and members entering office shall sign a statement affirming they read and understood the City of Hudson Code of Ethics. In addition, the Code of Ethics shall be annually reviewed by the City Council, and the City Council shall consider recommendations from boards and commissions and update it as necessary.

#### **19. Compliance and Enforcement:**

The Hudson Code of Ethics expresses standards of ethical conduct expected for employees and members of the Hudson City Council, Boards and Commissions. Employee and 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 and city. The Department Heads, Chairs of Boards, 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 shall impose sanctions on members, or City Manager, whose conduct does not comply with the City's ethical standards, such as a reprimand or formal censure with a majority vote. The City Manager or Department Heads shall impose sanctions on employees whose conduct does not comply with the City's ethical standards, such as a reprimand or formal censure. Under the City Charter, the City Council also may remove members of Boards and Commissions from office. A violation of this Code of Ethics shall not be considered a basis for challenging the validity of a Council, Board or Commission decision.

For all City Employees and Members of  
Hudson City Council, Boards and Commissions  
Adopted by Hudson City Council

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Forms:Code of Ethics.doc