

**CITY OF COLUMBIA  
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT  
FEBRUARY 28, 2012 – 11:00 A.M.  
CITY HALL – 1737 MAIN STREET  
COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM – 2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR**



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The Columbia City Council conducted an Administrative Policy Committee Meeting on Tuesday, February 28, 2012 at City Hall, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Leona K. Plough (Committee Chair) called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. and the following committee members were present: The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine and The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann.

### **COMMITTEE DISCUSSION**

1. Employee Ethics Code and Compliance Reporting Policy

Ms. Pamela Benjamin, Human Resources Director presented the revisions to the proposed policy, noting that changes were based on the feedback received during the last meeting. We clarified the objective of the policy and expanded the language on the receipt/disbursement of gifts. We modified the procedures for reporting a concern to include access to the Human Resources Department. We added language regarding investigations and sanctions. We also added language to allow the City Manager to appoint a designee to the Review Committee. The City Manager will provide a quarterly violations report to Council. A non-retaliation clause and a section on training were also included.

There was a consensus of the committee to make the following revisions:

- Under Gifts, strengthen the language on kickbacks
- Under Employee Responsibility, clarify that “The City is committed to investigating potential violations **then** addressing them if they have merit”
- Under Employee Responsibility, clarify that “...all employees are obligated to cooperate in investigating the matter.”
- Add the City’s outside labor counsel to the Review Committee
- Specify Council’s review date
- Add City of Columbia to the title of the document
- Clarify whether or not the Public Official Ethics Code and Compliance Policy should be included in the Employee Handbook
- Under Whistle-Blower Protection, add waste of “public” funds and a violation of “state” and “federal” law, rule or policy

The revised policy will be forwarded for City Council’s consideration.

## 2. Public Official Ethics Code and Compliance Policy

All newly elected officials will be asked to sign the Public Official's Ethics Code and Compliance Policy in addition to the two (2) Oaths of Office during the swearing-in ceremony.

A section will be added for elected officials to acknowledge that at all times they will comply with the following:

- Public Official Ethics Code and Compliance Policy
- State Statute relating to public officials contacting employees
- State Ethics Act

There will be annual refresher training on ethics for council either in July or during Council retreats. All council members will execute a certification on an annual basis. This certification will be attached to the policy.

The revised policy will be forwarded for City Council's consideration.

## 3. Ethics Reporting Process and Training Proposal

Quotes have been received for ethics training and will be shared with the Purchasing Department. The training should be adapted to meet our specific needs. The associated expenses have been included in the Human Resources Department's budget request for the next fiscal year.

Council will be asked to affirm the ethics policies in place on an annual basis.

The revised policy will be forwarded for City Council's consideration.

## 4. City Residency Policy

The proposed policy was modeled after Charlotte, North Carolina's policy.

There was a consensus of the committee to remove the following sentence that was added: "When filling all Department Head levels or above positions from within, preference will be given to candidates who reside in the City of Columbia."

The revised policy will be forwarded for City Council's consideration.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.