



OFFICE OF
Community
& Civic Life

November 20, 2019

Chloe Eudaly,
Commissioner

Suk Rhee,
Director

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INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

To: Mark Fetters & DRAC

From: Ashley Tjaden

Subject: Advisory Body Member Communications Policy

This is in response to your request for information related to roles and responsibilities for member communications.

Members are in an official Public Official position, which is a public trust, and their actions must be in accordance with State of Oregon Ethics and Responsibilities.

Occasionally, some advisory bodies may ask City staff or be asked by City staff to write position letters. Members are required to first receive approval from the staff liaison to the advisory body before making any position statements or claims. Staff will assist in facilitating a formal discussion or vote in a public meeting with advanced notification.

On rare occasions, some advisory bodies may ask City staff or be asked by City staff to write position letters beyond the City, for example to external groups or governments in support or opposition of policy issues that are relevant to the purpose and scope of the Body. This is accomplished by first proposing the position to the Staff Liaison to the advisory body. The Staff Liaison, in partnership with bureau leadership must approve the position before the letter has been drafted. The Staff Liaison and/or bureau leadership must work with the Office of Government Relations if the external communication is with a state, federal or tribal government. This process is required in accordance with Administrative Rule 3.01, which establishes the Office of Government Relations as the central coordinating body for this external intergovernmental outreach.





Some advisory body members may wear other hats and might testify on a subject at the state legislature, for example. The City's Office of Government Relations is responsible for managing and representing the state legislative and federal agendas of the City. So, before you casually mention you are on a City board, make sure you are not implying that you are representing the City, unless you have obtained the approval from the Office of Government Relations. When in doubt, it is always best to say you are expressing your own personal views and not that of the City or your particular board.

The use of City logos, letterhead, and resources is prohibited by advisory body members without prior approval from the City staff liaison. This is to maintain transparency, accountability, and consistency in all public communications.

Public Officials are asked to refrain from using social media to engage in dialogue about matters of the Advisory Body and public interest when there is a decision or discussion underway. This is to avoid advancing the work of the committee without a quorum, and to avoid a quorum in a social media discussion that necessitates an open and public meeting.

Certainly, you can express your personal views on your own time, your own listserve or social media, but you need to avoid associating it with the City. If a public official fails to comply with the operative statutes, a violation cannot be dismissed by placing the blame on the City.

Please continue to work with the Advisory Bodies Program, the staff liaison to your advisory body, your bureau director as more questions arise.

Sincerely,

Ashley Tjaden
Advisory Bodies Program Analyst
Office of Community and Civic Life